

**BETSY-TACY SOCIETY
NEWSLETTER #5**

The next business meeting of the Betsy Tacy Society will be Tuesday October 22, 1991 at 8:15 p.m. at the North Mankato Library.

1991-92 MEMBERSHIP FEES ARE DUE

Membership fees are due in September for the 1991-1992 year. Anyone who joined the society after May 1 of this year shall receive membership to run through September, 1992. Make checks payable to the Betsy-Tacy Society. Please send your membership form and your check to: Lona Falen, 303 Meadow Wood Dr., Mankato, MN 56001.

The Betsy-Tacy Society has a balance of \$1,069.13 in our checking account and \$581.34 in our savings account. Shirley Lieske - Treasurer

OUR LAST EVENT

Murmuring Lake (Madison Lake) was the setting of a Betsy-Tacy Picnic on Sunday August 25, 1991. It was hosted by the Betsy-Tacy Society as our summer event. The day was warm and sunny and a more-than-gentle breeze was blowing off the lake. The Picnic was held at a park just half-way between the Point Pleasant Inn and Mrs. Hart's girlhood home, making it an appropriate location.

There was a delicious assortment of foods including an array of different potato salads to taste and some entries in the "fresh unfrosted cake" category. Special thanks go to Lona who was up all night frying a big bucket of chicken.

We were happy to welcome new members from Rochester whom we enjoyed getting acquainted with. Shirley brought along an antique bathing suit for show and tell. After visiting, discussing the Betsy-Tacy books and real-life characters, watching the wind surfers, and trying to keep the food from blowing off the tables, and a few of us visited Vi Hoehn to view the bay window in which Mr. and Mrs. Hart were married. We also walked along the bank leading down to the lake and marveled at the old oak tree and two rocks at its base. It turned out to be a very Betsy-Tacy day.

COMING EVENTS

Don't miss "Ghosts of the Past" sponsored by the Blue Earth County Historical Society on Saturday and Sunday evenings, October 5th and 6th. This exciting and "spooky" event is held each fall at Williams Nature Center on the outskirts of Deep Valley. This is a gorgeous autumn walk through the trail of Mankato history while meeting historical characters along the way. Who knows, you might even meet Betsy.....

For information contact the Blue Earth Historical Society at 345-5566 or 345-4154.

EARLY CANDLELIGHT SHINES AGAIN

The Minnesota Historical Society Press has announced the intended reprinting of Early Candlelight in honor of the centenary of Maud Hart Lovelace. Early Candlelight, Mrs. Lovelace's second novel, first appeared in 1929. The new edition will be softback with a re-illustrated cover. Publication is scheduled for April, 1992. The Betsy-Tacy Society Newsletter will

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CONVENTION NEWS

We are looking for teachers or librarians to suggest Betsy-Tacy book-related activities for children for Saturday, July 11, 1992 at the Betsy-Tacy Convention. We also need volunteers to direct the activities. We might have an "everything cookies" session - as long as we use a "no-bake" recipe!

Out-of-town members have been inquiring about hotel accommodation in Mankato. The Betsy-Tacy Society has reserved a large block of rooms at the Mankato Holiday Inn for July 10-12, 1992. Reservation cards will be sent out with the convention materials early next spring.

Barbara Carter will be selecting sheet music of songs from the Betsy-Tacy books from her enormous collection for a souvenir booklet and after-banquet sing-along. Suggestions for particular song titles are welcome.

The old Carnegie Library will be the site of our opening ceremonies on July 10, 1992. The old Saulpaugh (fictionally, the Melborn) Hotel is unfortunately gone, but the Holiday Inn (our Convention Headquarters) stands on the same corner. The old Mankato train depot was recently purchased by the Elks Lodge and restoration is scheduled for completion by June, 1992. We are hoping to hold one of our events at the depot.

We are looking for a few more speakers for Saturday programs. If you would like to volunteer or have an idea, write: Sharla Whalen, P.O. Box 4774, Naperville, IL 60567.

FROM OUR MAILBOX

"A copy of your Betsy-Tacy Society Newsletter #4 came in the mail this morning and I absolutely loved it. I had no idea that there were so many other dedicated Lovelace fans out there. Although I have been a lifelong reader, I didn't discover the Betsy books until I was twenty-two and visiting my fiance's parents for the first time over the Christmas holidays. He had a twelve-year-old sister, and she had the books. I spent the week getting acquainted with my future in-laws in Easton, Pennsylvania, and (every spare minute) also getting to know the folks in Deep Valley. Last year my husband and I flew to Minneapolis and spent several days in Mankato. We stayed at the Holiday Inn, so conveniently located just across the street from your wonderful library where I spent many blissful hours." Joyce Crosen, Cumberland Center, Maine

"I am very excited to learn that there are lots of other people out there who appreciate the Betsy-Tacy books the way I appreciate them. One of the highlights of my life was hearing the "Merry Widow Waltz" on the radio a few years ago. ... P.S. If you are planning to serve 'Everything Pudding' at the convention Tasting Tea, I trust you will have the three Betsy-approved stomach-ache remedies available too!" Amy Oseroff, Greenville, NC (The remedies were soda, peppermint, and the care of a big sister!)

"The Betsy-Tacy books - all of them - are the books that give me the most pleasure that any books have ever, before or since I first read them. I read the early ones as a young girl and when they changed artists with the high school-travel-wedding books, I did not at first recognize that these further stories were about the same people until I started reading them. I am 56 years old and have in my adult library a complete hard-cover set of all the Betsy-Tacy books. Moreover, every year I reread the complete set. It takes about a week now. These characters are for me people I wish were real and who I wish I not only knew, but was related to. I know you must be acquainted with Jack Finney's wonderful book Time and Again. I wish that were a real possibility (his plot). I would go back to 1905 and live on Hill Street (or its real equivalent) and get to know Betsy (Maud). ...I have always planned a 'pilgrimage' to the 'shrine' of Mankato, ever since reading on the back of Betsy-Tacy and Tib that it was the probable Deep Valley. I also want to see Minneapolis (Betsy's Wedding) and find out if people in Minnesota are still like the ones in the book." Joan Tanney, Los Angeles, CA

"Back in Minneapolis in, I believe, 1945 when I was in the eighth grade, I was a volunteer in the Nokomis Junior High Library and a devotee of Betsy-Tacy books. Our librarian had the task of selecting a student to introduce Mrs. Lovelace at an event to be held in the downtown Minneapolis Public Library. Because I was such a fan, I was assigned the terrifying job. I'm not sure what the nature of the event was, but I guess she must have been on a tour associated with publication of one of the books. It was attended by school librarians from around the city, and a few selected students. Anyway, I had to write and practice an actual speech, and I did. I did, and I did. Mrs. Lovelace was the main attraction to the event. I made the speech (I

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"Even though her parents did not feel it was appropriate reading for her, fans of Betsy and Tacy Go Downtown may wish to read Lady Audley's Secret. It no longer costs a dime, but if anyone is interested, the book has been republished in the Virago Modern Classics series published in this country by Penguin. The new price is \$6.95 which tells us something about the inflation rate!" Johanna Hurwitz, Great Neck, NY (The author of Lady Audley's Secret is Mary E. Braddon. ISBN 0-14-016185-6.)

"My two daughters and I have all visited Mankato and walked from Hill Street to High Street several times. The Betsy-Tacy high school books came out, one a year, just a grade ahead of me and I felt they were mine all mine! As my girls grew up, they loved them too - we had to buy each a set. I'm all out of green sealing wax - darn! I really used to use it, thanks to Maud." Luette Sundberg, Polk, NE

"I really liked the Betsy-Tacy books growing up, and have come to appreciate them more the older I get. In fact, a search in used bookstores for my personal favorite, Emily of Deep Valley, got me started on collecting all of them two years ago. My collection even boasts a few dustjacketed, signed, first editions. It was fun to see her handwriting! And I feel fortunate to have them. She has become very popular to collect around here. It is nice to know other people are as fond of Betsy-Tacy and their companions as I am." Julie Butler, Roseville, MN

"I dearly loved reading the series when growing up, and enjoy rereading them to this day. I think every young bride should read Betsy's Wedding to get a glimpse of a loving young couple, and how to form a foundation for a relationship that will last and grow." Victoria Broadhurst, Woodland Hills, CA

"When I was young (about 8) my grandmother took me to the library and I got a library card. Every day after school I would ride my bike to the library - one of the first books I checked out was Betsy's Wedding. I finally bought an old copy of this book at a book sale. It has become quite a family joke as it has remained my favorite book to this day - kind of like a security blanket, something familiar I can always go to. I have been married, moved out of state, moved back, remarried, and have moved numerous times. Betsy's Wedding has survived the ups and downs, ins and outs. It is difficult these days to find books like this - they all seem to be written with a purpose in mind, and then we dissect them until we aren't sure what we have left, particularly children's books. These books have brought me many hours of 'pure enjoyment.' I thought for the longest time I was the only one who was still interested in them." Nanette Madding, Paso Robles, CA

"I wrote to Maud when I was expecting our first baby in 1955, telling her that we planned to name our baby Elizabeth, if a girl, and call her Betsy. (We had three sons before our Elizabeth was born and called her Liz!) MHL sent me the sweetest postcard with Betsy, Tacy, and Tib on it, as I recall, saying how happy she was about the expected Betsy! Years later, 1967-1969, we lived in Arcadia, California and I discovered that MHL lived in nearby Claremont. One Sunday afternoon, my daughter Liz and I drove over and dropped in on MHL, without calling or writing first. She was so gracious. She seemed taller to me than 5'4" as Betsy was. I asked about her beautiful complexion and she said she never used soap, but cleaned her face with cold cream." Sally McCracken, Fairview, NC

"Maud Hart Lovelace's books and people have always seemed to be among my best friends. I read them over and over as a child and later as an adult. I feel I learned a great deal from her about history and people. When I visited Mankato in 1980, I learned of her recent death. I was heartsick that her teenage home had been destroyed, but someday I hope that her original home will be purchased by the city and established as a museum." Nancy Netting, Wuhan, Hubei, People's Republic of China

"My mother got me started on the Betsy-Tacy books when I first started reading. My name is Betsey and I lived in Minneapolis. When I was 10 years old, I wrote to Mrs. Lovelace and asked where I could find her homes in Minneapolis. She replied, with a handwritten postcard, that everything had changed so much that she didn't want to give out the old addresses. I'm very sorry to say that postcard got thrown away. I reread my books every year and they are more precious to me every year." Betsey Halter Nieto, Mount Pleasant, MI

"I'm a school librarian, and have made sure that my library has as many of the Betsy-Tacy books as are available. They're quite popular - let's hope for another generation of fans!" Leslie Croce, Germany

"I received a copy of Betsy-Tacy and Tib on my fifth birthday and that began a life-long interest in the 'Betsy' books. I lived each book as it appeared, and Betsy traveled through high school as I did. Last spring (at age 53) I reread all the books in order -- and enjoyed them just as much as I had years ago." Nancy Decker, Albuquerque, NM

"Throughout my childhood, I was a big fan of the Betsy-Tacy books. I love them and still re-read them every year, even though I'm now 38 years old! I own all the Betsy-Tacy books, including Carney's House Party and Emily of Deep Valley. I've always believed that Mrs. Lovelace's novels were among the finest books ever written for children and young people. Luckily, they're still found in public libraries, but usually the entire collection isn't there. That's why I'm glad I have my own copies! I enjoy the books because they've shown me and so many others, what a happy middle class family life was like at the very

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"I'm sure you will understand how exciting it was for me to actually be in 'Deep Valley.' I had never really expected to be able to visit there. I hope it doesn't sound gushy or juvenile to say that it was like a dream come true; a very small, personal dream. When I was in the second grade and had the measles, my mother brought home some library books for me, including Betsy-Tacy, and that is how I got started. I don't know how many times I've read the series including Emily of Deep Valley and Carney's House Party, when I can find them. I think the books are the equivalent of 'comfort food' to me - they're comfort books. It would be very interesting to find out from fans just why they love the books. Maybe for some of us, Betsy lived the childhood and youth we would have liked to have lived. Of course, Mrs. Lovelace's charming writing style is a big factor." Diane Kipp, Vancouver, WA

"What a joy to find there are others who loved these abooks as much as I did. I believe I started reading them around 1940 or so. I forgot the names of the books when I had children but felt there was a favorite character in my childhood books named Stacy. (It was Tacy, of course) and therefore named one of my daughters Stacy after her. It wasn't until I found there is a Betsy-Tacy Society that my memory was jogged to those wonderful books. On my next visit to Minnesota to see my sisters, I hope I can also visit Mankato." Marilyn Jorissen, Tigard, OR

THE GREAT CAKE CONTROVERSY

Maud Hart Lovelace never specified the flavor of Mrs. Kelly's fresh unfrosted cake. In the last newsletter we asked members to send in their feelings on this subject of vital import! If you have an opinion, send it to: Lona Falen, 303 Meadow Woods Drive, Mankato, MN 56001

"I received my Betsy-Tacy newsletter today and was totally surprised to see the article "Mrs. Kelly's Cake Mystery." If someone had asked me, I would have sworn on a stack of Bibles that Mrs. Kelly's cake was chocolate. I don't know if it is because I am a chocoholic or what, but that is what I have always pictured in my mind as I read the books over and over and over. So that is my vote: CHOCOLATE!" Kathy Chevette, Stevensville, MI

"I'm more Hardy Boys than Betsy, but ... I'd say chocolate was pretty special - so special that it certainly would have had a more significant mention in the books, for a celebration, as an example. The Kelly cake would have been quite plain in that place and time ... plain yellow cake." Alan Chevette, Stevensville, MI

"As for Mrs. Kelly's cake - there is no question in my mind that it wasn't chocolate. If it was, it would have been mentioned. One never forgets to talk about chocolate! I always assumed Betsy and Tacy were eating my mother's simple one-egg cake: Cream together 1/2 cup sugar with 1/2 stick butter or margarine. Add one egg and one teaspoon of vanilla. Add one cup of flour, two teaspoons baking powder, and 1/2 cup of milk. Bake in a greased 8" x 8" pan for 20 minutes at 350 degrees. (You could also pour into a muffin tin and make a dozen cupcakes. In the summer I add blueberries.) Johanna Hurwitz, Great Neck, NY

"I definitely always pictured Mrs. Kelly's unfrosted cake as yellow. I don't know why, but I always have ... Maybe it's because I think Maud would have said it was chocolate, if it was." Cary Rich, Stamford, CT

"I would have assumed that it was a spice cake, since it was an old-fashioned cake. It wouldn't have required frosting since it already had a lot of flavor. Mrs. Kelly would have been able to toss in anything she had on hand, such as raisins, nuts, dates, etc." Lois Dethloff, Amboy, MN

"I am a recent member of the Betsy-Tacy Society and I am casting my vote for Mrs. Kelly's cake mystery. I envision it to be a moist yellow cake - something like a sponge or pound cake. I'll gladly contribute some recipes if you'd like. I'm really excited about my membership so far and I plan to attend the picnic at Madison Lake on August 25." Kay Rommel, Rochester, MN

From President Doris Berger: "Recipe for Sour Cream Chocolate cake. This is a prize-winning recipe of Mrs. Marvin Dokken, Benson, MN from WCCO Saturday Morning Open House, 1942.

2 sq. chocolate, 1/2 c. sweet milk, 1 1/2 c sugar, 1 c. sour cream, 3 eggs, 1 tsp soda, 1/2 tsp. salt, 2 c. sifted cake flour, 1 tsp. vanilla.

Method: Melt 2 sq. chocolate and 1/2 c. milk. Cool. Mix 1 1/2 c. sugar and 1 c. sour cream. Beat in 3 eggs, add chocolate mix. Sift together salt, soda, and flour. Beat into batter. Add vanilla. Pour into greased and floured 10 x 10 cake pan. Bake 350 for 40 minutes."

LOVELACE BIOGRAPHY

Sharla Scannell Whalen is expecting delivery in November ... but unfortunately, not of her book! She apologizes for the delays in publication of The Betsy-Tacy Companion, but is now in the final phases of manuscript preparation and expects production to begin imminently.

The Betsy-Tacy Society extends felicitations to Betsy Norum and her family on Betsy's recent recovery from a very serious illness. We cannot be sorry to hear that she is already thinking about the Betsy-Tacy Cookbook, but will be very happy to wait for Betsy's full recovery before expecting her to get down to work with Merian Kirchner and Kelly Reuter.

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Betsy and Tacy climbed up the Big Hill
And stepped straight into my heart.
Along came Tib (a daredevil with curls)
And Winona with her pony cart.

As Betsy wrote stories, they plotted and dreamed
About marrying the King of Spain.
They did the Cat Duet and the Baby Dance
And explored the Secret Lane.

The Carnegie Library and Uncle Keith's trunk
Were all very real to me.
I went with Betsy on her first day of school
And I cried about Baby Bee.

The little yellow cottage holds a special place
In all of our hearts today
And the hills and parks of "Deep Valley"
Are still filled with children at play.

I'm thankful that Betsy grew up and wrote books
About a childhood so happy indeed.
And if she were to look down from heaven above
I think she would be pleased.

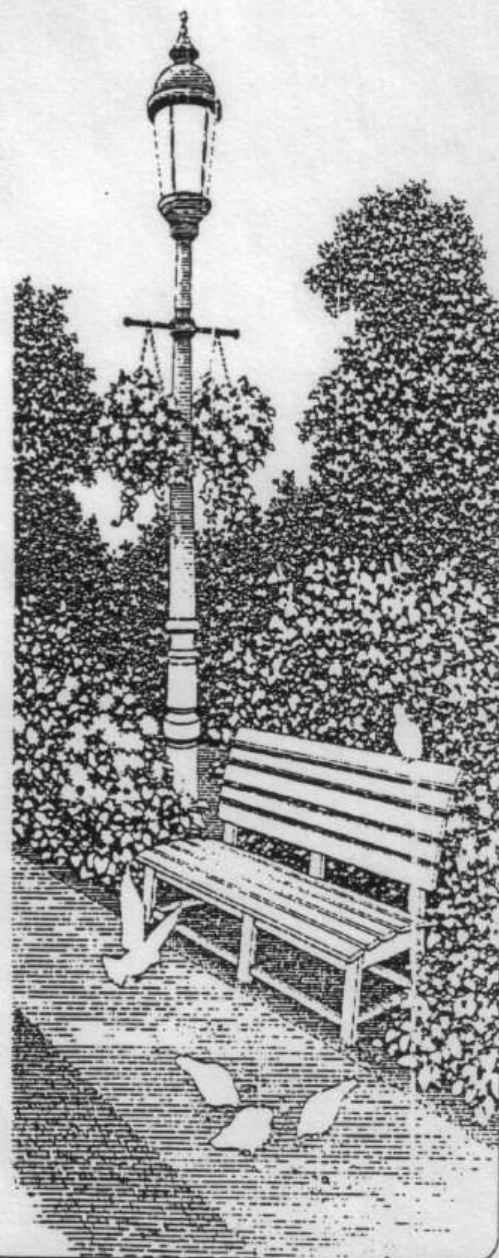
Although she grew up a long time ago,
Some things are still the same.
Children still play and read and daydream
About a future filled with fame.

So many of you who feel as I do
And have read these books with delight,
Now share them with your children
As you tuck them in at night.

Let's try to keep these books alive
For future generations to read.
For books like these that live in our hearts
Start out as a tiny seed.

They start as a seed planted by one
Who wrote for us all to see
That the magic of childhood never really ends...
It still lives within you and me.

Brenda Worsley



IF YOU ARE TRYING TO COMPLETE YOUR COLLECTION

Treasures from the Castle search service has located a few Lovelace books at what are, comparatively, rather reasonable prices.

Betsy-Tacy, 24th printing, library discard, good plus condition, dustjacket taped to cover. \$15.00 postpaid.

Betsy-Tacy Go Downtown, 14th printing, library discard. Dustjacket taped to cover, clean and tight. \$15.00 postpaid.

Heaven to Betsy, 14th printing, library discard in good condition. Dustjacket taped to cover. \$15.00 postpaid.

Betsy and Joe, 12th printing, library discard in good condition, dustjacket taped to cover. \$15.00 postpaid.

Betsy's Wedding, first printing, but library rebound and no dustjacket, good condition. \$20.00 postpaid.

Write to Treasures from the Castle, 1720 N. Livernois, Rochester, MI 48306. Rather than sending a check, send a postcard stating which book(s) you're interested in, and she will let you know what is still available.

A CALL FOR INPUT

We know that many Betsy-Tacy fans always dreamed of becoming authors, as Betsy did. Many of you ARE authors and many of you just like to write -- as Betsy did, you "go wild at the sight of a pencil." Put those pencils to work for us and send us your thoughts about the Lovelace books, suggested goals for the Society, ideas for the convention and for the newsletter. "There was nothing Betsy would have hesitated to write from an epic poem to an advertisement." (Heaven to Betsy p. 229) We're just asking for a few good ideas!

Wanted: The Betsy-Tacy newsletter requests creative ideas from our subscribers! Please send any and all ideas for a NAME (with a Betsyish flavor) for our Newsletter - something appropriately related to the books. Suggestions from local residents include: Deep Valley Sun, Maple Tree Times, or The Hill Street Herald. If you have an inspired idea, please send it to: Lona Falen, 303 Meadow Woods Drive, Mankato Minnesota, 56001

BETSY-TACY SOUVENIRS

The Betsy-Tacy Society sells Maud's last story, "Betsy and Tacy Go Over the Big Ocean," a one-page story, for \$3.00 including postage and handling. You can order Betsy-Tacy paper dolls designed by Kelly Reuter from the Society for \$3.00 per booklet plus \$1.00 postage and handling. Make any checks payable to The Betsy-Tacy Society and send your requests to: Lona Falen, 303 Meadow Wood Dr., Mankato, MN 56001.

Kathleen Baxter has hand-made Betsy, Tacy, Tib, and Winona dolls for sale. For more information please write to: Kathleen Baxter, 50 94th Circle N. W., Unit #201, Coon Rapids, MN 55433.

If anyone has requested any items from the Betsy-Tacy Society and has not received them, please write to: Lona Falen, 303 Meadow Wood Dr., Mankato, MN 56001.

Betsy-Tacy Society
139 Clark/E. Pleasant
Mankato, MN 56001



Wait! Don't Go! It's time to renew your membership!