



# NEW PARTNERSHIP AIMS TO DELIVER CHANGE TO FUNERAL INDUSTRY

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A business duo are pressing ahead with a new partnership they say will change the funeral industry.

John Delanoy and Julie Stout have launched Delanoy Funeral Services.

The pair, from Easington and Peterlee, east Durham, respectively, say it will give “loved ones a unique and memorable final farewell”.

The business is based at Peterlee’s Oakerside Park and run under an ethos, say John and Julie, that “focuses on new ways to say goodbye while still using many old traditions”.

Among its introductions is the filming of funerals, which, say the duo, provides a respectful keepsake for loved ones, particularly in the COVID-19 climate of restricted numbers at services.

The pair were introduced to each other by a friend of Julie’s – who John had helped with the loss of her father – and immediately struck up a business bond.

“My friend loved the way John worked, and how personal his approach was, and knew I was keen to pursue the ideas I had,” said Julie, who, prior to her funeral venture, had worked in marketing for almost 25 years.

“She thought there was an opportunity for us to work together and introduced us.

“We got together and quickly realised we shared a lot of the same thoughts,” added Julie, who launched Just Out Marketing in 2010.

“One of the things we were keen to introduce was filming of the funerals.

“At the same time, the coronavirus pandemic led to the national lockdown, and suddenly people were unable to give their loved ones the send-off they wanted.

“Churches were closed, and the deceased were either taken straight to the crematorium or graveside with very few mourners allowed.”

John and Julie’s first collaboration was to film the funeral of a local lady whose family lived in Canada and were unable to travel to the UK because of the restrictions in place.

Julie was then asked by Chevron Taxis to produce a video of Peterlee taxi driver Ian Ridley, which captured his final journey and the 100 taxi drivers who had lined the streets to say their goodbyes. The video reached 60,000 people.

The duo continued to work together over the next few months and in August, after agreeing they wanted to make their working relationship official, John and Julie formally launched Delanoy Funeral Services.

John, who became the fifth generation of the Delanoys to work for the family business that launched in 1897, said: “I’d been in the business from the age of 16 and took over from my mam around 12 years ago.

“Although it was fully established in the area, it needed freshening up and modernising.

“With Julie’s fresh eyes and the re-brand to Delanoy Funeral Services, we looked at new ways for people to say goodbye.

“Having Julie alongside me has made such a difference – like me, she really cares, but because of her personality, she has a knack of making families feel relaxed and actually enjoy the process as much as they possibly can.

“Funerals are always tough but that doesn’t mean they can’t have some personality, a

celebration of the deceased's life as much as an emotional last goodbye."

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