



THE BETSY-TACY SOCIETY NEWSLETTER #11



SPRING, 1993

"There was the vivid spring sky. There was the spring taste in the air. There were buds swelling on the trees in the wood lot and white bloodroots, pink and lavender hepaticas under wet mats of last year's leaves." BETSY & JOE p. 204

CONVENTION REUNION CANCELLED

The proposed convention reunion has been cancelled for this summer. If anyone is interested in planning a reunion for the summer of '94, please write to Elaine Pappas, 7548 Colorado St., Merrillville, IN 46410. It's not too early to start planning the next big convention, to be held in 1997 (commemorating the 100th anniversary of Betsy's fifth birthday and the beginning of her lifelong friendship with Tacy!). Anyone interested??

LOVELACE BOOKS FOR AUCTION

The Society of Phantom Friends has acquired several Betsy-Tacy books (including a few treasures) which they are auctioning off in an effort to raise funds. The Betsy-Tacy Society has no involvement in this event and will not profit from it in any way, but we are printing the information for those of our members who may be interested. For details about the books available and the rules for the auction, send a self-addressed stamped envelope to Nancy Roberts, 1039 Melrose Avenue, Alameda, CA 94501. Bids must be received by May 15, 1993.

BETSY'S BLOSSOMS TRIVIA QUIZ

by Nancy Cleaveland

I was surprised to find, when I wrote a list of plant trivia questions to Betsy-Tacy friends, that many wrote back saying they had never paid much attention to the plants in the series. Who could NOT notice the plants in the Betsy books?? Take the trivia quiz yourself to see how well you can do. There are questions from each of the ten Betsy books, and one each from WINONA, CARNEY, and EMILY.

We are delighted to introduce Nancy Cleaveland's new "Botany of Betsy" column! Turn to pages 8-9 to learn how to create a Big Hill garden of your own.

1. What was Betsy and Tacy's favorite tree to climb?
2. Why did Betsy say she and Tacy were giving flowers to Aunt Dolly? What flowers did they give her?
3. What had Betsy, Tacy, and Tib been looking for, the first time they climbed the Big Hill and saw Little Syria below?
4. What four scents of perfume did Mrs. Poppy give the girls at Christmas?
5. What two plants did Mr. Ray set out on the lawn of the High Street house? What plant did he transplant from Hill Street?
6. What party dress did Betsy wear Christmas Eve in Milwaukee? What did she wear in her hair?
7. How many different flowers were to appear in the herbariums for Mr. Gaston?
8. What did the usher bring Tacy after she had finished singing her Commencement Day solo? How did Tacy's solo begin?
9. Where did Betsy stay while in Venice?
10. What did Betsy ask for in her wedding bouquet?
11. What did Mr. Root always wait to do until after Winona's birthday?
12. Name the kind of tree Mr. Sibley said got its name for being so tough.
13. What flower did Emily's grandfather wear on his uniform on Decoration Day?

See answers on page 5.

If you would like to ask our Betsy-Tacy botanist to cover any particular topics in her next column, write to Nancy Cleaveland, 3095 Majestic Circle, Avondale Estates, GA 30002-1615.

Minnesota Historical Society to reprint GENTLEMEN FROM ENGLAND

GENTLEMEN FROM ENGLAND, Lovelace's sixth and final historical novel, first published in 1937 and written in collaboration with her husband Delos, is due to be reprinted by the Minnesota Historical Society Press this spring. "I'm particularly fond of this book," says Sally Rubinstein, editor of Borealis Books (the paperback reprint arm of MHS Press). "The Lovelaces capture both the flavor of the English colony and frontier life at the time. There's so much life in this book!" GENTLEMAN FROM ENGLAND will be officially launched in June at the Betsy-Tacy day to take place at the College of St. Catherine's in St. Paul, MN. GENTLEMEN FROM ENGLAND can be ordered directly from MHS Press by calling 1-800-647-7827. You may also order through your local bookstore. The price is \$12.95, ISBN 0-87351-287-1. Shipping will begin in May.

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Newsletter deadlines are Feb. 1, May 1, August 1, and Nov. 1 for the spring, summer, fall, and winter issues, respectively. Please send news and articles to Wendylee Raun, 4244 Alabama Ave. S., Minneapolis, MN 55416.



The Betsy-Tacy Society was formed in Mankato, Minnesota in April, 1990. Members, now numbering nearly 1000, receive the Betsy-Tacy Society quarterly newsletter, to which they are invited to contribute articles and information of interest to other members. We are pleased to print excerpts of your letters as space allows, and assume that you will permit us to do so, unless you request otherwise when writing. Address correspondence to Michele Franck, 294 Chestnut Ave., Boston, MA 02130-4440.

A Betsy-Tacy Society membership form can be found on page 15 of this newsletter.

Members are invited to contribute to the Maud Hart Lovelace house fund. See page 15.

**CALIFORNIA
HERE WE COME**

BTS member Susan MacCulloch writes: "Since I'm moving to a new community, I would welcome contact from any Betsy-Tacy fans in the Sacramento, California area." Susan may be contacted at 2261 River Plaza Dr. #199, Sacramento, CA 95833.

There is a high concentration of Lovelace fans in California. Where are they? The following is a list showing the first two digits of California zip codes in which our members are located.

- zip 90--- 33 members
- zip 91--- 20 members
- zip 92--- 25 members
- zip 93--- 17 members
- zip 94--- 48 members
- zip 95--- 37 members
- zip 96--- 9 members

**SISTER
ORGANIZATIONS**

A good number of our members belong to other groups throughout the country which promote authors as beloved to them as Maud is to us. In case you wish to join them, the following is a partial list:

International Wizard of Oz Fan Club

Fred M. Meyer, Secretary
Box 95
Kinderhook, IL 62345

Their newsletter, "The Baum Bugle," is published three times a year.

Jèannette Newman of Floral Park, NY sent addresses for the following organizations:

Avonlea Traditions

9030 Leslie Street Suite 1
Richmond Hill, Ontario
Canada L4C 7B5

Write for information on their 1993 catalogue of Anne of Green Gables merchandise.

Laura Ingalls Wilder Memorial Society, Inc.

P.O. Box 344
De Smet, SD 57231
605 854-3383

Membership in the Friends of the Ingalls includes 2 issues of Laura Ingalls Wilder LORE. There are several different levels of membership. They also have a flyer with booklets, prints, and postcards for sale.

The Jane Austen Society of North America

Viki Barie
2650 D Matheson Way
Sacramento, CA 95864
The group has 2500 members across Canada and America. Dues are \$15 per year and include a subscription to JASNA NEWS, a bi-annual newsletter, as well as PERSUASIONS, an annual journal.

Susan Stanfield of Manhattan, KS sent additional Wilder addresses:

Laura Ingalls Wilder Memorial Society

P.O. Box 269
Pepin, WI 54758

Almanzo and Laura Ingalls Wilder Association

P.O. Box 283
Malone, NY 12953

ERRATUM - the zip code for the Friends of Gladys Taber was misprinted in the last newsletter. The correct address is:

Friends of Gladys Taber

321 South College Street
Franklin, KY 42134
Attention: Gilbertine Moore

Do you know of other literature groups? Tell us about them!

NOTICES

UPCOMING MEETINGS:

National Board: March 11, April 15, and May 13, 1993 at the Heritage Center, 415 E. Cherry, Mankato, MN.

The first Betsy-Tacy Society Annual Meeting will be held at 7:00 p.m. on April 30, 1993 at the Heritage Center. Call Kay Hocker at 507 280-8348 for more information.

Twin Cities Chapter: May 11, 1993 at the Washburn Public Library in Minneapolis at 7:00 p.m.

Chicago Chapter: March 20, 1993 at the home of Frieda Maheras in Des Plaines, not far from O'Hare. Call Frieda at 708 298-9638 for more information.

Betsy-Tacy PEN PALS



The Betsy-Tacy Society is happy to assist members in forming a penpal network. If you would like to make some new friends through pen and paper, send a few lines about yourself for publication in this column to Wendylee Raun, 4244 Alabama Ave. S., Minneapolis, MN 55416.

*"I am eighteen years old and have loved the Betsy-Tacy books since the age of five, when I received the first three books for my birthday. I am in my first year*at Whitman College, but come from St. Paul, MN. I love to read, and a series I like is The Babysitters Club, by Ann M. Martin, though I also read the classics. I have become very interested in theater and dance while at college. I would love to hear from you." Martha Twomey, Whitman College, P.O. Box 1474, Walla Walla, WA 99362.*

BRIGHT IDEAS

from our members

Barbara Parker
Lockport, IL

"I had an interesting experience lately. I'd heard about Caswell Massey products - especially their almond cold cream soap, and because there are no stores in Illinois I called their 800 number and asked for a product catalogue. It arrived, I looked through it, and was caught off guard by Jockey Club items. They were created more than 100 years ago -- a men's fragrance - do you suppose it's the same Jockey Club Betsy used when she was trying to change herself in BETSY IN SPIRE OF HERSELF??"

Gotta be! The toll-free number for Caswell Massey is 800 326-0500.

Have you sent in a column to the newsletter? Please note that some sections are backlogged several issues' worth - so don't be surprised if you don't see your contribution in print immediately!

The Betsy-Tacy Books as Feminist Literature??

Members might be interested to note that the Betsy-Tacy books were included in Little Miss Muffet Fights Back: A Bibliography of Recommended Non-Sexist Books About Girls for Young Readers. This book was published by Feminists on Children's Media. What kind of role models have **you** found in the Betsy-Tacy books? We would like to hear how our members feel the Lovelace books are "holding up" in the 90's!

A Few Thoughts

by Susan Hackman
Richmond, VA

I want to thank Patricia Hampl for putting into words exactly what the Lovelace books mean to me (in her keynote speech, reprinted in the autumn newsletter). There is so much more substance to the Betsy-Tacy books than there may appear at first reading, and she has captured that deeper meaning beautifully. Thank you for proving to all of us how truly classic these books are.

I discovered the Society too late to attend the convention, and after reading about it in the newsletter, my disappointment is even deeper. But the newsletter itself is a consolation. What a lovely discovery to realize there are so many others who share my feelings for these books. (It's nice to know I'm not the only one who's been chasing after CARNEY'S HOUSE PARTY for half a lifetime!)



BIG BETSY-TACY
DOINGS IN
ST. PAUL AND
CHICAGO THIS
SPRING! SEE
PAGE 6 FOR
DETAILS!

CHAPTER QUERIES

"I would really like to connect with other B-T fans, especially those in the Northern Virginia/Washington, D.C. area interested in forming a chapter." Write to Julie Christian, Box 2267, Springfield, VA 22152.

CHAPTERS COMMITTEE

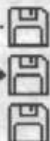
As our "chapter" opens, Lani Jordan (of the Twin Cities) and Melanie Rigney (of Chicago) have completed the first draft of the Betsy-Tacy Society "Chapters Handbook" and will soon be sending it around to national officers for additions, etc. Among the topics covered are program ideas, fund raising, and the relationship between chapters and the national organization. If you would like information about forming a chapter, or if you would like your name kept off the list given to chapters forming in your area, please contact Melanie Rigney, 5000 North Delphia Avenue, Chicago, IL 60656.

UPDATE ON LOVELACE BIOGRAPHY

Sharla Scannell Whalen reports that the revision of her book is at last complete. THE BETSY-TACY COMPANION is a biography of Maud Hart Lovelace, focusing on the period of Maud's life between ages five and twenty-five. The lives of Maud's parents, sisters, and friends are also detailed. The 436-page manuscript is now in the hands of its editor. Unfortunately, the book was originally limited to 384 pages (and space has not yet been made for the insertion of 300 photographs), so the pruning shears are being sharpened. A publication date has not yet been set, but the June BTS Newsletter should provide further information.

NEWSLETTER PRODUCTION

We were very pleased with the wonderful response to our plea for assistance with the newsletter. A fine production staff is evolving! We still need help from anyone with a computer who is willing to do typing. We would be particularly grateful for the assistance of anyone with a laser printer. Write to Sharla Whalen c/o P.O. Box 4774, Naperville, IL 60567.



DON'T FORGET

Send in the ballot on page 15!



BOOKS WANTED

Jennifer Alvarado is desperately seeking a copy of BETSY AND JOE to complete her collection. If you have one you would like to sell, please write to her at 10436 Glenellen Avenue, San Diego, CA 92126.

FROM YOUR FRIENDLY MEMBERSHIP CHAIRPERSON

Thanks so much to all of you who have written to join or renew your membership in the Betsy-Tacy Society. This is a wonderful job, since I feel I get to know each one of you a little bit. Occasionally, I have some difficulty deciphering the writing on the membership forms, and would like to ask you to please PRINT carefully when you fill them out. Be sure to include your area code and your zip code! (Note to those of you who have recently received your bumpersticker — did you notice the return address label on the envelope? No, we haven't changed our name to the Betsy-Tracy society. What would YOU do with 500 misprinted green foil return address labels?) For those who haven't gotten their bumpersticker yet (or the collector's edition misprint label) — I'm way behind, but I haven't forgotten you. Hopefully you'll get one before you get your next car!

Michele Franck

FRIENDS IN HIGH PLACES

John Gaddo
Minnesota Public Radio

Thank you for the most recent copy of the Society's Newsletter. It's helpful in keeping up-to-date on happenings in the Society. We would like you to keep us on the mailing list for the Betsy-Tacy Society Newsletter and other media mailings regarding the Society's activities. Our coverage of this past summer's convention and on-going events is enhanced considerably by the information the Newsletter provides. We wish you continued success as the years go on, and we look forward to promoting the Betsy-Tacy Society's activities in the "Deep Valley" area.

Glenda Kendrick
Washington, D.C.

From 1983-84, I lived in Mankato and used to enjoy going to the library just to reminisce through the Lovelace mural. This fall, as my son and I were driving into Mankato from the west, he was struck -- as I always have been -- by what a truly beautiful community it is. As a true Betsy-Tacy fan, I always felt it was fitting that I would live in Deep Valley -- even for a short while.

For the past ten years I have worked for Congressman Tim Penny who represents the First District, including Mankato, in Congress. He has encouraged First District communities to look for ways to use their assets to promote area tourism. Obviously, the Betsy-Tacy Society has found a way that he (not being a reader of the books) never thought of. That is simply terrific!

Thanks for putting time and energy into this project.



Illustrations are used in this newsletter with the gracious permission of HarperCollins.

Report from Eden Prairie

by Merian Lovelace Kirchner

I'd like to bring Betsy-Tacy people up to date on all the good stuff that's happening in Eden Prairie, MN, home of Alison and Lonny Gulden, and of Deep Valley Creations (the Guldens' Betsy-Tacy merchandise line) and Deep Valley Productions (their TV venture).

If you missed out on the 1992 Deep Valley Creations Christmas card, with its lovely recreation by Denver artist Cheryl Harness of the Rays' Christmas morning the year Mrs. Ray got her brass bowl -- or if you want to order more -- keep an eye on your mailbox. Deep Valley Creations is sending a flyer to Betsy-Tacy Society members only, announcing its first Winter's End sale, with a big discount on leftover cards. But no more Christmas tree ornaments -- they're all sold out.

"We had a very good Christmas season," Alison says. "We'll do a lot of things the same way next time, and some things differently."

One difference -- shipping charges will be lower from now on, and everybody who ordered from the 1992 Christmas catalog will get a gift certificate for a free shipment on a future order.

The spring catalog will come along in April or May. It will offer BETSY IN SPITE OF HERSELF in paperback as well as the first four titles. There'll be new Cheryl Harness notecards, too, and Pink Stationery. (That's a trivia question for you -- which story has pink stationery in it, and why?)

Meanwhile, Deep Valley Productions is in the midst of serious discussions with several major corporations that might be interested in underwriting a TV series based on the stories. Things are really looking good, and I hope we'll be able to tell you a lot more in the next Betsy-Tacy Society Newsletter.

P.S. Perhaps most of you know, but everybody should -- Alison and Lonny are going to donate 15% of Deep Valley Creations' net profits to the Society to help buy the Betsy-Tacy houses we've got our eye on.

TIES TO THE PAST

by Kristen Foster
Columbus, OH

Words cannot describe how happy I am to have found the Betsy-Tacy Society through VICTORIA magazine. Not only was BETSY-TACY a childhood favorite of mine, but the book is also a part of my heritage that has several missing links. I am so happy to have found a group of people that may be able to solve the puzzle as well as foster my appreciation for Maud Hart Lovelace.

A brief synopsis of my family story goes something like this: my great-great-grandfather, Frederick Widell, owned a mining operation and several blocks of downtown Mankato, as well as the Widell Company - these things seem to be lost from family history, because we know so little about them! My mother spent many summers in Mankato as a small child, visiting her grandparents, Gustav and Freya Widell, but remembers very little of it.

I, unfortunately, have never been to Mankato. My great-grandmother, however, left a family heirloom to the children: a copy of BETSY-TACY. She apparently bought one of the first copies in print, because the book is quite old and fragile. The book has quite a bit of my heritage that I cannot explain. The inside cover of the book has a map of the town in which BETSY-TACY took place. However, my great-grandmother marked several of the houses as "aunt Mary's house" and "Grandma Charlotte's house." This has always confused the family, because we lacked any knowledge of the history of BETSY-TACY or Maud Hart Lovelace. Someone in the family had also heard that my great-grandmother had been friends with Mrs. Lovelace.

I feel that there are connections between all these elements and I can't quite figure it all out. I have never had any concrete proof that BETSY-TACY was connected to Mankato, so the most startling part of the puzzle was when I saw that the Betsy-Tacy Society is based in Mankato. Coincidence seemed an unlikely conclusion. This gave me hope that BETSY-TACY really is connected to my past. This book has been in my family for four generations, and carries a great sentimental factor, too. I am so curious to find out information on BETSY-TACY, Maud Hart Lovelace, Mankato, and my heritage that I nearly screamed with joy when VICTORIA ran the address of your Society.

Even if there is no connection at all, I am still elated to have found fellow BETSY-TACY readers. This book has been in my family library for so long and is so old that I wasn't sure any other human being alive knew about it! My family is spread all across the country, but they are all quite curious about your Society. I only wish I could see Mankato as it was when my grandparents first came from Sweden, but nonetheless I can't wait to see it soon!

Ed. note - Kristen was delighted to discover that there are TEN Betsy-Tacy books - she had thought there was only the one, BETSY-TACY. We have also put Kristen in contact with Sharla Scanneil Whalen, who has made more than a passing acquaintance with turn-of-the-century Mankato.

Answers to Trivia Questions (from page one)

1. Backyard maple.
2. Because she was so pretty - asters and goldenrod.
3. Violets.
4. Violet, new mown hay, rose, and lilac.
5. Bridal wreath and hydrangea - a vine.
6. Daisy dress with daisies in her hair.
7. Fifty.
8. Corsage of tiny white flowers - "Sylvia, take the lily, daffodil."
9. House of the Yellow Roses.
10. Anything ... and forget-me-nots.
11. He didn't rake the autumn leaves.
12. Ironwood tree.
13. A snowball.

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Write or Call for CHILDREN'S & ILLUSTRATED CATALOG 1

PAGE BOOKS

HCR 65, Box 233
Kingston, AR 72742
501 861-5831

Currently I have no Betsy-Tacy books in stock, but I am always looking for them. I do have many other out-of-print books by authors Betsy-Tacy fans like, such as de Angeli, Lenski, Coatsworth, Sawyer, Field, Montgomery, Sereby, Taylor, and many others. I also search for children's books and have many not listed in this catalog, so your want lists are welcome.

Maggie Page

MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

NATIONAL BOARD

The **Annual Meeting** of the Betsy-Tacy Society will take place at 7:00 p.m. on Friday, April 30, 1993 at the Heritage Center in Mankato. The agenda includes:

- Call to Order
- Financial Report
- Old Business
- New Business
- Election of three Directors to the Board

(Ballots may be mailed in if one cannot attend. Registration for those voting at the meeting will be from 6:30 to 7:00 p.m.)

Program/Social Time

April was important in Maud's life as it was her birth month. From the descriptions in her children's books, Maud obviously loved birthday parties ... therefore, a birthday party is being planned! Each person attending should bring an object to share, representing some aspect of a turn-of-the-century birthday party.

The by-laws of the Betsy-Tacy Society state that there shall be a minimum of nine Directors and a maximum of twelve who will serve for three-year terms. There are presently nine Directors. Names were drawn to see when the terms of these nine would expire, as well as those listed on the ballot. The by-laws state that the Board of Directors will meet immediately after the annual meeting to elect the officers. An officer need not be a Director.

Present Board of Directors:

Term expiring in 1994: Doris Berger, Kay Hocker, Shirley Lieske.
in 1995: Kathryn Hanson, Linda Karow, Joan Landas.
in 1996: Lona Falencykowski, Alison Gulden, Kelly Reuter.

TWIN CITIES CHAPTER

The Twin Cities holiday event was a great success. It was held at Borders Bookshop near Ridgedale Center in Minnetonka, MN on Saturday, December 12, 1992. There were cookies and cider and a readers theater. Members Arlene Kase, Megan Weyrens, Michael Dahl, Karen Hoyle, and Antonia Brouillette performed the Christmas party chapter from *BETSY AND TACY GO DOWNTOWN*. The event had been publicized in a Girl Scout newsletter, drawing nine Brownie troops to Borders. In all, about 200 people were in attendance. More than one hundred forty little girls entered a drawing for a handmade cloth doll (crafted by president Kathleen Baxter). A display of photographs and Lois Lenski drawings, loaned by the Minneapolis Public Library, made the event complete.

The Twin Cities Chapter is planning a Betsy-Tacy and Tib day at the College of St. Catherine in St Paul. The day will focus on the educational aspects of Maud Hart Lovelace and the Betsy-Tacy series. Continuing education credits will be available to teachers. The day will feature a straight program, rather than a menu of choices, and will run from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Opening ceremonies will feature an introduction by Minnesota author Susan Allen Toth, followed by a keynote address by New York Times columnist Anna Quindlen (who is a lifetime member of the

Betsy-Tacy Society). Other programs include JoAnne Ray's presentation of a biographical sketch of Maud. There will also be a children's program for kids ages six to twelve.

Guests can purchase the Betsy-Tacy books as well as books by Susan Allen Toth and Anna Quindlen, whose book *THINKING OUT LOUD* comes out in April.

If any Twin Cities Chapter members have not yet received information about this event, they may call Laura Weber at 612 822-3574. Since the Twin Cities Chapter is such a large one, and space is limited, it is anticipated that it will not be possible to open this event to the public. TCC members should register promptly.

GREATER CHICAGO CHAPTER

On January 23, 1993, the Chicago Chapter of the Betsy-Tacy Society met at the home of Katrine Poe. As we feasted on mini-quiches and other goodies, we reviewed the jobs of our chapter officers. Under consideration is a newsletter for the Greater Chicago Chapter.

Our BIG program meeting will take place on April 25, 1993. This celebration of Maud Hart Lovelace's 101st birthday will include a Betsy-Tacy talk by Sharla Whalen, videos about MHL and Betsy, the Cat Duet, and of course, plenty of time for talking, eating, and Betsy-Tacy souvenir buying. After a great deal of investigation on the part of several members, the Chicago Historical Society has been chosen as the best location for this event. The Chicago Historical Society is located at the corner of North Avenue and Clark Street, near the Lincoln Park Zoo. The program will begin at 1:00 p.m. For further information, contact Diane Gonzales at (312) 337-5962 or Elaine Pappas at (219) 942-5563. We plan to have a wonderful program and hope for a tremendous turn-out!

"Mama," Betsy cried. "Mrs. Muller wants me to come to Milwaukee for Christmas." And so does the Greater Chicago Chapter. Well, not for Christmas, but tentatively for December 4, 1993. Debbie Tranchita and Melanie Rigney are looking into a holiday day trip (or overnight for the real hard cores) to Milwaukee. (Located only about two hours north of Chicago!) The Pabst Theatre is still there, not to mention a host of wonderful German foods we can sample. Hopefully, we'll be able to do a driving tour to some of the sites featured in *BETSY IN SPITE OF HERSELF*. Chicago Chapter members who plan to make this trip would especially like to hear from BTS members in the Milwaukee area who might be able to help us put this thing together. Contact Melanie Rigney at 312 625-2430 if you want to help and watch this space for developments.

If anyone would like to add our Greater Chicago Chapter **bookmark** to their collection of Betsy-Tacy memorabilia, please send a self-addressed stamped envelope and \$1 to Elaine Pappas, 7548 Colorado St., Merrillville, IN 46410.

Book Hunting Made Easy

by Nancy Roberts

Have you been searching unsuccessfully for those elusive Betsy-Tacy books to complete your collection? Let Nancy Roberts, book-hunter extraordinaire, guide you on your quest.

In real estate, the thing to remember is location, location, location. In book-hunting, the byword is network, network, network.

Tell your friends, relatives, and the people behind you in line at Safeway about your collection. At parties, mention onion sandwiches when you're passing the onion dip. Write to the names you see in newsletters; call people who live nearby. Make fifty copies of your want list and mail them. Attend conferences. Carry your Betsy-Tacy book bag when you go places. Sure, you'll get a reputation as The Book Lady (maybe the Weird Book Lady). As nicknames go, it's a winner.

Call all the libraries within a fifty-mile radius (or whatever) and find out when they have their book sales. Check out rummage sales and flea markets. Train (or bribe) your spouse and children to serve as additional eyes.

Visit used bookstores periodically and make friends with the owners. Many bookstores have search services (check for charges and requirements). When you travel, study the yellow pages for the bookstores and thrift stores you can visit en route. Many bookstores give out lists of antiquarian bookstores and upcoming sales.

Advertise in collectors' newsletters. I haven't had much luck with newspaper advertising but some collectors have. Unless the ad space is free, I doubt that ads are worth the cost unless you are willing to buy in quantity. One book dealer reminds collectors that churches sometimes have libraries, and will consider trades or donations if you spot that certain book. In model homes, I can't resist studying the "books-by-the-yard." I haven't yet found a treasure, but hope springs eternal.

Some collectors subscribe to newsletters, but never attend conferences or talk to other collectors. They write checks rather than letters. They don't know what they're missing: the fun, the friends, the excitement. While book collecting perhaps impoverishes one's wallet, it profoundly enriches one's life.

Nancy Roberts is a former high school English teacher who now works in her local library. An avid reader of adult and girls' series books (including of course the Betsy-Tacys), she is also a co-editor of "The Whispered Watchword" and a columnist for the "Mystery Reader's Journal." One of Nancy's greatest finds was a Judy Bolton book for \$1, worth \$500!



Nancy Roberts - in her element!

BETSY-TACY AND I

by Alisha Adams

I remember distinctly the day I picked up my first Betsy-Tacy book. It was in the library of St. Mary's School in Bird Island, MN. I was in seventh grade. Like Betsy, I would wander in and out of the library as often as I possibly could. I understood the reverence that Maud Hart Lovelace gave to visiting the library. I felt it myself. When I entered the library at school, I could almost feel the books talking to me. As in every library there was that wonderful mysterious and eerie feeling. I too would spend countless hours reading and looking for books.

That year, I read through the whole Betsy-Tacy series for the first time. The closeness and resemblance Betsy and I shared was incredible. The most prominent understanding I had with Betsy was the need to write.

From a very early age, I discovered a love of writing, and I soon realized that writing was not only something I loved to do, but something I needed to do. My friends always regarded me as "the writer" as Tacy and Tib regarded Betsy. Like Maud Hart Lovelace I have kept careful journals since elementary school.

The other love Betsy and I shared was the love of Minnesota. I understood the small town simplicity. The understanding that such things as the changing of the seasons in Minnesota, the beginning of each school year, Christmas, and graduation all have such an impact in one's life. They seem all the more special in Minnesota.

I think every Betsy-Tacy lover finds that her favorite aspect of the books is the friendship they feel with the characters. There is such a closeness. Like me, Betsy also got reprimanded in English class for using too many commas, she suffered through algebra and still got into college, she had crushes on boys, and still had many, many, fun times.

This fall I received my first copy of the Betsy-Tacy Newsletter. It was such a surprise and delight to me! I had no idea so many people loved the Betsy-Tacy books! Already the Society has become a wonderful part of my life. I've heard from so many great people that understand my love for the books.

I have never seen the sights in Mankato that Maud wrote about, but I'm sure that day will be a very important and emotional one for me. Maud Hart Lovelace has made such an impact on my life. When my senior year ends this spring and I set out into the "great world" I will surely bring along my Betsy-Tacy books and my journal. My only hope is that through my writing I can create classics and make as many wonderful friends as Maud Hart Lovelace did.



Alisha

THE BOTANY OF BETSY

by Nancy Cleaveland



"But I should have been interested (in making a herbarium), at least," says Betsy in *BETSY AND JOE*.
"I'm certainly crazy enough about flowers."

Betsy was certainly crazy about flowers. From my very first reading of BETSY-TACY almost thirty years ago – to my most recent rereading of BETSY'S WEDDING, I have paid careful attention to just what flowers and plants were mentioned in each book and the passages in which they were introduced. But I didn't stop there!

I have spent my whole adult life trying to collect those plants mentioned in the books. I planted bridal wreath and hydrangea bushes on the lawn. I delight in my forget-me-nots and bleeding heart. I planted a backyard maple, willows, and a honey locust (and am patiently waiting for it to grow large enough to have an "Emily" bench built around it). Of course, I planted an apple tree. I had to see for myself that apple blossoms really were "rosy." (They are.) I have honeysuckle and morning glories (even those bluish-pink ones). I have brown-eyed susans, columbine, hollyhocks, lupine, nasturtiums, and roses. Didn't I spend summer after summer on my knees in the back yard, pulling out blades of grass until I was left with a solid field of violets? Why, my own bridal bouquet had been pink roses and blue forget-me-nots above a shower of white satin ribbons. Like Betsy, I wasn't taking any chances...

SPRING COMES TO THE BIG HILL

"...they went up to the Big Hill. It was the most enchanting moment of the spring. The heat had brought out little light green leaves on all the trees. Wild plum trees were in bloom, white and fragrant. They were full of bees and the grasses were full of flowers."

BETSY WAS A JUNIOR

Betsy, Tacy, and Tib had put off making their herbariums for Mr. Gaston's botany class until the night before they were due. But what did it matter? Betsy knew that the Big Hill was "simply covered with flowers." They could find fifty different kinds without any problem. Perhaps they could, but I could find only thirty flowers in the Betsy books mentioned as growing on the Big Hill. Not even all of these were spring flowers. Of course, Maud couldn't write about every single plant growing on the Big Hill, but what about those she did include? **Could we recreate a Big Hill garden in our own yards?**

What you can grow in your own garden depends on the amount of sunlight it receives, the soil type, the drainage, and the type of trees around the area. If you transplant wildflowers from a threatened spot, be sure to check their surroundings before moving them, and try to duplicate these conditions in your own garden. If you order plants from a nursery, check on their growth requirements before setting them out in your garden. Finally, please note: many wildflowers are now either threatened or endangered. Never dig flowers from the wild without permission.

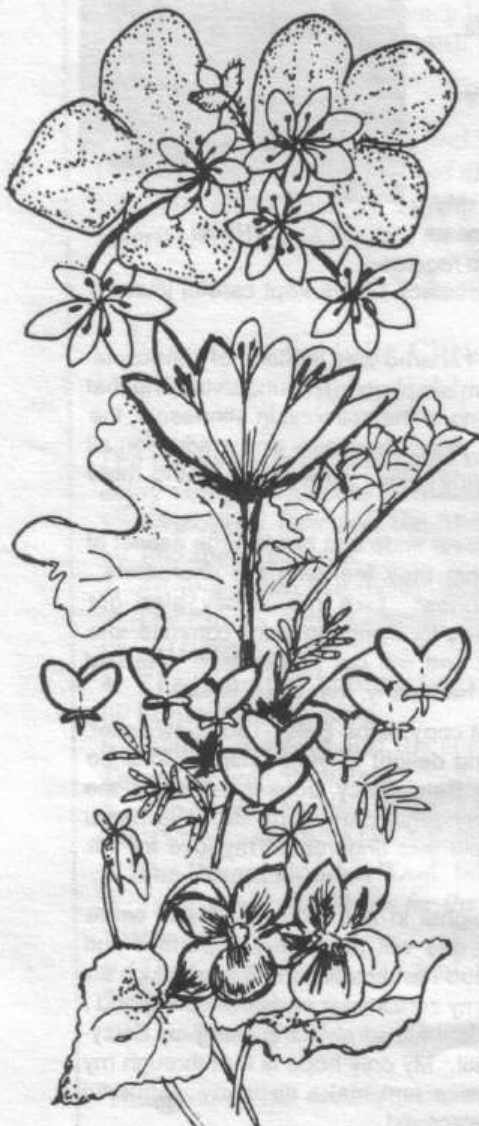
Let's start with the "favorite four" – VIOLETS, HEPATICAS, BLOODROOTS, and DUTCHMEN'S BREECHES. In most Betsy-Tacy books, these are mentioned in combination.

HEPATICAS or LIVERLEAF *Hepatica americana*

Early-blooming hepaticas symbolize spring to many wildflower lovers. The blossoms of the hepatica are among the smallest of the spring flowers. They actually have no petals, but they do have six sepals that resemble petals, and these may be blue, lavender, pink, or white. They may be grown from seed or by the division of existing clumps. Hepaticas are evergreen, so they bloom on the previous year's weather-beaten leaves. New fuzzy leaves and stems follow the flowers.

BLOODROOTS *Sanguinaria canadensis*

As a bloodroot peeps through the leaves on the ground, a single leaf is wrapped protectively around each bud. Only when the leaves have determined that it is warm enough for survival will they uncurl and reveal the delicate blossoms. Bloodroots will seed pods. If the leaves, stems, or roots are crushed, bright orange-red juice flows out – hence the name.



DUTCHMAN'S BREECHES *Dicentra cucullaria*

The flowers of dutchman's breeches are locket-shaped and nodding yellow tipped white spurs above bluish-green leaves. They stand five to six inches tall in moist, peaty soil, but die down after flowering in mid-spring. The easiest way to start a new clump is to divide an existing one. Cuttings are very hardy and will produce roots.

VIOLETS *Viola spp*

The many species of violas, violettas, and violets are the true perennial relatives of pansies. They are perhaps the most easily identified wildflower in the spring and the most prolific. Once established, violets almost can't be stopped. They are popular for edges and as underplantings for shrubs or trees. Leaves are ovate or heart-shaped, and flowers range from white to deep purple. Plants thrive in well drained, but moist soil, and spread by runners.

DOG-TOOTHED VIOLET *Erythronium Americanum*

What Tacy called the "dog-toothed violet" is actually not a violet at all, but a member of the lily family. They are also called "trout lilies," due to the coloring of the speckled leaves. The underground roots, however, are white and do resemble dogs' teeth. The tiny bulbs produce yellow freckled flowers which arch gently over the foliage. The plants are from two to six inches high, and can be found blooming on sunny days in the spring. On dreary days, they don't even open their flowers at all!

JACK-IN-THE-PULPIT *Arisaema triphyllum*

Jack-in-the-pulpit grows from twelve to thirty inches tall and has bright green, three-part leaves that rise above the blossom. But it is the unique bloom which attracts our attention. The flower, or "Jack," rises as an erect stalk covered with tiny blooms from within a modified leaf that makes a canopy over him and curves to form his pulpit. The canopy and pulpit may be either solid green or green striped with purple and "Jack" himself is greenish. Jack-in-the-pulpits bloom in rich, moist woods or wet swamplands. In the fall, they produce ruby red berries at their stem ends. They grow from underground tubers and can be divided for new plants, or offshoots can be separated and planted.

INDIAN PAINTBRUSH *Castilleja coccinea*

As the name implies, the blooms of this plant look like paintbrushes that have been dipped in flaming red paint. The color comes not from the flowers themselves, which are yellow-green, but from modified leaves which enfold each blossom. The foliage is slender and dull and ranges indiscriminately up the stems. Indian paintbrush lives in damp fields and at the edges of woods.

FALSE SOLOMON'S SEAL *Smilacina raemosa*

False Solomon's seal has the bright green, deeply lined leaves of true Solomon's seal, but its flowers are completely different. The flowers of false Solomon's seal remind us of puffy white plumes decorating the tops of zig-zag stems. The plants are one to two feet tall, and have yellow autumn foliage and clusters of blue-black berries. The plants can be propagated by dividing clumps.

WAKE ROBINS *Trillium spp*

Betsy's wake robins, or trilliums, are rhizomatous plants with whorls of three leaves under solitary three-petaled flowers at the top of each stem. They grow to six inches tall in humus-rich soil in light shade. Rhizomes can be dug and transplanted in early spring. The color of the flowers can be white or light pink.

SPRING BEAUTY *Claytonia virginica*

As one of the earliest spring wildflowers, spring beauty's clusters of pretty pink flowers peep above ribbony foliage in moist open woodlands. The tiny five-petaled flowers have deep pink veins that look hand-painted. The plants grow from underground tubers. Spring beauty is not a common wildflower in any part of the country. If you're lucky enough to find one, don't pick it, because picking the blossoms actually can cause the delicate plant to die.



Wildflowers were not all that grew on Betsy's Big Hill in the spring. Some flowers are so common today that almost any nursery sells seeds to them. **LUPINE, COLUMBINE, SWEET PEAS, and MORNING GLORIES** can be planted in the early spring for flowers into the summer months. There are countless possibilities in the flowering of our own "Big Hills." What flowers will you plant underneath your thorn apple tree, your Easter egg tree, your oaks, elms, and maples??

WHAT ARE YOU READING WHEN YOU'RE NOT READING BETSY-TACY??

"What are you reading?..." is a regular feature of the Betsy-Tacy Society Newsletter. Let us know what you're reading and what you love to reread. Send your literary lists and comments to: Stephanie Smith, 824 Kirkwood, Winthrop Harbor, IL 60096. Please note - we have a backlog of several issues worth of the WAYR column, so it may be some time before your submission appears!

by Tiffany Holmes
New York, NY

In answer to "What are you reading?" I recommend the following:

- *Northanger Abbey* by Jane Austen.
- L. M. Montgomery's *Anne* books (and the *Chronicles of Avonlea* discussing same).
- *The House of Mirth* by Edith Wharton.
- *The Tragic Muse* by Henry James (not to be confused with his friend Edith Wharton's *The Muse's Tragedy*).

P.S. "I'd love to correspond, and I write enormous letters." (Betsy, in *Betsy and the Great World*.)
Ed. note: please write to Tiffany or any other contributors to WAYR in care of the address above.



by Julie Christian
Springfield, VA

The following is a list of other books I treasure and enjoy along with those of Maud Hart Lovelace:

1. *Gone-Away Lake* and the Melendy Family books by Elizabeth Enright.
2. *All-of-a-Kind Family* by Sydney Taylor.
3. The "Shoes" and "Gemma" series by Noel Streatfeild.
4. The "Jennifer" books, especially *Jennifer Dances* by Eunice Smith Young.
5. *Daddy Long Legs* and the sort-of sequel *Dear Enemy* by Jean Webster.
6. *The Ballet Family*, *Ballet Family Again*, and the *Drina* series by Mabel Esther Allan.
7. The Rumor Godden "Doll" books.
8. *From Anna* and *Listen for the Singing* by Jean Little.
9. *The Golden Name Day* and *The Crystal Tree* by Jennie Lindquist.
10. *Understood Betsy* by Dorothy Canfield.

This is just what occurs to me at the moment!



by Katie Watts
Petaluma, CA

What am I reading? I noticed Elizabeth Goudge's *The Little White Horse* was mentioned in a previous column, but readers should also look for her *Linnets and Valerians*, a choice title for a dear book as well as her perennial favorite, *Green Dolphin Street*. Don't neglect the Edward Eager books: *Half Magic*, *Magic by the Lake*, *Knight's Castle*, *The Time Garden*, *Magic or Not*, *The Well-Wishers*, and *Seven-Day Magic*. Impossible to find but worth looking for is *Auntie Robbo* by Ann Scott-Moncrieff (you should have seen me dancing up and down in the used book store the day I found that one)!

Lucia Duff (and everyone else) should hunt up Betty MacDonald's other three books: *The Plague and I*, *Anybody Can Do Anything*, and *Onions in the Stew*. Also MacDonald wrote an early children's book, *Nancy and Plum*, which is dated and simplistic if you choose to look at it that way, but great for reading aloud to eight-year-olds. Our local library is a peach and got it for us last Christmas for a week only (why I can't imagine, since it can't be that popular). The boys and I raced through it. One of the lines was so funny we've added it to the Chez Watts lexicon.

Does anyone remember the Janet Lambert books, primarily the ones about the Parrishes and the Jordons? In particular, *Don't Cry Little Girl* was almost ruined by all the girls (yours truly included) who took it out and cried all over it.

Time travel fans should know of John R. Maxim's *Time Out of Mind*, plus the Jack Finney classics and Richard Matheson's *Bid Time Return* (published in paperback as *Somewhere in Time* to get more sales from the movie titles recognition).

I have an unknown (to me) Frances Hodgson Burnett called *The Lost Prince* that I can't seem to get around to - anyone read it? Is it as good as *A Little Princess*

WHAT ARE YOU READING WHEN YOU'RE NOT READING BETSY-TACY??

continued

and *The Secret Garden*? I stumbled on one of her adult books - what a mistake! It almost gave me diabetes, the heroine was sooooo good, and sooooo worthy, and sooooo virtuous, and because she was such a paragon she lived happily ever after in a book sooooo Victorian that "limbs" probably weren't even mentioned, let alone "legs." How she ever managed to get pregnant and give birth without the author once alluding to it in other than the most heavily-veiled terms was a real tribute to Burnett's vocabulary -- and my endurance!

If anyone is reading to younger children, our favorites are the four Alistair books by Marilyn Sadler and the incredible Hungry Three quartet by Russell Hoban and Colin MacNaughton. These were such a hit Chez Watts that when I found they were out of print I wrote to the publisher and bought all four. They are, in order: *They Came to Aarrgh!*, *The Great Gum Drop Robbery*, *The Battle of Zormla*, and *The Flight of Bembel Rudzuk*. Quirky, clever, perfectly written, delightful for adults and children. Hoban is best known for his dear Frances books, but should also be known for these and for the two Captain Najork books: *How Tom Beat Captain Najork and His Hired Sportsmen* and its sequel, *A Near Thing for Captain Najork*, a book my husband cannot read without laughing out loud.



by Joanne Forman
Ranchos De Taos, NM

I am a composer by trade, and my current project is an opera (my seventh) on Jane Austen's *Lady Susan*; I daresay I've read it more closely than anyone except the author.

My work (and the reading for it) is so intense, and I don't have a working TV, so I'm a voracious reader of genre literature. I read *The Wind in the Willows* every October. I read Georgette Heyer's Regency novels over and over, and also enjoy Ellis Peters' Brother Cadfael novels, Anne Perry's Victoriana, and James Lee Burke. Also enjoyed a Victorian trilogy by Philip Pullman, though labeled "Young Adult," I found the adventures of feisty Sally Lockhart very enjoyable.



by Virginia Wilhelm
New York, NY

I've been an avid reader since the age of six -- I loved libraries so much that I became a librarian and did children's work. And my first favorites were the wonderful Betsy-Tacy books -- I'm so glad to have found the society and all the other fans that I never knew about.

I have always favored books with a slightly historical background -- my other childhood favorites were *Little Women* and *Hitty* by Rachel Field. I reread them almost as often as I did the Betsy-Tacy books. I quite naturally progressed into the English novels as I got older -- Jane Austen, the Brontes, and Anthony Trollope. I also loved the Regency romances of Georgette Heyer, and a recent book that kept me spellbound was *Possession* by A. S. Byatt.



WHAT ARE YOU WRITING WHEN YOU'RE NOT READING BETSY-TACY

Books by Betsy-Tacy Society members. (Most recent titles given.)

Ilene Cooper:

Series

Frances in the Fourth Grade

*Kids from Kennedy Middle School**

Johanna Hurwitz:

Ali Baba Bernstein, Lost and Found 1992

E is for Elisa 1991

Roz and Ozzie 1992

School's Out! 1991

Pamela Jane

Just Plain Penny 1990

Marilyn Kaye:

The Atonement of Mindy Wise 1991

Series

Camp Sunnyside Friends, Changes Romance

Little Mermaid Novels, Portraits Collection

Sisters, Teddy Bear, Three of a Kind

Cheryl Harness:

The Queen with the Bees in Her Hair 1993

Henry Holt, ISBN 0-8050-1715-1

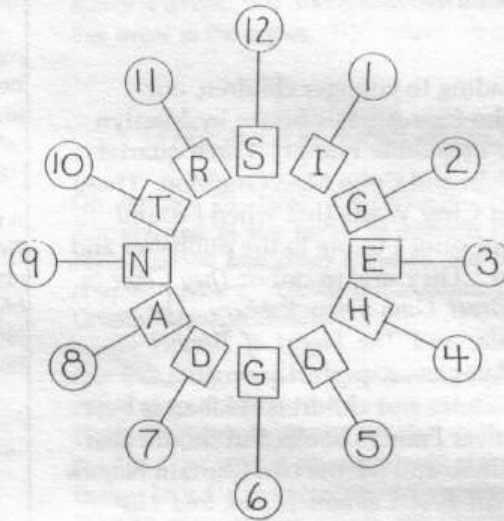
CHILDREN'S PAGE

by Renea Ratzloff
Mankato, MN

MAKE TIME FOR BETSY, TACY, AND TIB

Figure out the times according to the word problems below. Enter the answers in the triangles given. Find the letter corresponding with the time in the triangle in the circle above and place that letter in the square below it. If done correctly, you will find some advice from Betsy Ray.

1. Tacy's birthday party began at 1:00, and lasted 5 hours. Put the answer in Triangle #7.
2. Betsy was meet Tib at 12:00 at the library, but she got there 1 hour earlier. Put the answer in triangle #11.
3. Mr. Ray said supper would be ready at 4:00, but the gang did not show up until 2 hours later. Put the answer in triangle #10.
4. Tib was at the bench by 6:00 as planned, but Betsy had been waiting for an hour already. Put the answer in triangle #4.
5. School normally let out at 3:00, but due to a blizzard it let out 2 hours early. Put the answer in triangle #8.
6. Everything soup should have been done by 11:00, but it took 4 hours longer due to the stove breaking down. Put the answer in triangle #12.
7. Betsy, Tacy and Tib began Christmas shopping at 10:00, and went home 5 hours later. Put the answer in triangle #2.
8. It took Betsy, Tacy and Tib 4 hours to make all the bottles of colored sand they were planning to sell. They started at 9:00. What time did they finish up? Put the answer in triangle #5.
9. Tib was sure the play began at 9:00, but she ended up being an hour late. When did the play really begin? Put the answer in triangle #3.



10. Betsy's plane was to leave at 6:30, but she ended up waiting 3 hours longer. Put the answer in triangle #6.
11. It's 1:00. Joe was to pick Betsy up 2 hours ago. Put the answer in triangle #1.
12. It's 5:00, but Tacy's clock read 3 hours later. Put the answer in triangle #13.
13. When Tib awoke, she thought it was 3:30. However, it was really 7 hours later. Put the answer in triangle #14.
14. Betsy was to be home from the prom by 11:00, but she came in 1 hour later. Put the answer in triangle #9.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
△	△	△	△	△	△	△	△	△	△	△	△	△	△
□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□

Young Maud Hart Lovelace fans are invited to send us their Betsy-Tacy artwork for publication on this page c/o Bonnie Lai, 778 29th Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94121-3516.

ANSWER: READING IS GREAT

From Our Mailbox

*We'd love to hear from you! Address correspondence to:
Michele Franck, Corresponding Secretary, 294 Chestnut Ave., Boston, MA 02130-4414.
Should you wish to respond to one of the letter-writers below, please address her c/o Michele.*

"I am nine years old. I really love the Betsy-Tacy books. I really enjoy them. How I got to know them: it all started in third grade. Well everyone was trading books in the school library. I was just rummaging through the books when I found one I really liked. I started reading it during the summer. It's just like my best friend and I. P.S. My favorite chapter is in the first book, when Betsy told a story about them sailing on a feather." Dana Melichar, Alexandria, LA

"I am a children's author (middle-grade and YA novels) who credits my love of writing for children in part to Maud Hart Lovelace, whose Betsy-Tacy books (and aspiring writer-heroine Betsy Ray) entertained me for much of my childhood. Recently I sat down and reread every book of hers I could find, including hard-to-find volumes like EMILY OF DEEP VALLEY. I was delighted to hear about the Betsy-Tacy Society." Kathryn Reiss, Oakland, CA

"My goodness, a whole organization of Betsy-Tacy fans! And I thought I was the only person ever entranced by these books, and who has been pushing them on my own daughters since before they could read (a summer vacation with nightly readings of Betsy and Tacy at ages six and three!)." Jenni Buhr, Hingham, MA

"I was tickled to see the article in VICTORIA about the Betsy-Tacy goings-on in Mankato this past summer, as well as the Society and newsletter. It was also a wonderful surprise to find the story of Betsy's first solo trip to the library in Susan Allen Toth's anthology "Reading Rooms" which I read last year. I had always read these stories in weathered, yellowed books. It was a novel experience to see such a story on a crisp, white page and see how well it translated to a contemporary book." Christina Rukavina, New Orleans, LA

"I am so thrilled that I'm not the only one who loves the Betsy-Tacy books and have for over 35 years!"
Linda Treap, Dearborn, MI

"I am so excited to find I am not alone in the world. I grew up in "Deep Valley" reading the Betsy-Tacy series. As a child, in the fifties, I was very ill and those books were my best friends. I religiously read them to this day once (maybe twice) a year. I have introduced my two daughters to the series. While on a visit to Mankato in the fall of 1973, I stopped by the Public Library (then in the old building) and my favorite librarian (whom I had known all my reading life) gave me the sad news that the books could possibly go out of print. On my return home to Southern California, I immediately raced to my favorite bookstore and ordered the series. I gave them to my infant daughter for her first Christmas (you know that they will never leave this house!). They are now tattered and worn (just like the ones in the Mankato Library). My daughters and I have adored them for years. My youngest, Elizabeth, is fourteen and I still read them to her. I wish I could have met Maud to thank her for the hours of pleasure derived from those wonderful stories, to hear first hand what Mankato was like in those days."
Mary Kaye Adams, Pasadena, CA

"It was a thrill to me to hear the Betsy-Tacy Society existed. I truly did think 'I was the only one' out here on the West Coast! (I read all the books, growing up.)" Georgie Marie Decker, Seattle, WA

"Yes! Yes! I LOVED Betsy-Tacy (and Tib). I would love to become a member of the Society. I'm a middle school librarian on Long Island and started a similar sort of thing with a group of girls in my school -- The Anne Club - Anne of Green Gables - we all became 'Annies'! What fun we had!" Adrienne Davidson, Smithtown, NY

"I could hardly believe my eyes when I read the article in the July '92 edition of VICTORIA concerning the Betsy-Tacy Society Convention. If I had only known sooner of the Society's existence, I would have happily planned our family vacation around the Convention. Your image of a true Betsy-Tacy fan, reading and rereading, introducing everyone who will listen, and finally buying the books for her own library describes me to a tee." Debra Summers, Richmond, VA

"I cannot believe that you exist! Last week I reread (for almost the millionth time) BETSY-TACY, BETSY-TACY & TIB, BT&T GO OVER THE BIG HILL, and BETSY IN SPITE OF HERSELF. Those are the only copies my small branch library carries. I am very interested in finding the entire set. As a child I read the young Betsy books, and then as an adult rediscovered the high school and beyond years. I want my five year old daughter to have the chance to get to know Betsy as well as I do."
Mari Knowles, Seattle, WA

From Our Mailbox - continued

"I've been an avid Betsy-Tacy reader since I was 8 years old, and I'm now 31! I read the entire set every couple of years, and I really did think 'I was the only one.' We recently built an 'old' Victorian. I searched until I found an old house plan that had a Betsy spirit about it. I couldn't explain it to anyone. And, several years ago, I found an old mantelpiece hidden away in a store that looked just like the one I'm sure Betsy got married in front of all those years ago. Now that I have children, I think I'll start a tradition of Sunday night lunches! I've always said that if I could pick a place in time to live, it would be Deep Valley, Minnesota, at the turn of the century. Last night, when I read your letter in VICTORIA, I got so excited I ran yelling down the hall and scared my poor husband to death. Needless to say, he thought I was a little touched. I wish I'd known about the convention, I do believe I'd have flown right there." LeAnn Richard, New Market, AL

"I can hardly believe my good luck! I was reading the December issue of VICTORIA magazine, and lo and behold, there was info about the Betsy-Tacy Society! I have read every Betsy-Tacy book. Even the hard to find (at least for me) CARNEY'S HOUSE PARTY. These books have given me so much pleasure over the years. Even as an adult I enjoy them. There is nothing better to read on a gloomy afternoon, when you cannot find anything you really want to do. I pull out one of my Betsy books and get lost in the Victorian era. As much as I love these books, I am constantly amazed that not one of my friends has ever heard of Maud Hart Lovelace, much less read one of her wonderful books. So you can imagine my delight when I read that there are indeed other people that share my delight and love of these Victorian girls and their families." Cate Brusenbach, Lake Villa, IL

"I'm eight years old and my name is Juliet Vasu. I would love to join the Betsy and Tacy fan club. I've read BETSY-TACY and BETSY-TACY AND TIB. I'm in the middle of BETSY AND TACY GO UP THE BIG HILL. My favorite one was BETSY-TACY AND TIB. I read them at night in bed. I would love to have Betsy, Tacy, and Tib as friends." Juliet Vasu, North Olmsted, OH

"I caught your letter in my December issue of VICTORIA magazine. I was stunned! I am 54 years old and seriously 'thought I was the only one' in my age group that read and reread these books. I first started reading them at age 8 and followed right up through Betsy and Joe's wedding. I had received some of the later books as gifts when I was age 10 or 12. I was overjoyed as an adult to find the books on Betsy and Tacy's childhood in bookstores and have now completed my set, alas with paperbacks instead of hardbacks. I wrote to Maud Hart Lovelace when I was about 11. It was my one and only fan letter. I received a very nice letter back. I kept it for a long time, but regret that somewhere through the years it was lost. I married and moved to England for six years and then moved back to Michigan. Somewhere in these moves, the letter disappeared. I knew that the books were based on Maud Hart Lovelace's life and that got me interested in history. I am also interested in the Victorian era and do miniatures. I am creating a dollhouse village circa 1900. I often refer to my Betsy-Tacy books for research. To be honest, I often read the things for pleasure too! I cannot believe there are 'others' and I am so pleased." Barbara Millard, Otisville, MI

"As an avid fan of Betsy and Tacy for the last 35 years, I was delighted to learn of your Society and also the upcoming biography of Maud Hart Lovelace through an article in VICTORIA magazine." Aileen LaBonte, San Ramon, CA

"I thought I was the only adult interested in these stories!" Carol Welsch, Marietta, GA

"I was surprised and pleased to find out there was such a large group of adults that still read 'children's' literature as I do. I had forgotten about the Betsy-Tacy series, a series I read and reread for a number of years before moving on to Lucy Maud Montgomery, Louisa May Alcott, Madeleine L'Engle and E.T. Beebe, etc. I am now rereading the books, but I don't have to 'sneak' them out of the library for my 'niece.' I just stick one in the middle of a pile of books I'm checking out for my two-year-old son. The librarian doesn't know that I don't have an older daughter at home! You're doing a great job. Keep up the good work. P.S. I especially like the 'What Are You Reading' column." Rebecca Goodwin Kangos, North Andover, MA

"Although I was devoted to Laura Ingalls and enchanted by Anne Shirley, I don't think there was a character with whom I identified more than Betsy Ray! And yes, I too thought I was the only one!" Melanie Novak, Bethlehem, PA

"I was proud to share my love of the Betsy-Tacy books with a class of second graders on October 14th. That special day was Lois Lenski's birthday. I'd say that her illustrations were what made me love and adore the Betsy-Tacy books from the moment I saw them up until the present. I cherish the first four Betsy-Tacy books I own and I proudly spoke of them and displayed them that day. This led to a review of other Lenski books from her earliest Mr. Small books to the ones such as STRAWBERRY GIRL. I think I saw many children who were pretty eager and interested in Betsy-Tacy as well as Lois Lenski. It was nice to get children of today interested in old-fashioned books." Andrea Casper, P.S. 321, Brooklyn, NY

"I, too, thought I was the only one! I've been reading and re-reading the Betsy-Tacy books since I was 10 - for 25 years. They even nurtured me through an illness this summer - my best friend kept me supplied from the library." Karen Hunter, Memphis, TN

BETSY-TACY SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP FORM

Name _____
Phone _____
Address _____

Please check either: New Member or Renewal

Membership Levels

___ Sustaining \$100 and up ___ Individual \$10
___ Patron \$25 ___ Europe or Canada \$15 and up
___ Family \$15

If you prefer that your name not be given out for future Betsy-Tacy product mailings, please check here

Membership renewal will be in September, 1993. Make checks payable to the Betsy-Tacy Society.

Please send membership form and check to:

Michele Franck, 294 Chestnut Ave., Boston, MA 02130-4414.

CONTRIBUTION TO MAUD HART LOVELACE HOUSE FUND

Made By _____

Date _____

Amount _____ Check Number _____

Send contribution form and check to:

The Betsy-Tacy Society, c/o The Heritage Center, 415 Cherry Street, Mankato, MN 56001-3741

BETSY-TACY SOCIETY BALLOT

The Board of Directors of the Betsy-Tacy Society
submit the following names to be elected for terms as follows:

- () -- one year (1994) -- Sharla Whalen
- () -- two years (1995) -- Betsy Norum
- () -- three years (1996) -- Rosetta (Dolly) Blomquist

This Absentee Ballot may be mailed to:

The Betsy-Tacy Society, c/o The Heritage Center, 415 Cherry Street, Mankato, MN 56001-3741

Please do not remove address label adhered to reverse of this ballot.

MUST BE POSTMARKED NO LATER THAN APRIL 15, 1993.



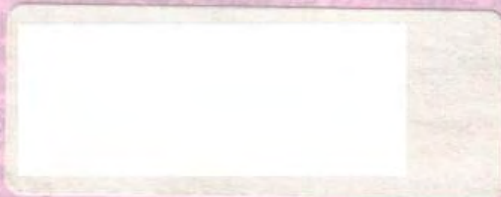
A BETSY • TACY PICNIC

Fill a shoe box with sandwiches and hard-boiled eggs,
and find a pail for cocoa ... picnic time is coming!

The Betsy-Tacy Society
c/o The Heritage Center, BECHS
415 Cherry Street
Mankato, Minnesota 56001-3741



To:



FIRST CLASS MAIL