

# News from the Pews

The Newsletter of Markinch Parish Church Vol 95 August 2012



**'Come Follow Me'**

# MARKINCH PARISH CHURCH



## Minister:

Rev. Alex R Forsyth TD BA MTh



A warm welcome is extended to all visitors and newcomers to the community to share in the worship, work and witness of the congregation.

## Church Service

Sunday 11am

[www.markinchchurch.org.uk](http://www.markinchchurch.org.uk)

## Communion Sunday

The Minister and Kirk Session invite you to share in the celebration of

### Holy Communion

on Sunday 19th August 2012 at 11.00 am.



## From The Minister - The First Word

In one of his books, Louis L'Amour tells about the days of the stagecoach in the Wild West.

The stagecoach had three kinds of tickets: first-class, second-class and third-class.

A first-class ticket meant that you could sit down no matter what happened and remain seated. If the stagecoach was stuck in the mud or had trouble going up a hill, you remained seated because you had a first-class ticket.

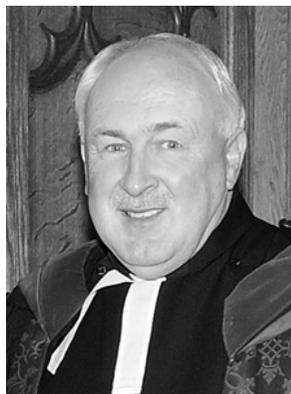
A second-class ticket meant that you could sit down until there was a problem, and then you had to get off until the problem was solved. You got out, stepped aside, and watched as someone fixed the problem. When it was solved, you got back in and took your seat.

A third-class ticket meant that you could sit down until there was a problem, and then you had to get out and push! You had to put your back into it and help to solve the problem.

Sadly this is the way many people relate to the church. Some think they have a first-class ticket. They sit and expect to be waited on. Others think they have a second-class ticket. They are along for the journey until there is a problem and then they bail out and become detached spectators. They stand to the side and watch others do the work and sort things out.

And then there are those who think that they have a third-class ticket. They are on board until something goes wrong or something needs to be done, and then they get out and push. They address the problem creatively trying to find solutions. They roll up their sleeves and go to work.

Which ticket do you have? Jesus said that the first would be last and the last first. I am grateful to all our problem-solvers who get out and do what's necessary.



See you in church

*Alex*

## A Message From Our Session Clerk

### **Elders**

At the last meeting the Session were advised of the resignation of Bert Ward. Bert was thanked for his dedication to the role of ruling elder after serving for 25 years. We wish Bert all the best for the future as he takes it easy on the golf course!

We will ordain a new elder, David Kerr, at the next communion service on 19th August. David will be able to attend his first meeting in November. We hope David enjoys his time serving as an elder.

### **New Kirk Session**

Having adopted a unitary constitution earlier this year, we are in the process of fine-tuning the new Session to ensure we work efficiently. During the August meeting we should be able to finalise the new committees and their responsibilities.

God bless.

*John Wood*

# QUIZAID

FRIDAY 14TH SEPTEMBER

MARKINCH PARISH CHURCH HALL

7.30PM

EVERYONE IS VERY WELCOME

QUIZAID is one of Christian Aid's biggest annual fundraisers. Thousands of people up and down the country at home, school, work or the pub screw their thinking caps on to raise money for Christian Aid.

So whether you are hot on history, clued up on popular culture or fanatical about food, make sure you are part of Quizaid 2012 at Markinch Parish Church. This year promises to be bigger and better than ever.

For more information or tickets please contact Tracy Thomson on 01592775752 or by email at [tthomson01592@hotmail.com](mailto:tthomson01592@hotmail.com)

## From the Parish Register

### **Baptisms**

03.06.12 Thomas Michael Muldoon  
10.06.12 Emily Elaine Inglis  
15.07.12 Isla Anne Rankine

### **Weddings**

21.07.12 Malcolm Weir & Sharon Warrender  
21.07.12 Charles Kirstein & Irene Blakeway  
28.07.12 Michael Andrew Boyack & Denise Robson

### **Funerals**

03.05.12 Cleish McDonald  
10.05.12 Betty Horne  
10.05.12 Bob Adair  
12.05.12 David Martin  
21.05.12 Helen Christie  
29.05.12 Margaret Cunningham  
06.06.12 Kenneth Phillips  
08.06.12 Neil MacArthur  
20.06.12 James Duffin  
21.06.12 May McGrow  
22.06.12 Josephine Kinnes  
27.06.12 Margaret Allison,  
27.06.12 William Dempsey  
09.07.12 Jean Hood  
15.07.12 David Cowie  
19.07.12 Janet Bell  
20.07.12 Ina Doig  
23.07.12 Margaret Grieg



## Worry Or Pray

Worry? Why Worry? What can worry do?  
It never keeps a trouble from overtaking you.

It gives you indigestion and sleepless hours at night  
And fills with gloom the day, however fair and bright.

It puts a frown upon the face, and sharpness in the tone.  
We're unfit to live with others and unfit to live alone.

Worry? Why Worry? What can worry do?  
It never keeps a trouble from overtaking you

Pray? Why pray? What can praying do?  
Praying really changes things, arranges life anew.

It's good for your digestion, gives peaceful sleep at night  
And fills the greyest, gloomiest day with rays of glowing light.

It puts a smile upon your face, the love note in your tone.  
Makes you fit to live with others and fit to live alone.

Pray? Why pray? What can praying do?  
It brings God down from Heaven, to live and work with you!

-The Builder (Kiwanis)

## The Guild

At this time of year, Guilds the length and breadth of the land are engaged in the business of arranging a syllabus for 2012/13. Sadly this is no longer the case here in Markinch. For the past few years membership numbers have been steadily declining and attendance at meetings averaging less than a dozen.

A hard working Leadership Team (minus a Secretary for the last two years) most of whom have served for many years did their best to keep things going. However no matter how interesting or entertaining the syllabus was, no new members were forthcoming.

The situation was discussed at the A.G.M. in March when in the absence of any other solution, a proposal that the Guild should fold was passed by a small majority. The hope was expressed that perhaps an unaffiliated group might be formed. (An unaffiliated group would have no fees to pay and no obligation to raise funds for Guild Projects.) In order to assist with the setting up of such a group a small sum of money was set aside from the disbursement of Guild funds. Any remaining money was donated to Church Funds.

*Nan McRoberts.*

## The Youth Club

The youngsters and volunteers have had an exciting session at our Youth Club with many fun activities. We were awarded £3000 from a Fife Council initiative, 'It's over to YOUth'. With this great windfall we were able to purchase a digital projector, folding screens to divide off sections of the hall, games including table football, art and craft materials, tee-shirts for the nativity play and sports equipment. The UniHoc indoor hockey equipment has proved to be extremely popular with the girls and the boys.



Youth 1st nominated us for a Youth Scotland Award, which was sponsored by B&Q. A team from B&Q came along one Thursday night and the youngsters helped them build two picnic tables and plant up some large plant-pots in the Church Hall garden, all of which were supplied by B&Q as part of our award. Please look in the Church hall garden and see our handywork.



Four of our youngsters took part in a Summer Playscheme organised by Youth 1st during the first week of the school holidays. They designed tee-shirts, visited an Eco Centre and Glenrothes Fire Station and went to Burntisland beach.

Some of our Youth Club kids and helpers received Volunteer Performance Awards or Youth Performance Awards from Youth 1st at their recent AGM. We are very proud of them.

Our volunteers are Tracy Thomson, Ken Wilkie, Michelle Whyte and Douglas Christie. Rachael Brown has now moved to Manchester to attend University and we all wish her well. Anyone wishing to come along and join this great team please contact Tracy by email on [tthomson01592@hotmail.com](mailto:tthomson01592@hotmail.com) for more information.



Our Youth Club session begins on Thursday 6th September and runs from 6.30pm till 8pm in the Church hall. Anyone aged between 10 and 18 can come along (Primary 5 to S6). We expect parents to drop the youngsters off and collect them at the end of the session unless we receive written instructions otherwise. There will be registration forms to complete on the first evening and the fee is only £1 per session plus some money for the tuck shop.

## **The following is an extract from a letter received from Christian Aid**

Dear Tracy

I am delighted to confirm receipt of **£708.00** arising from fundraising by Markinch CA Group this Christian Aid Week.

In 2011, over £1.7m was raised by the many hundreds of Churches and Christian Aid Groups across Scotland which support Christian Aid Week, including over £1m through House to House collections. We anticipate that the results of Christian Aid Week fundraising in 2012 will be equally impressive. Thank you for being part of this success.

The Methodist Church of Sierra Leone, which featured in this year's Christian Aid Week materials, is just one of over 500 partners in nearly 50 countries with which Christian Aid works. In countless communities in these countries, lives are improved and hope is kindled because of the continuing commitment to ending poverty shown by Christian Aid's supporters.

By taking Christian Aid Week into your church and community, you make this work possible. Please share the thanks of the Christian Aid Scotland staff team, and those of the partners and the communities with which we work, as widely as you can with all those who helped to make this Christian Aid Week possible in your own church and community.

With sincere thanks

Kathy Galloway, Head of Christian Aid Scotland

## **What Lies On The Other Side ?**

A sick man turned to his doctor as he was preparing to leave the examination room and said, 'Doctor, I am afraid to die. Tell me what lies on the other side.'

Very quietly, the doctor said, 'I don't know.'

'You don't know? You're, a Christian man, and you don't know what's on the other side?'

The doctor was holding the handle of the door; from the other side came a sound of scratching and whining, and as he opened the door, a dog sprang into the room and leaped on him with real joy.

Turning to the patient, the doctor said, 'Did you notice my dog? He's never been in this room before. He didn't know what was inside. He knew nothing except that his master was here, and when the door opened, he sprang in without fear.'

I know little of what is on the other side of death, but I do know one thing ... I know my Master is there and that is enough.

*Anon*

## Friendship Camp in Sistarovat, Romania.

I travelled along with a group of 16 people from Glenrothes Baptist Church to the Friendship Camp in Sistarovat, Romania which was held from the 12th to the 22nd of July this year.

Friendship Camp is part of the Friendship International organisation which is committed to building up the body of Christ by communicating the gospel and by equipping and training Christians in these countries using music, evangelism, discipleship training, seminars and workshops, practical work projects, orphanage ministry, education and camp ministries.

The group ran Friendship Camp where 51 Romanian children attended that week and took part in lots of different activities from making bracelets, watching demonstrations, water games, playing at the park, sports, singing, and sitting round the camp fire. Most importantly the children were attentive and engaging in the teaching of Christianity through multiple teaching sessions throughout the week long camp.

It was a fantastic fun filled week for everyone there. Everybody learned a lot and are eager to return to camp soon.

*Nicola Thomson*



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info@lynncunninghamca.com

## The Rotary Club of Glenrothes Annual Golf Outing



This will be held on Thursday 27th September 2012.

The event will be held at Balbirnie Golf Course and is a Texas Scramble with teams of 4 golfers. Cost is £125 per team including meal afterwards.

Anyone wishing to enter a team please contact  
*tthomson01592@hotmail.com*

All money raised will be used by The Rotary Club of Glenrothes to support their good causes within our community.



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## The Michael Colliery Disaster of 1967

Nearly forty-five years ago, on September 9th 1967, a fire broke out at the Michael Colliery in East Wemyss. The Michael Colliery Disaster claimed the lives of nine men.

“ As each miner went onto the cage, he handed his token to the lift man so that there would always be a record of those who were underground. This song is dedicated to the miners whose tokens remained with the lift man. “

### **“Men O’ The Darkness”**

#### Chorus

*They’re the men o’ the darkness, they’re the men o’ the flame.  
They’re the fuel in our foundries’, they’re the heat in our hame.  
They’re the lads long forgotten, except by a few.  
They’re the fathers, o’ the fathers, o’ the fathers o you*

I sing o’ the Michael, and all the other pits.  
O’ miners wi’ black faces, full o’ bravery and grit.  
With their picks and their shovels, wi’ heart and wi’ hand.  
As they worked wi’ ane anither, symbolic o’ the land.  
*They’re the men o’ the darkness...*

The work was hard and dangerous, it took a special breed.  
To work away in deaths’ dark hole, to give us light and heat.  
Their courage and their bravery, still echoes from the past.  
A milestone in Fife’s history, since that fatal blast.  
*They’re the men o’ the darkness...*

In “67”, September ninth, that fateful day did dawn.  
The Board had known about the gas, but still work carried on.  
A blast rang out, mid fears and doubt, and nine men they did die.  
Hells’ flames had come to claim their souls, but their souls were safe on high.  
*They’re the men o’ the darkness...*

*By Kenny Wilson & Pete Kerr  
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Thanks to Grant Taylor for providing this item for the newsletter.

## A Special Journey

I live a very privileged life today, despite having much less both financially and materially. Twelve years ago, dying (suicide) seemed a far easier option than to carry on 'living' and only the love of my children stopped me in my tracks. I felt far beyond, and not worthy of help, but God had other plans for me. I often asked 'why me?', but not any longer as 'acceptance' is the answer to so many of my problems.

Addiction is such a corrosive illness and had stripped me of everything precious; my dignity, self-worth, self respect, love, honesty ..... and so the list goes on.

With acceptance of myself, my recovery program, a loving God, honesty, hard work and perseverance, my life today is so very different and so much richer

I thought God had abandoned me, but it was I who had shut him out! And, for a very long time

With a huge struggle, I have learned forgiveness (most of the time) and I have learned to love again, in a very different way. I haven't experienced a bad day; difficult ones yes, but not bad ones. God must keep topping up my 'glass' because it's never half empty; always half full.

Today, my greatest asset is my past and I carry round with me a very large tool-box; filled mostly with gratitude.

As I try my best to live by Spiritual principles, guided by a loving God, I step forwards each day with great love and hope for the future.

I thank God for many special people who have been placed in my path, and you may be one of them. I pray I will carry on giving what has been freely given to me as I travel on my journey.

May you too be touched by God's presence.

*Anon.*

## Remember - This is **YOUR** newsletter !

If you have any interesting news, stories, poems etc, please hand them to Ken Wilkie or email [ken.wilkie@lineone.net](mailto:ken.wilkie@lineone.net) or call 01592 760042

**The deadline for the next issue is 28th October 2012**

## Church Website - [www.markinchchurch.org.uk](http://www.markinchchurch.org.uk)

The church website continues to receive good feedback on the design and content of the site from its visitors. In the last year we have had over 85,000 unique visits to our website.

The Sunday Bulletin, which includes the weekly intimation sheet, is available for download from the website every week so even if you are unable to attend church you can still be kept informed of what is happening in your church.

## Markinch : Its Church and Parish

By Ian Gourlay and Ken Wilkie

Contributors include: Dr Jean and Robert Balfour, Shane Fenton, Bruce Manson and Stuart Morris

Copies can be obtained from the church and also from Mary McArthur, Gents Hairdresser, 2 Croft Road, Markinch or from Ken Wilkie on 01592 760042 or [book@markinchchurch.org.uk](mailto:book@markinchchurch.org.uk)



**The paperback is priced at £12.50 (£10 for church members)  
Hardbacks now also in stock priced at £18 (£15 for members)**

## HELP RAISE MONEY FOR OUR CHURCH BY RECYCLING

**Thank you, to everyone who has been donating items to our indoor recycling banks.**

The textiles that we recycle through Rag Bag are sorted and graded at the UK's largest textile recycling facility – Nathans Wastesavers Ltd.

Over 200 trained people are employed to sort and grade over 600 tonnes of material every week prior to export around the world.

How it works –

- Collect your unwanted clothing at home and put them into our indoor recycling bank within the Church hall.
- Drivers will collect all the Rag Bag bags and bring the bags back to the processing factory in Denny.
- At the factory, a team of experienced workers sort and grade all the material into various product types. The material is baled and sent for shipment.
- Low grade textiles are made into industrial wiping cloths.
- Good quality clothing is transported to Africa and other developing nations where your old clothes are re-used.



**By recycling your clothing you can help other people and add to our Church funds.**

## **Presbytery News**

The July Meeting evening began with our annual fellowship meal, a most enjoyable occasion. Many thanks to the catering staff at the St Bryce Kirk Centre.

In her opening worship the Moderator, Rev Wilma Cairns, commented that we can all get bogged down by the pressures of life. We must remember that God is the source of our strength and take time to re-charge the spiritual batteries.

**Address** – Rev Ian Marr, a Church of Scotland minister, was recently appointed Development Manager for Christian Mission for the YMCA in Scotland. He spoke about the red triangle, the logo of YMCA representing the aims of the YMCA – the development of body, mind and spirit in the lives of young people. There is a desire to re-focus the organisation on ‘spirit’ and Christian mission – hence his appointment. This work can only be done in conjunction with churches. The YMCA works in 34 areas of Scotland. In our Presbytery it operates in Kirkcaldy, Glenrothes and Buckhaven. Local churches are encouraged to get involved. Ian mentioned a scheme piloted in Kirkcaldy – PlusOne Mentoring – which has proven very successful and will be rolled out nationally. If you are interested in finding out more Ian can be contacted on [ian@ymcascotland.org](mailto:ian@ymcascotland.org)

### **Some of the items on the agenda included:-**

**Union of Innerleven: East and Methil** – Representatives of both congregations were present. On Sunday 17 June 2012 both congregations voted in favour of the Basis of Union. This was also approved by Presbytery. The new congregation is to be called Wellesley Parish Church of Scotland, Methil. The Service of Union and Introduction will be held on Thursday 28 June at 7.00pm. Presbytery meets at 6.45pm. Presbytery was encouraged to pray for God’s blessing on the united congregation as they move into a new life together.

**Union of Dysart and Kirkcaldy: Viewforth** – Representatives of both congregations were present. On Sunday 17 June 2012 both congregations voted in favour of the Basis of Union. This was also approved by Presbytery. The new congregation is to be called Dysart St Clair Church of Scotland. A date for the Service of Union has to be agreed with the Kirk Sessions. Presbytery was encouraged to pray for God’s blessing on the united congregation as they move into a new life together.

**Report from the General Assembly** – George Grant of Bennoch Church, Kirkcaldy, reported diligence on behalf of Commissioners to the General Assembly in May. He gave an honest and interesting reflection on his week in Edinburgh.

**Moderator designate** – Notice was given that the Business Committee will bring the name of the Rev Tony Fowler to the next meeting of Presbytery to serve as Moderator for the ensuing year.

**Moderator’s Visit** – The Moderator of the General Assembly, Rt Rev Albert Bogle, will be visiting the new Victoria Hospital on Wednesday 5th September 2012. Plans are well advanced. This is a follow-on visit from that made by Very Rev David Lunan during his Moderatorial year. The aim of the visit is to

encourage staff and patients. Rev Jim Reid of Kinghorn spoke very personally of his appreciation of the staff of the Fife hospitals and encouraged us all to be encouragers.

**Bike and Hike** – Saturday 1st September, 10.00am-6.00pm – Only ten congregations have signed up so far! Marc Prowe, Convener of Church and Society, encouraged all congregations to sign up as soon as possible. All congregations have information. Fife Council's Transportation Service is keen to provide maps and suggested routes.

**Where do we direct people looking for help?** – The Church and Society Committee is drawing up a list of contacts to help us help others. Copies have gone out to each congregation. Please let Marc Prowe know of any others. marc@linktown.org.uk

**Congratulations** – Presbytery congratulated 2 church organists who were recently in the news. Eric Christie (St Columba's) received an MBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours for services to the community. Richard Michael (Abbotshall) received a BEM for services to musical education.

This was my final Presbytery meeting and Bryan Gould will be our Presbytery Elder from September when the presbytery meets after the summer break and I have no doubt he will keep you informed of future Presbytery meetings.

*Alison Taylor, Presbytery Elder*

## **Doors Open Day**

The church will welcome members of the public on the afternoon of 9th September as part of Doors Open Day, a Europe wide celebration of architectural heritage. An exhibition tracing the history of the church begins in the church hall at 2.00pm, and a guided tour will take place at 3.00pm. Guides will be available throughout the afternoon.

Doors Open Day will give us a chance to share our enthusiasm with the wider world. Markinch Heritage Group will team up with Markinch Parish Church members to organise an exhibition and guided tour of the building.

Some beautiful plans and drawings have recently been unearthed that give us further clues to the building's 18th century history. The exhibition in the church hall will set out recent research and presentations in the church will aim to describe how the building might have looked in former times.

*Bruce Manson, Markinch Heritage Group*

The following was seen in a beautiful hall in Glasgow, which had wonderful stained glass windows. The wording in one window read.....

***“Do good things while the holly is still green”***

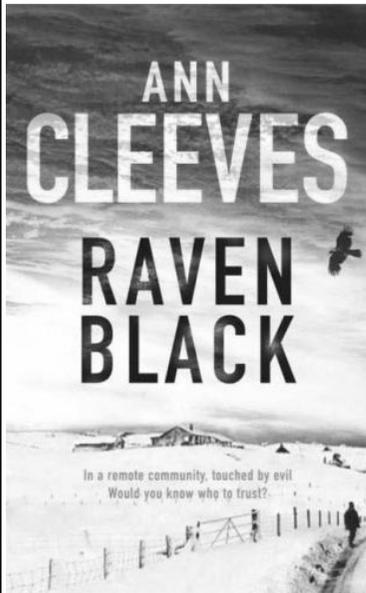
*Esma Morrison*

## Book Review by Ian Gourlay

### RAVEN BLACK by Ann Cleeves (Shetland Quartet 1)

I enjoyed the television series 'Vera' based on the Vera Stanhope novels by Ann Cleeves and decided to read more of her work. As a Scotsman, the Shetland quartet seemed the right place to start. She has done extensive research on the geography and history of the Shetlands, as Raven Black covers the period between the New Year and the Up Helly Aa celebrations. It's neatly constructed, well-paced and a beautifully written whodunit.

The novel begins in the home of Magnus Tait. A few days later Fran Hunter discovers the body of teenager Catherine Ross in the snow not far from the old man's house. The islanders believe Tait had murdered a young schoolgirl eight years before and are certain who murdered Catherine. Jimmy Perez is the detective assigned to the case. You'd think he'd have trouble suspecting anyone of murder yet he uncovers the hidden secrets which lead him to the killer.



The sense of place is tremendous - the cold and the isolation are tangible. The author captures the sense of a community seemingly united but with tensions and divisions just below the surface.

There are echoes of the cult movie 'The Wicker Man' with the outsider policeman coming to Shetland to solve the murder. There are clues and red herrings and I enjoyed trying to solve the mystery before Perez finally discovers the identity of the murderer.

Despite my amateur sleuthing I was wrong (and surprised) when the killer was revealed. The identity of Catriona's killer is also uncovered (I got that wrong too!) as the novel reaches its climax. I look forward to reading the next three novels in the series.

### Looking for something to do on a Thursday morning ?

Come along to Markinch Parish Church hall and join us for a coffee and a chat any Thursday morning between 10.00am and 11.30am.

Tea or Coffee is £1, Lucky tickets and home baking on sale.



**Book Review by Rev Alex Forsyth**

## **THE FEAR INDEX by Robert Harris**

This book is based on one of the factors responsible for the financial crash of 2008 - complex computer programs that run out of control. It's also a familiar story of the consequences of greed and arrogance.

The story centres around the computer program, VIXAL. This programme evolves into a form of artificial intelligence and leaves financial devastation in its wake.

The book is set in Geneva. It is a breathless narrative. As in previous books Harris weaves quality research into the story as he did in the best sellers, "Fatherland," and "Pompeii."

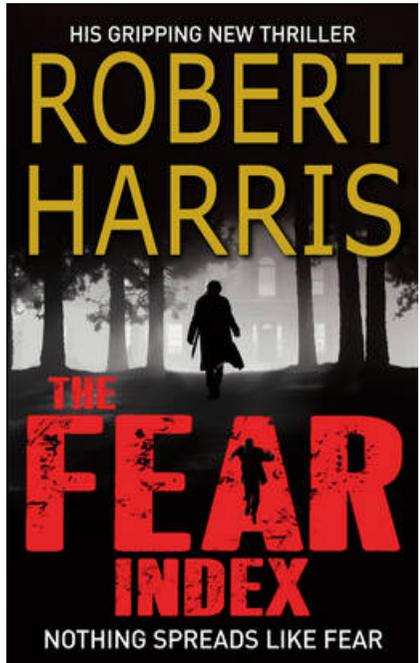
The main human character is Dr. Alexander Hoffmann. A brilliant scientist, he helped create the computer programmes used to analyse data generated by the giant particle accelerator - the Large Hadron Collider near Geneva. Hoffman is the brains behind a successful hedge fund that uses secret algorithms.

Harris introduces the reader to the quantitative analysts, or "quants," at Hoffmann Investment Technologies. He also introduces the reader to the phenomenally rich investors, who have allowed the company's top salesman, Hugo Quarry, to talk them into handing over millions to a computer program.

Throughout the book the reader is allowed to wonder whether the VIXAL algorithm has gone rogue, or whether Hoffmann is losing his grip, or is having a nervous breakdown.

In the end, VIXAL is not the nasty. Rather, the computer programme points to the greed, stupidity and recklessness that became the unmitigated financial disaster that led to the monetary catastrophe of 2008 and its continuing after-effects in the present day.

This is a page turner and well worth a read.



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