

Ruth by Lake and Prairie

Synopsis

It's the fourth largest city in the state and *Money* magazine's second best place to live in the nation, but Naperville, Illinois started out in 1831 with just a few families from Ashtabula, Ohio.

Ruth by Lake and Prairie is an historical narrative detailing the six week journey from the Ohio shore of Lake Erie to the prairies surrounding the DuPage River. While tradition usually calls to mind a vision of covered wagons trekking across the plains, only three days was actually spent traveling overland. More time was spent on the Great Lakes schooner *Telegraph* than in a prairie schooner on land!

The ship they sailed on was partially owned by Joseph Naper, who planned the move to Illinois and convinced other families to join him in creating the new settlement. One of those families was the Murrays: Joseph's sister Amy, her husband John and their children. **Ruth by Lake and Prairie** focuses on twelve-year-old Ruth Murray's experiences on the voyage.

While sorry to leave her home, Ruth understands the move will provide for the growing needs of her family. But Ruth views her understanding nature as an unsatisfying character trait. Between her younger sister's impatience and her older sister's flair for drama, empathetic Ruth is often overlooked. Calling herself the "middle and most ordinary child" of the family, Ruth ponders her role within her family and in the larger community of settlers.

The characters and chronology in **Ruth by Lake and Prairie** were carefully researched to be as historically accurate as possible. In addition to settling Naperville, some of the families mentioned in the book were founding citizens of Chicago, Lisle, Wheaton, Lockport and Traverse City, Michigan.

Everyone is familiar with the **Little House on the Prairie** books, but few realize that the stories of Laura Ingalls Wilder take place fully forty years after Ruth's family settled into their house on the prairie. **Ruth by Lake and Prairie** provides a snapshot of a less well-known period of America's westward expansion.

www.RuthByLakeAndPrairie.com



Ruth by Lake and Prairie

Author Biography



Although always intending to write children's books, **Ruth by Lake and Prairie** is actually the first by Kate Gingold to be published since she studied creative writing and fine arts at Knox College.

Instead, Kate detoured into newspaper articles and copywriting, as well as Girl Scouts, Sunday School, Room Mom, and the other accessories of motherhood. For the last five years, she's written a biweekly Internet column offering "Gnusworthy Tips" about websites and online marketing.

As co-owner of Gnu Ventures Company with her husband Don, Kate has had plenty of practice in researching and writing, but after ten years felt the need to write something other than advertising copy. Naperville's 175th Anniversary celebration offered the perfect opportunity to finally write that children's book.

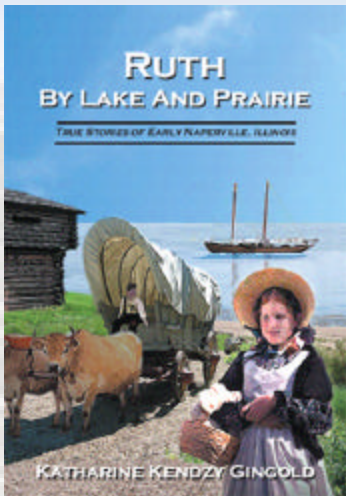
An avid reader and student of history, Kate was quickly drawn in by the research, and for eighteen months she borrowed time from her business and her family to collect information about the people and the time period. Kate talked to folks from across the country: experts on sailing schooners, genealogists and historians, and descendents of the characters in the book. Even while writing and rewriting the story, she was caught up in the research, which continues still.

Kate's long-dormant art skills have also had an airing in the last couple years. The United Way of Naperville sponsors summertime street sculptures, and Kate has had the opportunity to paint fairy, dragon and mermaid fiberglass statues.

With two teenagers still at home, Kate juggles writing and business with attending various musical and theatrical events. In what spare time she has left, she loves to read, garden, and throw themed parties. Since their dating days, Kate and Don have also attended Renaissance Faires every summer – in full costume. Kate's most recent costume creation was an 1830 settler's dress to wear during presentations of **Ruth by Lake and Prairie**.

www.KateGingold.com

Ruth by Lake and Prairie



In 1831, twelve-year-old Ruth Murray journeyed from Ashtabula, Ohio to the banks of the DuPage River with a group of pioneers led by her uncle, Joseph Naper. The trip took almost two months, most of it spent sailing the Great Lakes with 60 men, women and children packed into a small schooner. Through Ruth's eyes, we meet the area's founding families, explore relationships within families and within communities, and experience a girl's day-to-day life in the early nineteenth century. Carefully researched over eighteen months and using sources not previously available, **Ruth by Lake and Prairie** gives a more complete picture of the Naperville area's early history.



Katharine Kendzy Gingold fell in love with Naperville, living, working and raising her family in community for the past 18 years. The 175th Anniversary of Naperville's founding inspired her to research and write the historical journey to share with the city's children. Kate offers **Ruth by Lake and Prairie** to strengthen the roots of these youngest citizens and give them a new understanding of their hometown.

Praise for Ruth by Lake and Prairie :

This is a must-read for every student in the Naperville school system and for their families. I highly recommend this book to be placed in every school library.

A. George Pradel, Mayor of Naperville

We are lucky such a talented researcher and writer was drawn to this story. Ruth's journey captures the dynamic energies of a homesteading voyage at a time when "... Illinois has wide boundaries and few people."

Mary Lou Wehrli, 5th Generation Naperville family, Community Leader

***Ruth** makes our history come alive because you experience it through the eyes of this young girl.*

Mary Ellingson, Naper Settlement Board, Naperville City Council

Paperback: ISBN-13 978-0-9792419-0-1 • Retail Price: \$12.95

Hardcover: ISBN-13 978-0-9792419-2-5 • Retail Price: \$21.95

202 pages • Available in stores and online

www.RuthByLakeAndPrairie.com

