

Book news – Peter Ritchie's new book Cause of Death is out now

Black and White Publishing unveils 'Cause of Death', the eagerly awaited crime fiction novel by former Lothian and Borders Police detective Peter Ritchie.

Dozens of former colleagues were in the audience at the book launch which was held at Waterston's Princes Street store last week

Former Deputy Chief Constable Tom Wood, who worked closely with Peter in the 1980s, compered the event, putting the author on the spot with a number of insightful questions.



Former detective turned crime author Peter Ritchie with his new book

Also present was journalist Lesley Riddoch who was recently interviewed by the pair on BBC Radio Scotland's 'Good Cop, Bad Cop' show although she didn't divulge which one was which.

Peter and Lesley both read from the book.

Peter described the main character's initial meeting with the DCC following her arrival from Belfast, whilst Lesley concentrated on the life of Pauline, a drug addict and sex worker.

The event ended with a Q&A session with a great deal of interaction from the audience sparking memories of bygone pre Police Scotland days.

Peter said: "I had an idea for years about a detective who had been hit by a car and was lying in a road thinking about his

end. That was the prologue for the first book, and that's what I wrote when I first started.

I honestly had no idea what was coming next, then suddenly Grace appeared along with the story of Northern Ireland. Of course Northern Ireland becomes important probably because it had quite an effect on me from when I worked across there."

In ['Cause of Death'](#) Peter draws on his wide experience as an investigator to draw an authentic picture of how criminals, their victims and the detectives who try to catch them think, act and feel.

✘ The book follows the fortunes of Detective Chief Inspector Grace Macallan whose career has hit a serious roadblock. When a covert police operation in Northern Ireland goes badly wrong, she's faced with a painful decision – lie to save a young officer's career, or tell the truth and ruin her own reputation.

For Grace, there can be only one answer.

Reassigned to the newly formed Lothian & Borders Major Crime Team, Macallan is forced to rebuild her career and her reputation. But when a brutal attack on a prostitute turns into a series of murders, the Major Crime Team is under serious pressure. The tabloid headlines are lurid and the team badly needs a result.

With a new life to build in a new city, a new boss as smooth as an 18-year-old malt and a very high profile lawyer as the chief suspect, Grace soon begins to wonder if telling the truth is always the right thing to do.

Peter began his working life at 15 as a deep sea fisherman before joining the police service and moving through the ranks of CID/Murder Squad/Regional Crime Squad in Scotland.

He then went on to manage the Organised Crime Unit in the

National Criminal Intelligence Service in London where he ran a multi-agency team drawn from various branches of the law enforcement and the security services. This was a unique concept at the time and Peter travelled to many parts of the world in this role. He was subsequently appointed as the UK Liaison Officer to Europol in The Hague where he spent five years.

He returned to Lothian & Borders heading the Major Crime Team before taking on an advisory role for a project in Croatia.

Following his retirement he worked on a number of private investigations before spending the next few years as part of the public inquiry team looking into the murder of the LVF leader Billy Wright in the Maze Prison.

He also worked on a public inquiry into the death of eighteen patients in the Vale of Leven Hospital from a hospital acquired infection.

Peter spoke to The Edinburgh Reporter just before the book launch event.