



WORD FORGE BOOKS

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Author Bio

Award-Winning Author Mary A. Shafer



Mary Shafer was born in 1961 to a family of writers. She became a full-time freelance writer in 2001 and has never looked back.

Mary began her career as a graphic designer and served as art director for NorthWord Press, a nature book publisher based in northern Wisconsin. There, she also multi-tasked as an editor, copywriter and public relations assistant, and fell in love with the world of publishing.

She had her first book published in 1993, by NorthWord imprint Heartland Press. *Wisconsin: The Way We Were*, is a historical nonfiction overview of Wisconsin's first century of statehood. It sold 15,000 copies in hardcover and is in the process of being brought back in paperback and eBook formats.

Two years later, Mary's second historical nonfiction book was published by Willow Creek Press. *Rural America: A Pictorial Folk Memory* is a heavily illustrated essay on the character of agrarian America before the industrial revolution. It won an award for Best Book in One or Two Colors from the MidAmerica Publishers Association that year, marking the first award in Mary's writing career.

A long hiatus from book writing followed, as Mary returned to her birth state of Pennsylvania. She established herself in Bucks County, long venerated as a creative haven for artists, writers, musicians and performing artists.

In 1998, her work appeared in the anthology *A Place To Which We Belong*, published by 1000 Friends of Wisconsin to commemorate her former home state's sesquicentennial. That same year, her essay "A Reluctant Maturity" garnered an Honorable Mention in *The Potomac Review's* Annual Short Story/Essay Contest.

2005 saw the debut of Mary's book, *Devastation on the Delaware: Stories and Images of the Deadly Flood of 1955*, under the auspices of Word Forge Books. The narrative nonfiction title, three years in the research and writing, is the first comprehensive documentary of the record-setting flood in the Delaware Valley. It was named a Notable Book of 2005 by *Writers Notes Magazine*, and was a finalist in the Nature Writing and U.S. History categories of the "Best Books 2006" awards competition by USABookNews.com. It is now in its second edition, having sold nearly 6,000 copies. The new edition garnered Finalist status in the Best History Title and Best Regional Nonfiction categories of the 2011 National Indie Excellence Awards.

In 2008, Mary edited and contributed an essay to the anthology *Almost Perfect: Disabled Pets and the People Who Love Them*. The book was published by Enspirio House, winning a Muse Medallion and a Certificate of Excellence from the Cat Writers Association in 2010.

Mary's current projects include a Civil War-era ghost story/romance novel, and a series of mystery novels about a forensic meteorologist/storm chaser with a special gift. She's also working on an auto tour guide about the 1955 flood, and continues to make a living as a commercial copywriter, freelance journalist and marketing consultant.

Mary is a member of the American Society of Journalists and Authors, the Authors Guild, Pennwriters and Sisters In Crime, an organization of women mystery writers. She consults on the business of book publishing with indie authors and publishers as The Indie Navigator (indienavigator.com). She's on Twitter at @mshaferauthor.

