

# John Friedel

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**John Ashby Friedel** (born May 15, 1946 in Birmingham; died October 13, 2010 in Birmingham) was a photographer, educator and hospital worker.

Friedel moved to Vestavia Hills with his family when he was a teenager and graduated from Shades Valley High School. He worked during school as a news photographer. On the morning of September 15, 1963 he was attending services at the Cathedral Church of the Advent when he heard the blast from the deadly bomb at nearby 16th Street Baptist Church. He called his father to bring him his camera and went to the scene to document the aftermath.

One of the photographs he captured showed Juanita Jones grieving with her sister, Maxine McNair. An Associated Press photographer on the scene offered to buy Friedel's film for \$100. The photograph, credited to Friedel, appeared as the cover of *Newsweek's* September 30, 1963 edition.

Friedel earned his bachelor's degree at the University of the South in Sewanee, Tennessee and taught in Atlanta, Boston and Birmingham. Later he worked at Cooper Green Mercy Hospital. He was a member of St Andrew's Episcopal Church.

Friedel spent some time living out of his car. Several area churches helped find him an apartment before he died in 2010.



Friedel's photo on *Newsweek*

## References

- "John Ashby Friedel" obituary (October 17, 2010) *The Birmingham News*
- Yeager, Andrew (September 13, 2013) "The Story Behind Newsweek's 16th Street Baptist Church Bombing Cover." Interview with Reggie Holder. WBHM 90.3

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