I arrived within a crescendo of apprehension, partly self induced but also as a result of the tension of all those around me who were completely encapsulated by the manufactured theatre within which we were to share time and space.

In the silence of early morning I had been prepared appropriately following some clarity having been brought to bear on the fact that the natural freedom that had been my reasonable expectation of many desirous options was to be curtailed without explanation or appropriate process of democracy.

My magical and proactive wispy dreams through the hours of darkness, were without notice removed from my option selection, which normally followed the hasty consumption of porridge with a touch of treacle.

I had emerged, as a rabbit from a hat, across seemingly miles and miles of highway to eventually break out from the darkness and echoes of underground into the vast manufactured environment of synthetics.

So close to the wartime blackout, the structure was saturated with every electrician's attempt to overpower the sun by force.

The annual reoccurrence of the use of this place and it's like, together with the repetitious ritual of producing synchronised new product in the drive to create and enhance markets would and in the form of EXHIBITIONS generally impact on all who for better or worse take part in the treadmill of materialism.

Indeed, I had arrived for the first of many, many visits within the EARLS COURT EXHIBITION CENTRE where not only did I feel extremely tiny but also where it became evident that my Grandfather was clearly not the largest thing on the Planet.

Throughout that day I combated continual yearning for the fruit in the orchard at home, the smell and sight of the meadows and sound of the insects and birds. That day at least, I would not be filling my jam jar with sticklebacks or discuss life with the brown trout as they gently and without fear held pace against the free flowing chalk stream. I would not this day climb and sit under the beautiful Beech trees or escape to the tree house on the margins of parental control which facilitated communicational exchanges between tree house occupants and the driver.
I stood intrigued but at present totally unimpressed with this new adventure involving Design, Manufacturing and Marketing in this strange new world of competition and persuasion. Can all this be a good idea?

This activity hype was of course taking place immediately after the Second World War and there were many reasons and effects not achievable in present day focus.

Nevertheless I stood in firm mode of observation at The Wonders and Woes of the Exhibitionist.

My complaint to my Mother that I felt ‘stupid’ wearing a grey suit complete with short trousers and ‘turn-ups’, white shirt and Bow Tie was quickly re buffed by the comment “you’re not alone Dear!” which required no response. I should perhaps mention that my hair was neatly parted on the left which was in any event mandatory. Certain elements of this dress code seem to have evaporated over time even in the hands of ardent EXHIBITIONISTS.

The days that preceded my full emergence into the world of work were a cocktail of insight and participation in the very real world of manufacturing where those with jobs certainly worked six days each week, and my Technical Education, which embraced multiple skills in design, art and technology.

I was now at the age of Sixteen to embark on my first and possibly most important EXHIBITION, that of my own work in every aspect. Students from the Technical School and College would exhibit their work and would be judged not by academics but by leaders of Manufacturing Industry.

The exhibits were designed and made by hand but most importantly must be viable and marketable and purposeful for volume mass production hence generating work and much needed jobs.

To my delight I was awarded the Gold Medal which was presented at the Manufacturers Annual Dinner.

Exhibitions, with all the attendant preparation, risk and investment would never cease to be a fine balance of stimulated tension and opportunity. Some industries are exposed more than others but most experience the pain.

That which is seen as the Exhibition Stand and Exhibit is but the tip of the iceberg. The real work, ingenuity, risk and skill development is pursued in the months and sometimes years of forward planning and preparation.

Bursts of wellbeing are experienced through the journey but unfortunately my observation is such that the most common human condition is to exude clouds of suspicion over all that is potentially diverting from the well - trodden path however akin to quicksand. One such burst of wellbeing was enjoyed when our new designs and industrial merchandise was selected and exhibited at the Design Centre. As a linked result of acclaim, we exhibited and featured as the ‘Best of British’ at the Hanover Trade Fair.

welters® mission in Design and Innovation creates activity in many industries. One such example is the specialty in a diversity of areas within the Funeral Services Industry. welters® have now for over twenty one years been attending and exhibiting diverse professional, technical and operational services of unique status at conferences and exhibitions in this marketplace. Throughout these years at least two and often three exhibitions and conferences each year have been attended with all the specific challenges that this Industry presents.

An early inspirational meeting of minds took place when I was invited to participate and exhibit by UNESCO at an International Conference in Wroclaw, Poland which pursued the wonderful and exciting subject of Cemetery Art. It would be amazing to be able to feel that in Britain we were able to rise, grasp and appreciate the importance and opportunity inherent within the potential. The issues creating constraint and apathy are as numerous today as they were 21 years ago but unfortunately, they are rather different. The ‘moving target’ scenario will, I am sure, remain forever.

As a result of the post war rise in popularity of cremation and the conceivable belief that the funeral service industry in Britain was content to exude philosophy, advancing thought and persuasion
that the public required no focal point of grief after cremation, welters® investigated product design and marketing into European countries where management was more open to change. Despite cremation percentages being much lower in France, the International Exhibition Funeraire in Paris would reach a wide global market.

The design and product development was enthusiastically embarked upon for five months. Every detail of the exhibition stand organised and carefully committed.

Due to the excessively high cost of employing French stand fitters under the ‘organiser package’, we embraced the challenge from start to finish. Exhibition complex environments are a hive of restrictive practice, artful manoeuvres, back scratching and the like but despite the odds, I took three men who had never seen the twenty four tons of individual masonry components that had never been previously assembled.

We loaded the forty foot trailer, exhaustively checking that all components were on board but in any event it was stacked to the roof.

I looked on as the results of five months work accelerated in a southerly direction into the distance under the apparent care and control of a driver who could well have been just released from the clutches of Her Majesty’s pleasure.

I hastily departed eastwards with my team of three, only one of whom had ever left British shores before. The other two would shortly wish that the status quo had been preserved.

The flight was relatively uneventful as flights go. That is the nature of flying I suppose, you either make it or you don’t, not many exceptions. We did.

Charles de Gaulle Airport was the usual bundle of fun. That misguided fairground experiment designed to make the old wish they were young and the young wish they were old so that they could ride in one of those cart things. I never worked out how to operate all those folk with guns. I expect we had the economy travel package.

The train into the City centre was calming. Intermittent singing, dancing, jumping on and off, demanding money, speaking in tongues or something similar.

We collapsed into the IBIS Hotel. I thought I was in England.

Early morning, before the streets were aired, the litter swept and the pavements flushed down, allowed us to pass relatively unnoticed out of the City to the by now maniac Exhibition complex at Le Bourget. It was not yet seven o’clock as our forty odd tons of rolling stock bore down upon us reorganising the molecular structure of the Tarmac with gay abandon. The driver was clearly identifiable by the two bright red spheres in the front of his face presumably acquired as a result of the lights from oncoming traffic or the overwhelming courtesy extended to transport drivers by the Ferry Company onboard ship.

The hive of activity involving vehicles of all shapes and sizes driven or aimed by drivers or pilots of all nationalities and persuasions threw caution to the wind. With their understanding or not of individual highway codes and by approaching their respective targets using instinctive solution solving techniques based on a first past the post theory applied without fear or favour through the shortest distance between two points, the combatants machinery came to rest.

Through time, we acquired an understanding and immense respect for this multicultural solution to problem solving and in fact developed our own personal skill base in sharp contrast to that formally endured in England amidst enormous queues of long faces, misery, negative analysis and endless reams of forms, lists and paperwork. Not only that, this was much more fun and effective.

The work in hand continued with my team of willing and dedicated participants throughout the long day and on until around ten in the evening.

Much sweat, a small amount of blood and only a few tears were shed as the complex structure was proudly completed with only minutes in hand before the doors and gates were abruptly locked for the night.

On the increasingly rare occasion when human synergy
is achieved it is a joy to behold. We slept well.

Throughout the following days of the Exhibition we presented ourselves, polished up and as far as reasonably possible bright eyed and bushy tailed.

Under the bright heat of Exhibition illuminations and the usual tortuous experiment of oxygen extraction from our environment, we boldly exchanged theoretical philosophy with copious quantities of the great and the good. We were also well exercised by those that do and those that don’t, and the usual ample sufficiency of the well booted and spurred so called ‘consultants’ claiming vast insight and a wealth of knowledge and resource for ready dispensation at the wave of their wand or more often at the hand of their secret benefactor over whom they claim to have absolute control.

We were well pleased with the outcome of the mission which generated considerable forward momentum despite contributing disproportionately to the advancement of the ageing process which is in any event to be expected from this category of adventure.

The so called expert European haulage company that was employed to collect the contents of our exhibition stand managed to interpret our instruction that there was no requirement to deliver the trailer immediately to our factory by managing to lose the 40ft container for 16 wks and we, to this day, are not sure through which continents it journeyed before returning to its home in England.

Throughout the years that have followed, welters® have maintained an extensive programme of representation through a wide number of exhibitions both at home and abroad. welters® archive of exhibitions and events is extensive and contains information and images of considerable interest, information and humour. A few pictures and details of that personal and corporate journey are included in these few pages to reinact just a little history which will be interesting for some and potentially challenging for others. Whilst some digital images are shown here, the pre-digital dossier is held separately and is being prepared for subsequent publication.

Each venue presents its own individual opportunity and challenges which leave indelible markers in our memory of, not only the locations and the commercial activity of the company at the time, but also of the people and personalities which impacted on each and every situation en route.

**Southport 2003**

Excitement at being able to create an exhibition stand worthy of projecting our products and services was tempered by advice that a Spanish exhibitor who, from memory only ventured into the British market on one occasion, had contravened normal practise in attempting to set up their exhibition on the wooden floor of the hall, hence, making it impossible for us to gain access with a part of our product range. An urgent re-think was required and alternative elements were dispatched from the factory to overcome the problem.

Certain interment chamber components already reduced in size had to remain outside the exhibition hall in the car park for inspection by potential clients.


welters® have over the years, sponsored, organised and exhibited at a range of Government World™ conferences and exhibitions. Papers, discussions and networking opportunities were key to the focused delivery of these functions which have taken place across the country at venues including The House of Commons, Blackpool and Cardiff.

The responsibilities and levels of project management where conferences are organised, sponsored and
promoted are quite different and the opportunities are extended and wide ranging compared with the limitations and specifics of appearing in an exhibitor only status.

Harrogate 2006/2007

The Cairns Hotel became a changed venue following others in Harrogate. These memories emerged from 2006 and 2007.

One element of importance to us was that our articulated vehicles could enter the car park to facilitate mechanical offloading and the exhibition stand could be established within a marquee where again, by removing the side of the structure, mechanical aids could be used to position real product as opposed to the usual struggle of appropriate representation of product and service through pictures and minimalist components. Again, the product displayed would have been conceived and prepared over a period of probably 6 months and the preparation of these parts and the display of the exhibit, collection and return to our factory, involved many personnel and hours of work mostly outside normal working times to ensure that hotel guests, other delegates and members of the public were not disturbed.

There is always time pressure setting up and dismantling of exhibits and hasty tea breaks are often involved to fit in with others working near by.

Gateshead 2007/2008

Another most interesting venue! Delivery access was essential very early in the morning and the hotel conference management ‘thought’ that the floor would be sufficiently strong for the purpose so as usual, we had to make our best judgements and proceed. Lifting equipment was essential and the inevitable operational congestion was minimised with high levels of ingenuity and dedication. It was somewhat of a shock to find that the stand which had taken the best part of a day to build had to be dismantled and dispatched in an hour and a half as the room was required for the evening conference dinner. The process had to be managed quietly as the closing sessions were taking place immediately behind our screens.

Our beautiful Portico of Peace™, Obelisques and Environmental Ingestor™ were overwhelmingly appreciated by delegates.
Kenilworth 2008/2009/1010

Kenilworth exhibition venue – after repetitious visits, operates relatively smoothly if one omits the theft of the badges from my car as an important feature! Our stand location within the exhibition is limited to one opportunity as there is only one position which has the appropriate access from an external door. We have exhibited in 2008, 2009 and 2010 and although on our last visit dimensional information provided through the hotel management caused us unnecessarily to reduce the height of our exhibition stand, other issues became relatively unimportant. Our goals were achieved through early deliveries, late collections, and coping with the usual stresses of stand building within thoroughfares operated by others.

Good and effective client exchanges were possible as evidenced by the group gathering around our stand where the point of humour being discussed remains on the limited access register.

Stratford upon Avon 2010

The Stratford conference was possible, eventually, to exhibit that which we had intended, following an investigative visit to the hotel for a thorough understanding to be obtained as to how it might be possible to set up the stand with our various items of bulky and heavy product and the hiring of track mats to access over steps and undulations.

We are considering collating a photo library of all hotel carpet designs as we are of the firm belief that across the nation, they can only have been designed by cocktail bar managers in the early morning hours following a repetition of heavy nights!

The conference, through its duration, afforded us much opportunity to discuss with and observe keen and serious clients intermixed with those alluding to far flung dreams and visions and of course the stand visitors representing commercial organisations seeking out worthwhile ideas and designs with missions of intellectual property infringement. This is a common factor which has to be recognised in our overall policy to publicly disclose or not.
Private Business

The relationship between the Private and the Public Sector is indeed complex, challenging and often misunderstood.

Private companies and trading organisations are also often Family structured in their operational function and rely heavily on a dedicated and uncharged input from Family members. Essential moral support and encouragement such as 'your reward is in Heaven' being cast on the wind to lighten the load at regular intervals.

Over the last decade immense cost increases have been absorbed, most of which have been generated through 'red tape' and vast quantities of additional legislation all of which costs money which cannot be passed down the line for ever.

Inevitably the private operator is the sponge mop which through the Family Unit simply works longer and harder.

This is a complex subject but if not resolved there will be no Entrepreneurs or Exhibitionists in the future. Perhaps all the motorways, car parks, office blocks and football stadiums will be converted into allotments and greenhouses.

Who will be interested in providing for the years that lie ahead?

We look forward to an exciting and Purposeful Future.