David Page FRIN
1929-2016

It is with great sadness that we report that David Page FRIN has died at the age of 86.

David was unique in that he had been a professional navigator both at sea and in the air, as a Master Mariner, holder of Pilot and Flight Navigator licences and authorised Navigator Flight Test Examiner.

At the age of 16, as the Second World War closed in 1945, he joined the Merchant Navy and the Royal Naval Reserve, ultimately becoming a Master Mariner.

But, in 1957, he moved to the air by joining Air Charter Ltd, British United Airways and then British Caledonian as a flight navigator, becoming the latter's Chief Navigator. Hence, for over 30 years, he oversaw the practical navigation of fleets of aircraft ranging from the piston-engined Avro Tudor and Douglas DC-4 (Skymaster) through turboprops to the likes of the jet Douglas DC-10, the Airbus A-320 and the Boeing B-747 (the Jumbo). His responsibilities included route planning and proving, specifying performance, aircraft evaluation and the introduction of computers.

This involved the introduction of navigation aids such as Loran-C, Decca, Dectra, doppler, Omega, inertial systems, satnav, area-nav, performance management and the adoption of CAT III landing operations.

David also advised other overseas airlines and lectured to the Royal Aeronautical Society-sponsored Air Transport Course. He kept an interest in general aviation as a pilot and part-owner of a light aircraft – and devoted his spare time to sail training and navigation instruction. With regard to maritime affairs he served on the Small Craft Committee of the Society for Nautical Research*.

From 1960, David served on or chaired a number of international aviation committees, including IATA Technical Panels. He represented all airlines on the ICAO Review of the General Concept of Separation (RGCS) Panel and the Eurocontrol NAVSEPM Panel, and chaired the IATA European Airspace Management Group.

Between 1997 and 2003 he was the Secretary General of the International Association of Institutes of Navigation (IAIN) as well acting as its ICAO co-ordinator and representative on the ICAO Future Air Navigation (FANS)
Committee, which oversaw the adoption of WGS-84 as the worldwide standard datum for civil air operations.

David Page was a Fellow of the Royal Institute of Navigation and served a handful of times on its Council, being Vice-President in the mid-1980s and Chairman of the Technical Committee around the turn of the century.

David’s wise guidance and influence were much appreciated and the national and international communities afloat, ashore and in the air are grateful for his enormous contribution to the science of navigation.

*The Society for Nautical Research was founded in 1910 to encourage ‘research into matters relating to seafaring and shipbuilding in all ages among all nations, into the language and customs of the sea, and into other subjects of nautical interest’. The Society plays an important role in preserving and promoting the maritime heritage of the UK. It was instrumental in saving Nelson’s flagship HMS Victory in 1922 and has been closely associated with her restoration ever since. The Society was also instrumental in founding the National Maritime Museum at Greenwich in 1937 and the Royal Naval Museum at Portsmouth in 1972. It has also played a significant part in the preservation of the frigate Trincomalee.*