

## In Memoriam Dr Aart van Wijk (18 April 1934–5 July 2016)

On 5 July 2016 a good friend and one of the first editors of this journal, Aart van Wijk, passed away. He lived a long and varied life, worthy of being told here.

Aart was born on 18 April 1934 and after having followed his primary and secondary schools he received his final school certificate (*Rijks Hogere Burger School*) in 1951. One year earlier he had already followed a glider course which ended with five solo flights. In September 1951 he joined the State Aviation Schooling Institute, where he did his first solo flight in a Tiger Moth (1952). A year later he finished the course at Ypenburg airfield, from where he was sent to Gilze-Rijen airfield to familiarize himself with the Harvard (1953) and the Beechcraft (1954).

This resulted in the B-3 licence for flying civil aircraft.

The autumn of 1954 saw his admittance to the Royal Netherlands Air Force, starting with a course for Air Force officers in Breda (1955), followed by flying courses in his favourite aircraft, the Gloster Meteor.

At the end of 1956 he came over to KLM, where he worked until his retirement in April 1992. During these years he flew many different types of aircraft, including the DC-3, the DC-8, the DC-9 and finally the B-747/400.

*During his stay with KLM he was a member of the National Pilots' Association, and member and president of the International Federation of Air Line Pilots' Associations (IFALPA) Legal Committee, which awarded him in 1992 its highest award.*

In the meantime he used his free periods to study law at the University of Amsterdam where he received his LLB in 1968 and his Doctorate in Law in 1974, with a thesis on the Aircraft Accident Inquiry in the Netherlands (at that event I was one of his two official assistants). September 1980 saw his entry to a law office in Amsterdam (where they had a section for aviation cases), followed in 1989 by him setting up his own law firm.

After his retirement from KLM in 1992, he stopped all his juridical activities and started a completely new life. He began secondary school courses for Latin and Greek, for which he obtained the final certificates in 1994 and 1995, and which were followed by a university study of the classical languages (1997–2007). He became member of the Classical Languages Association and one of its reading clubs. This resulted in his translation from the Old Greek version of a Potter's

book into Dutch. After 1992 Aart also wrote some important books about 'his' dear Gloster Meteor and flew an old DC-3 of the Dutch Dakota Association. In 2007 he received a high Royal Order.

And now the important part of all this: when I started preparing in 1973 the birth of a journal on Air Law for the Kluwer firm, I asked Aart to be a member of the Editorial Board. We started publishing in 1975 with four editors. Aart was very active and also eager to write articles, book reviews and reports on his main fields of interest: reviewing books or articles in the field of Aircraft Accident Inquiry, writing reports on the activities of the IFALPA Legal Committee (which sent him to many ICAO legal meetings), and other reports on air law conferences, where we often went together. Aart provided much information which normally never sees the light of day in our journals. Aart and I worked closely together. Several times we attended conferences where he sat in the pilot's seat and I was invited to the cabin to do less dangerous work. We also divided conferences among ourselves so that many reports could be made. The first years brought us into close contact as so many new ideas had to be worked out.

Strangely enough, we never realized that we were together in 1955 in Breda at the Air Force officers' training: he as a real pilot, I as a lawyer and future member of the Air Force Staff.

The last time I saw him was at my farewell from our journal in November last year.

The obituary in the newspaper announcing his passing contained the following wise words: *The last flight west, my friend, is the one we all must take.*

Wybo P. Heere