

## Goodbye Graham

I've done this a few times but never thought it would be for Graham and this young.

Graham lived a full life even though it has been cut sadly short.

Graham Leslie Wright was born on 7<sup>th</sup> April 1953 at Stockport on the outskirts of Manchester in England and was the youngest of 4 children having 3 older sisters, the youngest being 11 years older.

The family moved to Jersey in the Channel Islands when he was 9 or 10 and there he passed the 11 Plus exam and went to Grammar School. Not liking school much he left at the age of 15. But as you know Graham was an intelligent person.

Graham had a number of jobs and experiences over the next few years. I'm not sure how long each of them lasted.

- Photography – Sennett and Spears and taking photos which appeared in the local paper such as up and close with a lion in a cage at the Gerald Durrell Zoo
- Entertainment industry - Mobile Canteen for Monty Python Film set. They needed an old bomb of a car to launch over a cliff and blow up and since

this hadn't been organized Graham managed to get them one. It was supposed to explode half way down but this happened when it landed at the bottom.

- Lighting and sound and photos for bands – One story Graham told was when he had to look after Donovan Leitch (Mellow Yellow fame) when in town so Donovan didn't get lost or into any sort of trouble. While walking barefoot across the grass area in the town centre Donovan stepped on some broken glass and this apparently became the inspiration for the song Jersey Thursday.

Another time Graham took photos of a then unknown Kenny Rogers.

Rogers was impressed and asked Graham to join his entourage, but Graham declined. Just after this Kenny Rogers hit the big time.

- Graham started a Mechanic's Apprenticeship but didn't stay with it for long as he didn't like mainly having to sweep the workshop and make the tea.
- Graham drove heavy trucks for British Rail for a short time collecting containers from the docks.
- He had a short attempt at gardening, where Graham somehow managed to turn Lady Docker's prize winning Strawberrys yellow (oops!).

When 19, Graham and his mate Gordon were in the pub one wet Saturday and they decided they wanted to leave Jersey so they tossed a coin to determine whether they would go to Canada or Australia and you no doubt know which way the coin fell as they travelled via Singapore to Melbourne.

Graham had several jobs after arriving

- He worked in a garage for Melbourne Tramways Board
- Driving a van for St Vincent de Paul where he had a work experience co worker by the name of Red Simmons who later came looking for Graham when he wasn't around and wanting to offer him a job as Road Manager for some new band called Sky Hooks.

Graham travelled to Adelaide a few times and on one trip he met a girl called Barbara Saul. They got together and soon after married and had 4 children together before the marriage dissolved and they divorced.

It was during that time just before Alison was born that I was introduced to Graham. I was playing drums in a band and one of the singers knew Barbara. As I didn't sing I had started taking an interest in photography during band rehearsals at times when the others were practicing harmonies. I had also been taking photos for my Uni Rag and social occasions. Graham liked the portfolio that I

showed him and suggested we collaborate on a project shooting Publicity and Front of House photos for a amateur dramatics group at Theater 62 which is where I first saw my now wife Sue.

The project worked out well and Graham suggested we consider a photographic partnership. Known as Melrose Photographers we operated together successfully for around 3 years. The work we attracted was mainly weddings but we did portraiture and some small industrial and decor work. We adopted the motto "If it reflects light we'll photograph it". We processed our black and white work in a darkroom Graham had constructed in his shed but used the services of a commercial lab for the colour stuff. We often had "Marketing meetings" in the darkroom along with more than a few wines which also went down well 😊.

In addition to the photography Graham and I along with some others did some freelance Lighting and Sound for several community events among them the "end of year mass" for the St Dominic's Priory College which saw Graham clambering around on the roof of the Convent and Cloisters the night before, running cables and placing theatre lights, no-one had heard of Health and Safety back then and the Nuns found this quite amusing.

Graham also did the lighting for several productions that were part of the Adelaide Fringe Festival.

Graham was my Best man at our wedding in 1984 and as a strong family friend became the God Father for our Children, Sarah and John. I also became God Father to his son's Simon and Adam but that relationship faded when his marriage finished.

Several years later Graham met Lynette and they were married. Lynette was running an antique shop in Birdwood called Granny Cosgrove's and they lived behind the shop. Graham took an interest in repairing and restoring old Grammar phones and collecting 78's.

Through the whole time after meeting, Graham and I would fix our cars together and it was Graham who taught me much about mechanical repairs as prior to this I had known nothing beyond filling them up with petrol. Sue reminded me the other day how I would tell her we were going to do some work and it should only take an hour but then we would be at it all day.

While in SA Graham had several jobs

- British Tube makers, making steel pipes using large welding machines,

- He became an Owner Driver for TNT until he fell off the back of his truck and hurt his back,
- He became the Head of Security for the Parks School and Community Centre complex which also involved managing staff, planning and controlling Government budgets,
- He then went to work as a Control room operator for a security monitoring firm.

Besides work Graham had a small “Laser” yacht which although a 1 person boat we used to go out in it together. It didn’t take much for me to realize he knew something about sailing and I knew nothing as when I took control we just drifted out to sea, but we had a good time.

Graham and Lynette purchased a “Trailer Sailor” yacht and moored it at a Mariner on Hindmarsh Island at the Mouth of the Murray River from where they often sailed.

At the turn of the Century, Graham and Lynette announced they were selling up and moving to Tasmania, which was sad news for us. From there on we

communicated by phone and emails. We saw each other when they visited SA or we came to Tassy but there are others here today who probably know more and will recount about his/their exploits at the Salamaca Markets, Country Fire Service, Huon FM, the LBT, The Kermandie Hotel and the friends that he made and which he would write or talk about on many occasions.

At This point I just want to say GOODBYE GRAHAM it was great knowing you and will greatly and sadly missed by myself, Sue, Sarah and John. No longer can I think, I'll ask Graham, I'll send that to Graham, Graham and I can discuss that, or I'll give Graham a call.