



WORD FORGE
BOOKS

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Author Bio

Word Forge Books – Bringing You the World Through Words



***DEVASTATION ON THE DELAWARE:
Stories and Images of the
Deadly Flood of 1955***

Award-Winning Author Mary A. Shafer

- Weather Coordinator, Nockamixon Twp. Emergency Management Agency
- Certified SkyWarn Weather Spotter #LKD-001

Mary Shafer is a full time freelance writer living and working in Bucks County, Pennsylvania. She spent three years researching and writing *Devastation on the Delaware* before publishing it in 2005.

- **1966: Just before her 5th birthday, got caught at Beach Haven, NJ (Long Beach Island) in the remnants of Hurricane Alma**, which had once been a rare early-season Category 3 storm. Never forgot her terror, standing in the wind and driving rain, watching the waves crash up almost to her family's car as they loaded to escape the storm. Credits this as beginning of her weather obsession.
- 1968: Moved to a Milwaukee, Wisconsin suburb in the tornado-prone Midwest. **Remembers the vague fear of going to bed on hot, humid summer nights while a tornado watch was in effect.**
- 1980-81: Attended University of Wisconsin campuses at Stout and Milwaukee, studies concentrated in art, history and English composition; holds Associate of Applied Science degree in Commercial Art and Communications from Milwaukee Area Technical College.
- Mid-1980s: Began freelancing as reviewer of films, books and B&Bs for alternative publications.
- 1990-91: Art director for NorthWord Press book publisher in Minocqua, WI
- **Sept. 15, 1991: Woke from uneasy sleep to the screaming wind of a tornado** as two twisters passed on either side of her northern Wisconsin property – the most frightening night of her life.
- 1991: Went back to freelancing. Researched and wrote **her first historical nonfiction book, Wisconsin: The Way We Were; published August 1993 by Heartland Press.**
- 1993: Returned to Milwaukee. Resumed freelance writing and design work.
- 1994-1996: Taught commercial art and copywriting at her alma mater, MATC.
- **1995: Second book, Rural America: A Pictorial Folk Memory, released in July by Willow Creek Press. Won Best Book Award from Mid-America Publishers Assn.**

- 1997: Returned to home state of Pennsylvania and continued freelancing.
- 1998: Her work appeared in the anthology *A Place To Which We Belong*, published by 1000 Friends of Wisconsin to commemorate state's sesquicentenary.
- 1998: Her essay "A Reluctant Maturity" garnered an Honorable Mention in the *Potomac Review's* Annual Short Story/Essay Contest.
- 2001: Begins pursuing writing full time, running The Word Forge, a full-service communications firm in Ferndale, Pennsylvania. Specializes in: history; weather; emergency management/disaster preparedness; light construction & related fields. Has edited more than 30 trade books, mostly nonfiction and nature titles.
- 1999-Present: Teaches adult evening classes in writing at the Community Schools of New Hope-Solebury and the Palisades School District.
- **2002: Certified by the Sterling Institute as a SkyWarn Severe Weather Spotter.**
- **2003: Joins Nockamixon Township Emergency Management Agency as Weather & Communications Coordinator**
- **Latest book, *Devastation on the Delaware: Stories and Images of the Deadly Flood of 1955* is the first comprehensive documentary of the record-setting flood in the Delaware Valley.**
- **October 7, 2005: The book was published by Word Forge Books, and sold out its entire first printing of 2,500 copies within 42 days. By 2010, it had sold 5,000 copies, an average of 1,000 copies per year. Mary is in the process of updating the book for release in August, 2010—the 55th anniversary of the 55 flood.**