

# Carola Dunn

In my long-ago youth, every summer and often at Easter, we used to stay at Crackington Haven. On the beach, we dug new channels for the stream. We body-surfed with wooden boards. We climbed the rocks. We walked up Penkenna to St Gennys. If it rained too hard for outdoors, we stayed in and played endless Spite and Malice tournaments.

Shopping in Bude, climbing Rough Tor, exploring the villages of the North Coast: my favourite was always Port Isaac. It seemed an idealisation of what a Cornish fishing village should be: the harbour, the quays, the cliffs, the headlands, and best of all the opes running back up the hillsides from Fore Street, secret, mysterious places where you might find anything at all, even a house with a stream running underneath.

When I started planning a mystery/crime series set in Cornwall, there was no question but that Port Isaac would be part of it. I decided to create a fictional village for my setting; for a writer, it's less constricting. But my Port Mabyn is a cross between Port Isaac and Boscastle, located somewhere between the two.

In particular, a 1998 incident involving the Port Isaac Lifeboat inspired two books. The Spirit of the PCRSE went out to save a father and son trapped in a cave near Bossiney. It was swamped, and two lifeboatmen were also trapped overnight and injured. Vivid descriptions in the local paper of the conditions in the cave as waves crashed in led to a similar scene in Fall of a Philander, one of my 1920s Daisy Dalrymple mysteries (though I moved the setting to Devon). And a cave rescue near Bossiney involving an inshore boat from Port Isaac plays an important part in my third Cornish Mystery, The Valley of the Shadow (to be published in the UK in April 2013).

My sister lives in Cornwall now, near Cotehele (which I've also featured in a couple of books), so I visit regularly. However, my Cornish Mystery series is set around 1970, returning to the Cornwall and the Port Isaac of my childhood memories.

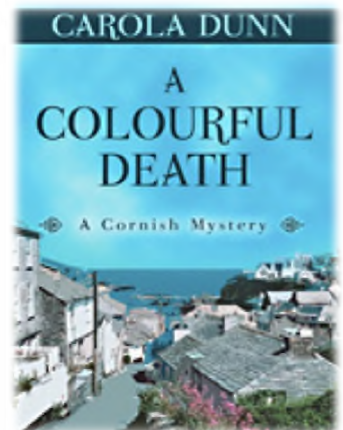
*Carola Dunn*



Carola at home in Eugene, Oregon with her dog Trillian



*Carola with her mother's Westie, Candy, the inspiration for Eleanor's Teazle*



Set in Cornwall in the 1960s, in the fictional fishing port of Port Mabyn on the North Coast.