



news and views from the
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JOHN WELLS FRPS



John Wells was born and lived all of his life in Lincolnshire.

He was a representative for a number of companies involved in the automotive parts business. He retired in December 2011 as a Sales Manager for a firm based in Garstang. Before taking up photography seriously John was golfer and his handicap of just 4 ensured his selection as a county representative player. He was a member of Blankney Golf Club for over 45 years.

In the mid-1980s John turned to photography and was the first in his club, RBCC (Lincoln), to gain an RPS Distinction, and his Fellowship was gained with a panel of Cibachrome Prints of coastal scenes. He was a prolific worker, turning data-files into

finished sets of prints in exceptionally short times and he was able to include up-to-date work in his lectures within days of taking the pictures.

John was very much a "people person" and an extremely popular speaker at clubs all over Britain; he loved to involve audiences in his presentations, and his wicked sense of humour allowed him to say things other speakers might not have got away with. He seemed not to take photography seriously but that was not so - all that he did, he did to the very highest level and audiences recognised that. One comment always attached to John and his work was that he was both creative and "inspirational".

John was a member of GAMMA Photoforum based in Bradford and has been sponsored by Permajet for several years. John retired in December 2011 and at the end of January 2012 he was found to have an inoperable brain tumour. This was a great shock to his wife Doreen, his family and all his many friends in the photographic world. John sadly passed away on 27th June 2012 in St Barnabas Hospice in Lincoln.

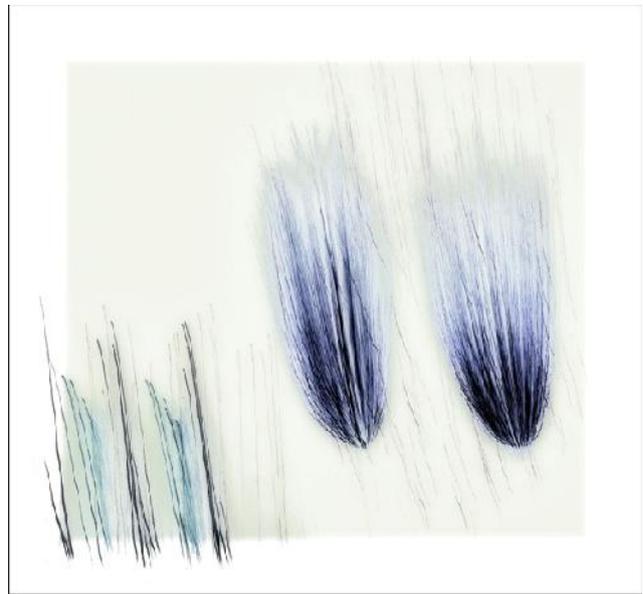
Peter Yeo

The funeral will be held at 13:50 on Monday 9th July at Lincoln Crematorium, Washingborough Road, Lincoln LN4 1EF. (Tel: 01522-873646).

The mode of dress should be quite formal, e.g. suits and ties. Only family flowers please. However cash donations will be welcomed which will be split between St Barnabas Hospice who cared for John right up to the end, and Macmillan Nurses and Marie Curie who together cared for John so well prior to his admission to St Barnabas.

John used to come a lot to Hitchin on business and when we moved to Shropshire we missed his calls of "is the kettle on? I've got some pictures to show you." We have continued to see John through the Eyecon Group, Permajet Lecturers' get-togethers and his very popular talks to Wrekin Arts PC. We are going to miss him dreadfully. His humour always shone through and he was such a prolific printer there was always plenty new and exciting work to see.

Irene & Gerry Froy



All pictures by John Wells.

He made you laugh, this guy, he laughed at himself. He joked with us by e-mail when he learned about the illness that took him with too much unsaid, still at the top of his photographic game.

John took the pictures of an observer. He used his 'eye' and his skill to work rapidly, often in short series, lending his awareness of the humour in any given set of circumstances - from shopping centres in Glasgow to the seafront at Cleethorpes. There was an art in all of it, from the Photoshop techniques to the clever abstractions, from the waist level street-life viewpoint to the intricacies in the architecture at Lincoln Cathedral. His approach was varied, modern, often acute, frequently 'contemporary', unique and slightly eccentric. His visual dial navigated its way from weird to random, through classic to poignant to 'taking the Mick', something he could do without rancour or harshness.

Who will forget his stage manner? No-one who saw him will forget. Big car, glasses, a pile of enthusiasm, full of dry wit and anecdote, frequently self-deprecating and drawing heavily on the ridiculous aspects of life that saddle all of us everyday. He put it all down in pictures and used his voice to let us wallow in the humour of it all. Audiences everywhere lapped it up, were transported on a wave of mirth and the wonder he found in the ordinary world, punching out images that made you think and smile. John reminded me of Peter Cook, standing as it were at a slight angle to the photographic universe.

I'll remember him for the laughs he created at the Smethwick Permajet "floor" show and the ill fitting yellow shirt days helping out on the Permajet stand at Focus, and the way he loved being part of the club scene. John, we shall miss all this.

Leigh Preston





A book is currently being prepared featuring the work of Permajet Lecturers and this is the short biography that John provided for himself.

“John Wells was originally a darkroom worker, making many of his images by burning back and bleaching transparencies, backed up by an extensive array of filters. Digital imaging allowed him to change that approach, but with the same creative involvement. He is always searching for something different in the hope that his work will still be appreciated by other photographers.”