

The Bottom Line



This Marilyn Parkes, she looks just like someone's granny doesn't she?

She's not, she's a **THIEF**

This month's newsletter is slightly different, instead of advising you on what you should or shouldn't do; I'm going to tell you the story of Marilyn Parkes, and how she stole £314,000 from her employer.

Marilyn Parkes was born Marilyn Elizabeth Ramsey on 27th September 1951 and according to her curriculum vitae she was educated at St Dominic's School, Brewood, near Wolverhampton where she gained 8 O levels and 3 A levels.

On leaving St Dominic's School, Marilyn was accepted by St Hilda's College, Oxford, and studied English and Business Studies.

She left St Hilda's College, Oxford and went to work for Tarmac Construction as secretary to their head of the accounts department. She spent 13 "very happy years" (her words) with Tarmac Construction before leaving to have her daughter Emily.

Marilyn then juggled her very busy life looking after her daughter, with working part-time at a rose nursery near her home in Albrighton, where she was responsible for their customer accounts and wages department, she also found time to work part-time as a secretary for a local farmer, looking after his VAT, accounts and private correspondence.

She then worked for a company called Simple Simon Packaging of Bridgnorth; more of this stage in her journey through life later.

In the summer of 1996 Marilyn applied to Perry & Williamson Ltd, then based in Bilston, for the position of clerk/typist. She was successful with her application and spent two, *and apparently* not very happy years with the company before leaving in 1998.

Marilyn did not become involved with Perry & Williamson Ltd again until March 2002, when she re-joined the company at the request of owner Mr David Perry and swiftly made herself indispensable, taking control of wages, accounts receivable, accounts payable and lots more besides.

Marilyn was also a bit of a social animal, she kept horses at a local stable, she was a member of an exclusive fitness club and she liked to socialise; all of which takes money, much more than she was earning from Perry & Williamson Ltd.

What a busy industrious lady she was, with her education and work ethic, she was obviously destined to go very far. Except.....

Most of it never happened.

She didn't go to St Dominic's School; she went to the local comprehensive.

She didn't go to St Hilda's College Oxford to read English and Business Studies; they have never heard of her, and further more did not have a course in Business Studies.

She didn't spend 13 "*very happy years*" at Tarmac Construction; they also have never heard of her.

She did however work for Simple Simon Packaging, before suddenly leaving in 1996..... we're not sure why; perhaps it had something to do with her appearance at Bridgnorth Magistrates Court, where she was found guilty of 3 counts of theft, with a further 8 to be taken into account, and for which she was awarded probation.

Marilyn Parkes was arrested by the West Mercia police in November 2006; she admitted fraudulently obtaining a sum of money from Perry & Williamson Ltd. She had been doing so for a period of 4 years from March 2002 until October 2006, when her employer became suspicious and reported her to the police.

Marilyn was transferring into a joint bank account, (the same bank account that her salary was paid into) approximately £5,000 per month; a total of £314,000 over the period of her employment with Perry & Williamson Ltd.

So, how did she do it?

She controlled the banking, the BACS payments for wages and salaries, invoicing, payments, everything. **She had it all.** She controlled the money going in and the money going out. She had the implicit trust of her employer, and she cruelly and greedily systematically betrayed that trust from the start of her employment with Perry and Williamson Ltd.

And when she was charged to appear at Shrewsbury Crown Court on Monday 29th November 2010, 4 years after her arrest, she gave a further demonstration of how evil she really is by pleading not guilty and trying to shift the blame onto her employer, Mr David Perry, a man of unblemished character.

The thief, Marilyn Elizabeth Parkes is now 59 years old, and she started a 4 year sentence after being found guilty of theft on Thursday 2nd December 2010. She started stealing from Mr Perry when she was 51 years old; experience tells me that a person does not suddenly become a thief at the age of 51.

What was Marilyn Parkes really doing when she said she was at Oxford University and working for Tarmac Construction for “thirteen very happy years”? Perhaps we will never know, and certainly the police investigators appeared to make little effort to find out. (They may have improved their clear-up rate if they had)

How many more employers has she stolen from? Employers who did nothing except get rid of her; leaving her free to prey on other unsuspecting victims.

Marilyn Parkes declared herself Bankrupt on 25th February 2008; she was discharged from Bankruptcy on 25th February 2009, possibly in a misguided effort to evade repayment of the monies she stole.

None of the money Marilyn Parkes stole has been recovered, there is still approximately £180,000 unaccounted for; she spent £134,000.

Why did it take West Mercia police and the Crown Prosecution Service 4 years to get her into court?

That is another story.

Regular readers of my newsletter may remember the FRAUD TRIANGLE, a generally accepted theory of why people steal. The Marilyn Parkes case is a classic example of this theory and was clearly demonstrated during the course of her trial.

The Fraud Triangle Theory maintains that are three elements that need to be in place for an individual to commit fraud. PRESSURE, OPPORTUNITY and RATIONALISATION.

For Marilyn Parkes the PRESSURE was the need to maintain her lavish lifestyle; the OPPORTUNITY was the position of trust she found herself in, and the RATIONALISATION was that she believed she deserved a bonus.

My company, Paul Wiseman Investigations specialises in corporate investigation.

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- ✓ **Introduce anti fraud policies**
- ✓ **Perform fraud risk assessments**
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