

John Wells (Estate)

John Wells (17 November 1936 – 11 January 1998) was an English actor, writer and satirist.

Wells started in cabaret at Oxford and began his television career as a writer on *That Was The Week That Was*, the 1960s weekly satire show that launched the careers of David Frost and Millicent Martin, among others, and also appeared in the television programme *Not So Much a Programme, More a Way of Life*, as well as in *The Secret Policeman's Other Ball*. Besides making cameo appearances in films such as *Casino Royale* (1967) and *Rentadick* (1972), television dramas like *Casanova* (1987), an episode of *Lovejoy* (1991) and comedy shows like *Yes Minister*, he also wrote television scripts and screenplays, such as *Princess Caraboo* (1994).

Wells was one of the original contributors to the satirical magazine *Private Eye* and contributed to *Mrs Wilson's Diary*, the long-running spoof journal of the wife of Prime Minister Harold Wilson. From 1979 he repeated that success with *Dear Bill*, a series of letters (co-written with Richard Ingrams) supposedly sent by Denis Thatcher, husband of Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, to Bill Deedes. Wells developed the feature into a stage farce, *Anyone for Denis?*, first performed in 1981, in which he played Denis Thatcher. Co-starring Angela Thorne as Mrs. Thatcher, the play was a major West End hit, toured the UK and was adapted for television. Wells also played Denis Thatcher in the Bond movie *For Your Eyes Only* (1981). In 1991, he and Thorne again played the Thatchers in *Dunrulin*, a one-off TV sitcom-like satirical look at the couple in retirement.

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