

'Devastation on the Delaware' an obsession for Bucks County writer

By **MICHAEL SADOWSKI**

Pocono Record Writer

It touched her so much, she couldn't help but write about it.

So for three years, that's what Bucks County writer Mary A. Shafer did: research and write about the Flood of 1955.

The culmination of her work is "Devastation on the Delaware," a narrative nonfiction documentary book based on the events of the Aug. 18-19 flood that raged down the Delaware River valley, from New York state to Philadelphia.

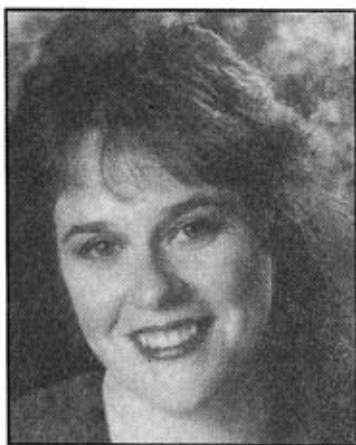
"It's been an obsession, really," she said. "Not in a bad way. But it's just been something I've been so interested in. It's been an amazing project."

The ruins the flood made of the Poconos is an integral part of the book. Shafer researched the damage done throughout the area, including the ravaging of a spot that came to be known as Camp Davis, just south of Anomink.

Camp Davis was a group of about 12 cabins inhabited by summer visitors attending the nearby Pinebrook Bible Conference Center. Thirty-eight adults and children died when the site was wiped out by the raging Brodhead Creek. Only nine people who were there that night survived.

In her initial interviews of witnesses to the flood, Shafer found her idea for a book would be well-received, if a bit hesitantly.

"The first thing I found is that people still have a hard time talking or even thinking about it," Shafer said about the flood that killed 78 people in Monroe County. "But the other thing I found was that when I told them I was working on a book about the flood, the response was almost always the same — it's about time."



Mary Shafer of Bucks County has been writing a book about the Flood of 1955 for three years. 'It's been an amazing project,' she says.



'Devastation on the Delaware' will be published Oct. 1.

"Devastation on the Delaware" will be published by Word Forge Books, a division of the author's freelance writing business. The 6- x 9-inch softcover book is 440 pages, with more than 75 black-and-white photographs; 10 maps and diagrams. Visit www.55flood.com, or call toll free, (888) 320-9673. Fifty cents from each copy sold will be donated to the Delaware Riverkeeper Network.

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