**Stephen Booth**

A newspaper and magazine journalist for over 25 years, Stephen Booth was born in the Pennine mill town of Burnley. He was brought up on the coast at Blackpool, where he began a career in journalism by editing his school magazine. He wrote his first novel at the age of 12, and knew from the moment he finished it that he wanted to be a novelist when he grew up.

After graduating from Birmingham Polytechnic (now the Birmingham City University), Stephen moved to Manchester to train as a teacher, but escaped from the profession after a spell as a trainee teacher in a big city comprehensive school.

Starting work on his first newspaper in Cheshire in 1974, Stephen was a specialist rugby union reporter, as well as working night shifts as a sub-editor on the *Daily Express* and *The Guardian*. This was followed by periods with local papers in Yorkshire, Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire. He was at various times Production Editor of the *Farming Guardian* magazine, Regional Secretary of the British Guild of Editors, and one of the UK's first qualified assessors for the NVQ in Production Journalism.

Freelance work began with rugby reports for national newspapers and local radio stations. But Stephen also had articles and photographs published in a wide range of specialist magazines, from *Scottish Memories* to *Countrylovers Magazine,* from *Cat World* to *Canal and Riverboat*, anda short story broadcast on BBC radio. In 1998-99, his writing career changed direction when, in rapid succession, he was shortlisted for the Crime Writers’ Association’s ‘Debut Dagger’ award for new writers, reached the finals of the Dundee Book Prize, won the £5,000 Lichfield Prize for his unpublished novel *The Only Dead Thing*, and signed a contract with HarperCollins for a series of crime novels set in the Derbyshire Peak District.

In 2000, Stephen's first published novel *Black Dog* marked the arrival in print of his best known creations - two young Derbyshire police detectives, DC Ben Cooper and DS Diane Fry. *Black Dog* was the named by the *London Evening Standard* as one of the six best crime novels of the year - the only book on their list written by a British author. In the USA, it won the Barry Award for Best British Crime Novel and was nominated for an Anthony Award for Best First Mystery. The second Cooper & Fry novel, *Dancing with the Virgins*, was shortlisted for the UK's top crime writing award, the CWA Gold Dagger, and went on to win Stephen a Barry Award for the second year running.

In 2003, Detective Constable Ben Cooper was a finalist for the Sherlock Award for the Best Detective created by a British author, thanks to his exploits in the third book of the series, *Blood on the Tongue*. The publication of *Blind to the Bones* that year led to Stephen winning the CWA's Dagger in the Library Award, presented to the author whose books have given readers most pleasure. The same book was nominated for the Theakston’s UK Crime Novel of the Year award in 2005.

Subsequent titles have included *One Last Breath* (2004), *The Dead Place* (2005) – both finalists for UK Crime Novel of the Year - *Scared to Live* (2006), *Dying to Sin* (2007), *The Kill Call* (2009), *Lost River* (2010), *The Devil's Edge* (2011), *Dead and Buried* (2012), *Already Dead* (2013), *The Corpse Bridge* (2014), *The Murder Road* (2015), and the latest Cooper and Fry novel *Secrets of Death*, which is published in June 2016 by Sphere. A special Ben Cooper short story, *Claws*, was also published in 2007 to launch the new Crime Express imprint. All the books are set in England's beautiful and atmospheric Peak District.

In addition to publication in the USA, Canada and Australia, translation rights in the Cooper & Fry series have been sold in fifteen languages - French, German, Dutch, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, Swedish, Danish, Finnish, Norwegian, Russian, Czech, Romanian, Bulgarian and Japanese.

Stephen left newspaper journalism in 2001 to write novels full time. He and his wife Lesley now live in rural Nottinghamshire. In recent years, Stephen Booth has become a Library Champion in support of the UK’s ‘Love Libraries’ campaign. He has also represented British literature at the Helsinki Book Fair in Finland, appeared with Alexander McCall Smith at the Melbourne Writers’ Festival in Australia, filmed a documentary for 20th Century Fox on the French detective Vidocq, taken part in online chats for World Book Day. He is a popular speaker at conferences, conventions, libraries, bookshops and festivals around the world, and loves to meet readers.

Praise for Stephen Booth:

“One of our best story tellers."

*-* ***Sunday Telegraph***

“Booth is a modern master of rural noir.”

**- *The Guardian***

“There are few, if any, contemporary writers who do this as well as Stephen Booth.”

 - ***Arena magazine***

"Booth delivers some of the best crime fiction in the UK."
- ***Manchester Evening News***

"Suspenseful and supremely engaging. Booth does a wonderful job."

- ***Los Angeles Times***

"This is intelligent and substantive crime fiction, rich with complex characters."

- ***Library Journal***

“Powerful police thrillers that are not afraid to step into the dark.”

*-* ***Northern Echo***

"Mature and accomplished... If you read only one new crime writer this year, he’s your man." - ***Yorkshire Post***

"Atmospheric intensity, living landscape, strong central characterisation, all put at the service of a powerful, well plotted story. A dark star is born!"

- ***Reginald Hill, creator of the Dalziel and Pascoe series***