

Wg Cdr Kenneth Horatio Wallis, DSO, MBE, Ceng, FRAeS, Phd, RAF

Ken was an honorary Vice President of our Society and a great supporter.

We miss Ken, as, even in his 90s, drove down from Norfolk to be present at our Open Days in his small Peugeot, towing Little Nellie, the famous James Bond autogiro. "Little Nellie" was, of course, the autogiro famously flown by Ken, who doubled for "James Bond" in the film "You Only Live Twice".

Ken Wallis was a very clever and innovative engineer. Those of us who had the privilege to visit his imposing Georgian mansion house at Reymeston in Norfolk were so impressed with the many examples of his engineering skill. He would take us about one hundred yards to his hangar and inside were 18 or 19 home built autogiros. He was of course, a leading exponent of this form of flight.

"I expect you would like me to have a flight?" he would say. A couple of swings on the propeller and off he would trundle down a narrow path to a nearby field. Soon he would be 300ft above us. Hands and feet off the controls, Ken would be in his element!

In another farm building close by were speedboats and engines that he had designed and raced during his eventful life. Tucked away in a corner stood a pair of mighty Bristol Centaurus radial engines. I wonder what plans he may have had for them!

On his first visit to Martlesham Heath he recounted that his log had reminded him that he had once landed here in a Wellington in 1942. Ken went on to take part in no less than 28 sorties over enemy territory.

All of us who knew him were privileged indeed. Truly a legend in his own lifetime. Ken Wallis died in his sleep aged 97.

Martyn
MHAS Chairman