

Writing the blues

By Susan J. Conrad, Daily News Correspondent |

Corfu native Bryan Krull has combined his love of blues music and history in his first published novel, "Lil' Choo-Choo Johnson, Bluesman." Krull, a 1988 graduate of Pembroke High School, has spent the past eight years as a history teacher. With the birth of his daughter six months ago, he is now spending his time as a stay-at-home father and writing books, he said.

"I've always been interested in writing," Krull said. "I started this book three or four years ago, but in the past year I've had more time for research and writing."

The story is a historical fiction about a boy from Mississippi who becomes a blues guitar legend. Earl "Lil' Choo-Choo" Johnson left home at age 10 with only his father's guitar. The story encompasses the heyday of Delta Blues, birth of rock and roll, the British invasion and the blues revival of the 1960s.

Krull used Corfu as the fictional home of the main character. Krull said Johnson lived by Murder Creek, but in Mississippi. "You can't write fiction without drawing something from your own life," Krull said.

Krull's most recent teaching job was as a long-term substitute in Akron High School. He has also taught at private schools in Florida and Connecticut. He met his wife, a native of Akron, while working in Connecticut, he said. "I had to move to Connecticut to meet someone from two towns over," Krull said. He and his wife moved back to the western New York area about a year ago. They are living in Spencerport.

Krull became interested in Blues music through Blues-influenced Rock and Roll bands, he said. "When I was a teen, I listened to whatever was on the radio," Krull said. "My dad had a Muddy Waters cassette in the car that we used to listen to on car rides." As an adult, Krull said he has been interested in reading about the history of Blues

and Blues musicians. Krull has chosen to self-publish his first novel.