

Send a Story of Prairie du Chien



A self-published series

**© Mary Ann Stemper
Since 2009**

Volumes I-IV complete

Volume V in progress

www.prairieduchienstories.com

In some Native American traditions, the goose is the keeper of folktales, myths and legends, the communicator of ancient knowledge. Goose connects us to the past and our forgotten history.

The Great Spirit works through a story teller and gets the message delivered where it needs to be.

Send a Story of Prairie du Chien
Series of 5 volumes
44 stories completed

Volume IV 2012
Total 242 pages
215 images—new and old photos
Series total over 800 pages & 800
images

Each pamphlet sized 16-28 pages
Old Favorites
Forgotten Stories Remembered
Memorable Events and People

**All stories are now available
on digital PDF format
Available on the website
www.prairieduchienstories.com
Paper copies available from the author**

Volume V 2013-14 is in progress
4 stories now available

Volume V 2013 [digital 41-]

1. **When the River is Ice** is about the winter season between 1850 and 1950 when the ice road and the ice harvest were central to winter's rhythm. [41 V-1] **Available**
2. **Prairie du Chien's 14:** Sites on the National Register of Historic Places includes pictures and brief descriptions. [42 V-2] **Available**
3. **An Old Indian Town: Prairie du Chien in 1814** was written to join the community celebration of the 200th anniversary of the Battle of Prairie du Chien. It tells what the town was like then and gives mini-biographies of 4 important players.[43 V-3]
4. **For Love: The Murder of Katie Jordan.** In 1868 a beautiful young woman was murdered by her one time boyfriend. We know of her because her father had her killer's name etched on her gravestone. [44 V-4]
5. **No Brighter Side: An August Road Trip in the Driftless.** Each August I take a road trip to visit the sites in Crawford and Vernon County that were a part of the Battle of Bad Axe in early August 1832—arguably the most significant event to happen in our area. [45 V-5] Available August 2014

Unfortunately, I have been slowed down in my writing by the need for some serious eye surgery. I have recovered from one corneal transplant and will have the second one in the near future. Until I have recovered from both, I hesitate to make promises about the stories I will write. I still have a long and growing list of topics.

Volume IV 2012 [digital 31-40]

1. **Old French Days** is the reprint of Albert Coryer's Memoir of Julian and Joseph about life among the early French around 1840. [31 Volume IV-1]
2. **The Lady Franklin** is the story of Norman Wiard's iceboat about 1860 when John Muir joined Wiard at Prairie du Chien to work on the invention. Later Wiard went east and Muir went west; both became famous. [32 Volume IV-2]
3. **The Jan √ Collection** is a sketch of Jan White Check and her successful business, Check's Antiques. Her children have made her images of Prairie du Chien available at the public library. [33 Volume IV-3]
4. **Up One Side and Down the Other** is a walking tour of Blackhawk Avenue from Main to Illinois and back to Main. First published digitally, it is **downloadable** from the library's web site or [34 Volume IV-4] www.prairieduchiensotries.com
5. **Not Since the Villa Parades** recounts the years between 1935 and 1952 when the city owned the Villa Louis, and the opening was a 3 day celebration. [35 Volume IV-5]
6. **Red Bird: Swallowed Up and Lost one** of Prairie du Chien's best tales. In the summer of 1827, Red Bird made a decision which *swallowed up and lost* the considerable good will and respect he earned from all who knew him. [36 Volume IV-6]
7. **The Great Artesian Well** is the history of the library site including the Artesian Well dating to 1875, the sanitariums that grew from the well. This anniversary edition was published to coincide with the 100th birthday of the Wachute Memorial Library. [37 Volume IV- 7] **Free Download**
8. **A German Generation** is about the generation of Germans who came with the railroad and built modern Prairie du Chien. Michael Menges is featured. [38 Volume IV-8]
9. **Babette's Loup Garou** is the reprint an old werewolf trickster tale set in Prairie du Chien. [39 Volume IV-9]
10. **Keewatin Academy** is about the short lived boys school housed at the Villa Louis prior to WWI. [40 Volume IV-10]

Volume III 2011 [digital 21-30]

1. **The Execution of Chunksah** is the raw tale of death by firing squad at Fort McKay January 7, 1815. The execution spot was about wher the Villa pond is today. [21 III-1]
2. **Knoxie: A Love Story** is the nationally famous love story of Sarah Knox Taylor and Jefferson Davis that began in Prairie du Chien. [22 III-2]
3. **Our Friend Lawler** is mini-biography of Prairie du Chien's greatest philanthropist, John Lawler, with equal emphasis on him home and business life. [23 III-3]
4. **The Gilt is Gone** Dousman House Part 2 [1919-2011] when it housed a packing plant and sat empty. [24 Volume III-4] At the End of the Road tells of the Dousman House as a hotel.[24 II-4]
5. **On A Regular Bender** catalogs the floods in Prairie du Chien from 1785-2011 with records, pictures and stories. [25 III-5]
6. **Let the Eagle Scream!** celebrates the 4th of July in early Prairie du Chien [26 III-6]
7. **A Short Life in the Saddle** tells the intriguing story Don J. Berry who grew up in Marquette and attended Campion and died young far away from home. [27 III-7]
8. **Emma Big Bear** honors the Winnebago woman as a faithkeeper for her Winnebago people. She was a long time resident of McGregor and Marquette and an accomplished basket maker. [28 III-8]
9. **The Howe Way** salutes 100 years of Howe family ownership of *the Courier* [29 III-9]
10. **The Birdman and His Wonderful Machine** is a companion piece to *The Howe Way* and tells of the 1911 Hugh Robinson historic fligh— the first big story in the *Courier* after Hank Howe took over. [30 III-10]

[30 Volume III-10]

The **30** is a running numbering starting with the first in 2009. That number indicates the story is available digitally in PDF format, **Volume III-10** indicates the print identification of a story. The last 20 stories 21-40 are now in digital format. The author is translating the others to digital format as she continues to write new stories.

Volume II 2010 [digital 11-20]

1. **The Big Fire: February 1899** reports the fire that destroyed the north side of the East 100 block of Blackhawk Avenue. [11 II-1]
2. **The Legend of the Blackhawk Tree** written because readers requested it. [12 II-2]
3. **Faith of Our Fathers: Holy Trinity Episcopal Church** is the summary of the church since it was associated with Fort Crawford with a tribute to Father E. Raymond Sims, who passed away in January 2010. [13 II-3]
4. **At the End of the Road** tells of the Dousman House during its heyday as a hotel. Charley Huffs Schmidt, the hotel's colorful proprietor for 25 years is featured. [14 II-4]
5. **A Prince of a Good Fellow: Alva A. Caya** is the biography of a favorite son who was the first to die in combat in WWI. The story focuses on Prairie du Chien during the years of his life 1893-1918 [15 II-5]
6. **An Ever Present Spirit celebrates** the 100th anniversary of the statue. It traces Prairie du Chien's connection with Father Marquette back to 1673. [16 II-6]
7. **An Indian Runner** is a story by Eliphalet Price from Clayton County Iowa @ 1850 about how one Sioux warrior won a race for life at Fort Crawford in the 1820s. [17 II-7]
8. **The Corner: The Kappel Block 1866** The biography of the brick block on NE corner of Blackhawk and Beaumont [18 II-8]
9. **For Some Strange Reason** the story of the Brisbois graves by reader request [19 II-9]
10. **A Ryghte Merries Christmasse** a collection of memories of Christmas in Prairie du Chien. [20 II-2]

Volume I 2009 [digital 1-10]

1. ***The Raven of the Reynards*** published in Great Britain in 1846 and traveled back to Prairie du Chien where it is enjoyed by a new generation of readers. [1 I-1]
2. ***Without Any Provocation*** tells of two senseless murders in the 1840s involving young men from Prairie du Chien [2 I-2]
3. ***Kicking Up the Devil*** is a wild tale of river thieves and how they met up with vigilante justice one May weekend in 1858. [3 I-3]
4. ***An Awful Crime*** recalls two brutal murders in the 1860s and other mayhem that plagued Prairie du Chien during the Civil War years. 4 I-4]
5. ***The Winneshiek*** is about the bar and grill, the watershed and the series of Winnebago chiefs all sharing the name. 5 I-5]
6. ***Wachute Memorial Library on Wacouta Avenue*** honors an important institution on the historic artesian well site and the Wachute family that donated the library. In 2012 the library will celebrate its 100th birthday. [6 I-6] **Free Download**
7. ***The Raffaaf Block 1870*** is a biography of the building that is currently home to *Windy Cove Treasure*. [7 I-7]
8. ***Sacred to the Memory; Fort Crawford Cemetery*** recounts the old military cemetery and the people buried beginning in 1829. [8 I-8]
9. ***The Kane's on Fire!*** tells of the historic fire in 1873 that changed downtown Prairie du Chien. It was on the Main Street site to be developed as a new hotel complex. [9 I-9]
10. ***Hey Rube!*** is one of our favorite stories of the Buffalo Bill Riot in the summer of 1900 retold because readers requested it. [10 I-10]

Send a Story of Prairie du Chien

In the **summer of 2009**, retired English teacher, Mary Ann Stemper launched a series of stories about Prairie du Chien. Each is pamphlet size containing 16 -28 pages with vintage and recent pictures. She originally thought the stories would make attractive birthday or Christmas cards for people who are interested in Prairie du Chien; hence the title of the series.

Wendy Benish Kotte sold the stories exclusively from her shop from **September 1, 2009 until her untimely death in December 2013**. It's unlikely the stories would have been published without Wendy's encouragement and insight. The stories and their author miss her.

When her health is fully recovered Mary Ann will find a place in Prairie du Chien to sell print copies. Until then paper copies can be purchased directly from her.

Harold Waterman of Studio 91 designed the website **in 2011** and keeps it updated. See

www.prairieduchienstories.com

In 2013, Mary Ann began selling her more recent stories in digital format.