

Stephen Christopher Stanko



Information researched and summarized by
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Date	Age	Life Event
01/13/1968	0	Born in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba
1983	15	His brother Billy died in a house fire, which might have been arson and the case was never solved. The death caused his father to turn his back on Stephen.
1985	17	Stephen took the SATs and was in the 85 th percentile (500 verbal, 620 math)
1986	18	He was denied admission to the Air Force Academy, which was his lifelong dream. He then became "lost" after this event. He then turned to crime when community college didn't work out as well.
1992	24	Liz McLendon-Bucker met Stanko in 1992 and they began to date. She noticed very odd things about him from his false business claims to pick-pocketing a neighbor. She claims one day she woke up to Stanko standing above her where he proceeded to try to suffocate her. She then told him if he left her alone she would never speak of it again.
1993	25	He was arrested on grand larceny and breach of trust charges.
1995	27	He was out of his parents' home and had nowhere to live, his father disowned him.
1995	27	He was arrested at his job for filing false paperwork to collect commissions he didn't earn. He claimed he was innocent and spent over a month in jail.
11/14/1995	27	He got a job at McElveen Ian Buick GMC. He soon began stealing cars from the lot there
February 1996	28	He began stealing new and used cars off the lot that he worked on and began selling them to McLendon's unknowing neighbor who wanted to start a used car dealership.
02/17/1996	28	He was fired from his job at McElveen Ian Buick
02/18/1996	28	Liz confronted him about being fired and he didn't tell her. He then became very angry with her for accusing him.
02/19/1996	28	Stephen and Ray Crenshaw (Liz's neighbor) were in the back of an unmarked cop car when Liz came home one night. They were asking questions about stolen cars.
02/20/1996	28	Liz and Stephen wrestled around, she then proceeded to go to bed after their fight and woke to the smell of bleach. He was standing over with a wet cloth and leaped on her. The police were called and he had tied her up.
02/23/1996	28	He was served a warrant for his arrest and placed in the Greenville Detention Center. He was transported to the Berkeley County Detention Center and booked at 11:30 p.m. and incarcerated on kidnapping charges. He claimed that he and Liz were married.
02/24/1996	28	He was interrogated where he blamed Liz for everything and confessed to taking money from Ray Crenshaw in 1995.
April, 1996	28	Berkeley County grand jury indicted him for kidnapping, assault and battery with

		intent to kill and nine counts of breach of trust, with fraudulent intent for stealing cars and two counts of obtaining property by false pretenses.
1999	31	He had been writing. He wrote a proposal and sent it to Greenwood Press in Westport, Connecticut.
2000-2001	32	Stanko filed many trivial suits and complaints against the South Carolina Department of Corrections.
2000-2002	32-34	He and Dr. Gordon Crews worked on the book by phone. Their book idea was rejected by Greenwood Press.
2004	36	Dr. Wayne Gillespie, Stanko, and Crews published the book in 2004. "Living in Prison. A History of the Correctional System with an Insider's View."
2004	36	A woman in a shop overhears Stanko talking on the phone about his charity work. He then convinced her he was working for the Children's Cancer Research Foundation
July, 2004	36	Released to community supervision for a two year program.
Summer 2004	36	Met Laura Ling (43) at Horry County Memorial Library – Socastee Branch. He starts working on a book about serial killers
October 2004	36	The first time Stanko met Laura's daughter, Penny
12/08/2004	36	Stanko played a worker at the Owl-O-Rest Factory for money
Early 2005	37	Stanko worked for Stucco Supply but was then fired for lack of sales
04/08/2005	37	Stanko broke; he was on edge and needed a fix. He tied up Laura and choked her after raping Penny then twice sliced a knife across Penny's throat
04/08/2005	37	Went to Henry Turner's (74) home and spent the night. Shot him once in the back and once in the chest. He then calls the library to let them know that Laura won't be in today. Cops go to Turner's sons house to let them know a fugitive is on the loose Turner's son realized that Laura's car is at his dads. They find his father dead. Stanko took the car for a joy ride and went to the Blue Marlin, a bar. He spent all his stolen money on others at the bar. He then went to the Master's, a golf tournament in Augusta, Georgia
04/09/2005	37	Laura Ling's remains are autopsied. Stanko met a woman named Dana Putnam at a bar and went home with her.
04/10/2005	37	Stanko meets Dana Putnam family. Family thinks he's a good guy.
04/13/2005	37	Dana finds out from friend who Stanko really is and calls the police. He gets arrested a few hours later.
Spring 2005	37	Represented by two lawyers William Isaac Diggs and Gerald Kely. Gregory Hembree gives an opening statement promising to show the jury that Stankos violent outbursts weren't a onetime thing but a continuing pattern.
04/12/2006	38	He was sitting in the Georgetown County Detention Center awaiting trial a year after being arrested
08/15/2006	38	The parties met in court without the jury to set up the ground rules for the penalty phase of the trial.
08/18/2006	39	Jury sentences Stanko to death.
01/13/2007	39	CBS dedicated an entire episode of <i>48 Hours</i> to him.
03/16/2007	39	His mother passes away
09/23/2007	39	He appears in front of the South Carolina Supreme Court to appeal his conviction
March 2008	40	His lawyers argue that Stanko didn't get a fair trial because during <i>voir dire</i> , the judge wouldn't allow potential jurors their opinion of the insanity defense. They also argued that she failed to instruct the jury on any additional and unrequested statutory mitigating circumstance during the penalty phase.
11/09/2009	41	Stanko's trial for the murder of Henry Turner begins.
11/19/2009	41	Convicted and sentenced to death for the second and final time
09/25/2011	43	Stanko files an appeal of his death sentence in the Henry Turner murder.

General Information

Sex	Male
Race	White

Number of murder victims	2
Country where killing occurred	United States
States where killing occurred	South Carolina
Cities where killing occurred	Murrels Inlet
Type of killer	Spree
Height	6'2"
Childhood Information	
Date of birth	1/13/1968
Location	Guantanamo Bay, Cuba
Birth order	2 nd of 5
Number of siblings	5
XXX?	No
Raised by	Both parents
Birth category	Second
Parent's marital status	Married
Did serial killer spend time in an orphanage?	No
Did serial killer spend time in a foster home?	No
Was serial killer ever raised by a relative?	No
Did serial killer ever live with adopted family?	No
Did serial killer live with a step-parent?	No
Family event	Death of a brother
Age of family event	15
Problems in school?	No he was popular in school.
Teased while in school?	No
Physically attractive?	People thought so – he was charming
Physical defect?	No
Speech defect?	No
Head injury?	Yes, Hit with a bottle
Physically abused?	No
Psychologically abused?	No
Sexually abused?	No
Father's occupation	He was a master chief in the US Navy
Age when first had intercourse	
Mother's occupation	
Father abused drugs/alcohol	
Mother abused drugs/alcohol	
Cognitive Ability	
Highest grade in school	12
Highest degree	High School Diploma
Grades in school	
IQ	143
Source of IQ information	Benson (2011), page 272
Work History	
Served in the military?	He wanted to be in the military but they didn't accept him
Branch	
Type of discharge	
Saw combat duty	
Killed enemy during service?	
Applied for job as a cop?	
Worked in law enforcement?	No
Fired from jobs?	Fired from a job at McElveen Ian Buick GMC
Types of jobs worked	Used car salesman

Employment status during series	Unemployed
Relationships	
Sexual preference	Heterosexual
Marital status	Single
Number of children	0
Lives with his children	0
Living with	His girlfriend, Liz McLendon, lived with Laura Ling
Triad	
Animal torture	No
Fire setting	No
Bed wetting	No
Killer Psychological Information	
Abused drugs?	No
Abused alcohol?	No
Been to a psychologist (prior to killing)?	No
Time in forensic hospital (prior to killing)?	No
Diagnosis	
Killer Criminal History (Prior to the series)	
Committed previous crimes?	Grand Larceny, Assault and battery, Kidnapping
Spent time in jail?	Yes
Spent time in prison?	Yes, 8 years
Killed prior to series? Age?	No
Serial Killing	
Number of victims (suspected of)	2
Number of victims (confessed to)	None
Number of victims (convicted of)	2
Victim type	Teen girl older women old man
Killer age at start of series	37
Killer age at end of series	37
Date of first kill in series	April 8, 2005
Date of final kill in series	April 8, 2005
Gender of victims	One male, one female
Race of victims	White
Age of victims	43, 74
Type of victim	Acquaintances
Method of killing	Strangled, shot
Weapon	Knife, Hand gun, Hands used to strangle
Was gun used?	Yes, in murder of Henry Turner
Type	Handgun
Did killer have a partner?	No
Name of partner	
Sex of partner	
Relationship of partner	
Type of serial killer	Spree
How close did killer live?	In home and near home
Location of first contact	Library
Location of killing	Home
Killing occurred in home of victim?	Yes for both, though different homes
Killing occurred in home of killer?	Yes for female no male
Victim abducted or killed at contact?	

Behavior During Crimes	
Rape?	Yes for the teen daughter
Tortured victims?	No
Stalked victims?	No
Overkill?	Yes – Laura Ling was overly beaten
Quick & efficient?	No
Used blindfold?	No
Bound the victims?	Yes
After Death Behavior	
Sex with the body?	No
Mutilated body?	No
Ate part of the body?	No
Drank victim's blood?	No
Posed the body?	No
Took totem – body part	No
Took totem – personal item	Yes – Bracelet
Robbed victim or location	Yes - took money and a few other items like a car
Disposal of Body	
Left at scene, no attempt to hide	Yes
Left at scene, hidden	No
Left at scene, buried	No
Moved, no attempt to hide	Yes – behind bed but not in an attempt to hide
Moved, hidden	No
Moved, buried	No
Cut-up and disposed of	No
Burned body	No
Dumped body in lake, river, etc.	No
Moved, took home	No
Sentencing	
Date killer arrested	4/13/05
Date convicted	8/15/06 and 11/19/09
Sentence	Death twice
Killer executed?	Not yet
Did killer plead NGRI?	Yes
Was the NGRI plea successful?	No
Did serial killer confess?	No
Name and state of prison	Lieber Correctional Institution in Ridgeville South Carolina
Killer committed suicide?	No
Killer killed in prison?	No
Date of death	
Cause of death	

References

Benson, Michael (2011). *Watch mommy die*. New York: Kensington Publishing (ISBN 13: 978-0-7860-2499-5).