

THE BETSY-TACY SOCIETY

Note Book

The Betsy-Tacy Society

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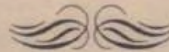
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Newsletter deadlines are February 1, May 1, August 1, and November 1 for the spring, summer, fall, and winter issues respectively. Please send news and articles to **Wendylee Raun, 4244 Alabama Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN 55416.**

About the Cover

You will notice that this issue of the Betsy-Tacy newsletter has a somewhat unusual cover. Here's why: It occurred to us that it might be fun, and very much in the spirit of the society, if the newsletter had the look of the notebooks Maud used for her writing. In order to accomplish that we needed to see what her notebooks looked like. We put Lona Falen on the job, and Lona contacted Shirley Lieske, who has some actual old notebooks once belonging to Maud. Shirley sent us xeroxes and we chose the one that you see replicated on this issue. It was transformed into its new version by Tricia Hayden, of Hayden Design, Fullerton, California, and will appear on at least the next several issues.



Note From Our President

It's a pleasure to welcome Kathleen Baxter as our new national Vice-President. Kathleen has been the driving force of the Twin Cities Chapter, of which she is currently President. It was Kathleen, along with the other dedicated members of the Twin Cities Chapter, who made the Betsy, Tacy and Tib Day, on June 12 at the College of Saint Catherine's, possible and who made it the great success that it was.

We are very grateful to Anna Quindlen not only for the splendid speech she presented at Betsy, Tacy and Tib Day, but also for allowing us to reprint it in this issue of the newsletter.

We were thrilled to hear recently from Merian Lovelace Kirchner that your calls and letters to HarperCollins have had an impact, and that all ten books in the Betsy-Tacy series will be reprinted and available by the end of 1995. This is just wonderful news, and those of you who wrote and called can pat yourselves on the back.

If anyone is interested in attending a local meeting, please contact me at (507) 345-8103 for information on meeting times and places.

Lona Falen

Greetings From the Land of Correspondence!

Hello, everyone. I hope you are enjoying this most wondrous of seasons. The mail continues to flow in steadily, bring me much pleasure and my mailman many backaches. There have been a few common concerns raised which I'd like to mention. The newsletter is mailed bulk mail, which keeps membership costs down. It can take as much as a month between the time it's mailed and the time you receive it. Since bulk mail is sorted by zip code, even people in the same state can receive their newsletters at different times. If a friend or family member gets her newsletter and a week later you're still waiting, don't panic! You should wait at least several more weeks before writing to request another one. Another problem is that bulk mail is not forwarded, so if you're about to move, please send me your new address so I can make sure your newsletter finds you. All questions about your membership or the newsletter should be sent directly to me at the address below; this will ensure the quickest response. And keep those cards and letters coming! We love to hear from you.

Michele Franck



Photo Credits: The photo of Anna Quindlen on page 4 is courtesy of Ruth Berman. The photo of the Betsy, Tacy and Tib Day Display on page 20 is from Barbara Carter, as are the two photos on page 19.



The Betsy-Tacy Society was formed in Mankato, Minnesota in April, 1990. Members, now numbering nearly 1,000, receive the Betsy-Tacy Society 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 Avenue, Boston, MA 02130-4440.

Betsy Ray, Feminist Icon

by Anna Quindlen

To prepare for this speech today I had to reread all ten of my Betsy-Tacy books. I would like to make this sound like a hardship, but most of you know better. There are three authors whose body of work I have reread more than once over my adult life: Charles Dickens, Jane Austen, and Maud Hart Lovelace. It was, as always, a pleasure and a delight.

And the truth is that I have been preparing for this speech, in a variety of ways, for 30 years, and especially for the last 10. That was the decade in which I began to examine most closely what it meant to be a feminist in America, as I am, and why I felt so strongly that the women's movement and what I believe it stands for has changed my life.

Many of those issues have been explored in my column in the NEW YORK TIMES and over and over again I have tried to reinforce a simple message that I believe has been distorted, muddled, misunderstood, and just plain lied about in recent years by those who want women to go not forward, but backwards.

And that is that feminism is about choices. It is about women choosing for themselves which life roles they wish to pursue, not being pushed into little wife/mother or executive/bitch or columnist/know-it-all or smart-but-not-sexy boxes by our society. It is about deciding who does and gets and merits and earns and succeeds in what, by smarts, capabilities, and heart—not by gender. It is about honoring individuals because of their humanity, not their physiology.

And that is why my theme today is *Betsy Ray: Feminist Icon*.

Because could there be better books, and could there be a better girl, adolescent, young woman to teach us all those things about choices than Betsy, along with her widely disparate circle consisting of Tacy and Tib, Julia and Margaret, Mrs. Ray and Anna the hired girl, Mrs. Poppy and Miss Mix, Carney and Winona, Miss Bangeter and Miss Clarke? All these different women, who go so many different ways, with false starts and stops, with disappointments and limitations, and yet with a sense that they can find a place for themselves in the world.

Do you realize that not once, in any book, does any individual, male or female, suggest to Betsy that she cannot, as she so hopes to do, become a writer? Can anyone possibly appreciate the impact that made on a child like me, wanting it too but seeing all around me on the bookshelves the names of men and seeing all around me in my home the domesticated ways of women?

In the early books, of course, this is not what we see. We see prototypes, really, just as Snow White and Rose Red, or Cinderella and her stepsisters are prototypes.

We see three little girls who begin as types: the shy and earnest one; the no-nonsense, literal one; and the ringleader, the storyteller, the adventurer, the center—Elizabeth Warrington Ray. The adventures and, more important, the traditions begin: the picnics on the Big Hill, the forays to Little Syria, the shopping trips

at Christmas time, and Betsy's sheets of foolscap piling up in her Uncle Keith's old trunk.

The books are simply stories of small-town life and enduring friendship among little girls, so it is easy to overlook their importance as teaching tools.

But consider the alternatives to children in the early grades. The images of girls tend, overwhelmingly, to be of fairy princesses spinning straw into gold or sleeping until they are awakened by a prince.

Even the best ones usually show us caricatures instead of characters. Recently, for example, I wrote an introduction for a 50th anniversary edition of *MADELINE*. It is one of my favorite picture books for children, has been since I myself was a child, mostly because of one line which sums up the rest of it:

To the tiger in the zoo, Madeline just said
"Pooh, pooh."

Madeline, unlike the straw-spinning princesses, has attitude. She is nobody's fool.

But attitude, truth to tell, is a surface, two-dimensional characteristic, attractive though it may be. The stories of Betsy, Tacy, and Tib transcend attitude just as the simplistic drawings of the early books give way to the more realistic, albeit to my mind, slightly oversweet representation pictures. They are ultimately books about character, and especially about the character of one girl whose greatest sin, throughout the books, is to undervalue herself.

For those are the mistakes Betsy finds she cannot forgive; when she sells herself short, when she is not all she can be. As opposed to the shy, retiring, and respectful girl who became so valued in girl's fiction, Betsy does best when she serves herself, when she is true to herself.

In this she most resembles two other fictional heroines who, not surprisingly, also long to be writers and take their work very seriously indeed. One is Anne Shirley, of the *ANNE OF GREEN GABLES* books, and the other is Jo March of *LITTLE WOMEN*.

But the key difference, I think, is a critical one. Both Anne and Jo are implicitly made to pay in those books for the fact that they do not conform to feminine norms. Anne begins life as an orphan and never is permitted to forget that she must work for a living—in fact, you might call her the Joe Willard of girls, although she is far less prickly and far easier to like than Joe Willard. Jo March habitually reminds herself of how unattractive she is and settles down, in one of the most unconvincing matches in fiction, with the older, most unromantic Professor Bhaer. It is her beautiful sister Amy who gets the real guy, the rich and romantic Laurie.

Betsy, by contrast, never had to pay for the sin of being herself; in fact, she only finds herself under a cloud when she is less than

herself. At base she is a charmed soul from beginning to end, because she can laugh at herself and take herself seriously at the same time, because she is serious but never a prig and is interested in boys but never a flirt. Can anyone forget the moment when, returning from the sophomore dance at Schiller Hall with that absolute poop Phil Brandish trying to worm his fist into her pocket, she turns to him with desperation and blurts out, "You might as well know. I don't hold hands."

In fact it's probably in that book, *BETSY IN SPITE OF HERSELF*, that we see Betsy most in the way I think we were always meant to see her—as a girl who will do what is right for her, not necessarily what the world wants her to do. But first, like most of us, she has to do what is wrong for her to find out what right is. She decides to nab Phil just for the fun of it, and to that end she adds the letter E to the end of her perfectly good name, sprays herself with Jockey Club perfume, and uses green stationery to write notes instead of her poetry or stories. It's inevitable: when the real Betsy sneaks out, in the form of a song parody she and Tacy invented before the Phil/Betsy affair began, they break up. But instead of a sore heart, Betsy is left with Shakespeare:

This above all,
To thine own self be true.

Betsy already knows, as do we, that that self varies widely from girl to girl, that there is no little box that will fit them all. In *HEAVEN TO BETSY* she says—in the passage that made the future so clear and yet so mysterious for me, "She had been almost appalled, when she started going around with Carney and Bonnie, to discover how fixed and definite their ideas of marriage were. They both had cedar hope chests and took pleasure in embroidering their initials on towels to lay away. Each one had picked out a silver pattern and they were planning to give each other spoons in these patterns for Christmas and birthdays. When Betsy and Tacy and Tib talked about their future they planned to be writers, dancers, circus acrobats."

Yet Betsy never looks down on those aspirations of Carney and Bonnie. But she never looks away from her own aspirations. She follows a sensible progression from writing to dreaming of being a writer to actually saying she is going to be one, to sending her stories, when she is a mere senior in high school, to various women's magazines. She makes the mistake so many of us make—like Jo March, she learns early on that writing about debutantes in Park Avenue penthouses is doomed to failure if you've neither debuted nor visited Park Avenue—but her gumption carries her through.

And there are, interestingly, no naysayers among her family members. While the Rays have three daughters, early on two of them are already committed to having careers outside the home: Julia as an opera singer, Betsy as a writer. Betsy's parents are totally committed to this idea for them both, sending Julia to the Twin Cities and even to Europe to further her training as a singer and arguing vociferously that Betsy's work is as good as any that appears in popular magazines.

In fact the most conspicuous occasion on which her father is disappointed in Betsy is the one on which she is disappointed in herself. Actually, I should say more than one, although the annual events tend to run into one another: that is, the school society essay competition which is a significant part of every high school Betsy-Tacy book.



As you'll all probably recall, Betsy represents the Zetamathians against the other writer in her class, Joe Willard, three years out of four. In the first year she blows it because she puts off doing her research on the Philippines, and tries to pad out her essay with the kind of ruffles and flourishes she adores. The second year she blows it because she had broken up with Phil Brandish the night before, and her brain has turned to lead. The third year she is not asked to compete because of years one and two.

And the fourth year she finally wins, although there is the faintest hint that Joe has let her do so because he is in love with her, a denouement that, not to be coy about it, I found most unsatisfactory.

In fact it's Betsy's relationship with Joe, who we know almost from the time she first meets him at Butternut Center is bound to be the love of her life, that is also a decidedly feminist strain through the later books. For from the beginning it is a relationship of equals, a relationship based not on flirtation but on the life of the mind. The clearest image of this equality is the Christmas they exchange gifts for the first time: they manage, out of all the world, to buy the same thing for each other—a leatherbound volume of *AS YOU LIKE IT*.

But it is also a relationship based on healthy competition, the competition of the essay contest. Joe is a formidable opponent.

(Betsy, I should add, is a nicer and more well-rounded person. I mean, did any of the rest of you get tired of feeling sorry for Joe and indulging his crabby moods after the first few times?) Anyhow, the person who Betsy is really competing with is herself—a self that can veer widely between being serious about what she does and indulging herself in the fun of the moment. After she loses the first essay contest she does this postmortem, which is as much about her life as the occasion:

She looked back over the crowded winter. She did not regret it. But she should not have let its fun, its troubles, its excitements squeeze her writing out.

"If I treat my writing like that," she told herself, "It may go away entirely."

The thought appalled her. What would life be like without her writing? Writing filled her life with beauty and mystery, gave it purpose...and promise.

"Everyone has something, probably. With Julia it's singing, with Anna it's cooking. With Carney and Bonnie it's keeping house and having families...Something that's most important of all because it's theirs to do."

That idea of something that is yours to do became narrower and narrower as my mother grew up. As Betty Friedan wrote in *THE FEMININE MYSTIQUE* by the time my mother was ready to enter what Julia always called "The Great World," it had narrowed to one role and one role alone, that of wife and mother.

I don't know when exactly I knew that that was never going to be enough for me. But I know where I got the idea that more was possible. It wasn't from career women or role models; when I was a girl, there really weren't any.

I learned it from books, and none more than from the stories about Betsy, Tacy, and Tib. Because the most important thing about Betsy Ray is that she has a profound sense of confidence and of her own worth.

For one moment, she even comes out squarely as a feminist in the pages of a Betsy-Tacy book. On the high seas, after both Julia and Tacy have married, Betsy is confronted about the British feminist movement by a fellow traveler:

That night the dinner conversation turned to woman's suffrage. In the United States the campaign for votes for women had progressed without much violence. In Great Britain, too, at first, the women had merely paraded and made speeches. But then they had started picketing the House of Commons and breaking windows. They actually tried to be sent to jail in order to call attention to their cause by hunger strikes.

"Women," Mr. O'Farrell remarked, "are certainly ingenious at making themselves annoying. One window smasher up for trial kept her back to the judge and sang the "Marseillaise" all the time he was talking to her."

"Good!" Betsy cried. The English lady was

startled, but not so much so as Mr. O'Farrell. "You're not a suffragette!" he exclaimed. "I certainly am." "I don't believe it." "Why, of course, I am!" She was astonished that anyone could doubt it... "But you're not a militant?" Betsy wasn't sure she was a militant, but she wouldn't back down. "I would be if I had to be."

Of course, if this had been wrapped in a sanctimonious, plaster saint package, Betsy would have been, perish the thought, Elsie Dinsmore, the perfect boring little girl of popular fiction who Betsy herself once mocks. And if there had been no boys in the books, I, for one, wouldn't have read them.

But we did read them, many of us, for so many reasons: Because Maud Hart Lovelace had a real gift for adapting the prose to the appropriate age level, and the themes, too; because we fell in love, not only with Betsy but with Tacy and Tib and all the others, and we wanted to know, from year to year, what was happening with them; because of Magic Wavers and Sunday night sandwiches, and smoky coffee brewed out of doors and all the other little ordinary things that, in some fashion, became *our* ordinary things.

And because they were just like us.

But we now know there are many uses, with many different goals and aspirations. For many years those goals and aspirations were truncated by one simple fact: Our sex. Everything around us reflected that, from who sat on the Supreme Court to who listened to our chests when we were sick, to who oversaw services when we went to church on Sunday.

But from time to time we encountered a teacher, or a parent, or even a book that told us that we should let our ambitions fly, that we should believe in ourselves, that the only limits we should put on what we tried for were the limits of our desires and our talents. When I told people I was going to give this speech, most had never heard of Betsy-Tacy, and I had to describe them as a series of books for girls. But they were so much more than that for one little girl who grew up to be a woman writer and who, perhaps, learned that she could by the example given inside these books.

Anna Quindlen is a columnist for the New York Times. This article is taken from the talk she presented on June 12 at the College of Saint Catherine's in Saint Paul for Betsy, Tacy and Tib Day, sponsored by the Twin Cities Chapter of the Betsy-Tacy Society.



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.

by Beth Hudson
Texas

I am delighted as I read the newsletter to find so many Lovelace readers enjoy the same books and authors that I read. A TREE GROWS IN BROOKLYN, ANNE OF GREEN GABLES, and the Little House books are all childhood and adult favorites of mine, books I still enjoy taking off the shelf and reading from time to time. They are some of my best friends.

I also let Maud guide me in my reading and have read many of the classics I first heard about as a young girl reading Betsy-Tacy books. I, too, enjoyed THE TANGLEWOOD TALES, Shakespeare, VANITY FAIR, and, one of my all-time favorites, LES MISERABLES. I also, thanks to Maud, read almost all of Dickens and the poets, especially Longfellow.

Like Maud loved Minnesota history, I have a love for the history of my state, Texas, but I won't bore you with that! For biography, I recommend some of the following: THE RISE OF THEODORE ROOSEVELT by Edmund Morris, THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF LINCOLN STEFFENS, WALTER LIPPMAN: AN AMERICAN CENTURY by Ronald Steele, KATHERINE ANNE PORTER by Joan Givner, MARGARET BOURKE-WHITE by Vicki Goldberg, A 20TH CENTURY JOURNEY by William Shirer, LBJ-THE PATH TO POWER by Robert Caro.

For really delightful reading, pick up any of the Provincial Lady series, written around WW II by British writer E. M. Delafield.

Now, for all of you who have adopted the Ray Tradition of Christmas Eve readings, either family style or a quiet afternoon to yourself, I'd like to add the following to the STORY OF LUKE, A VISIT FROM ST. NICHOLAS and Dickens' CHRISTMAS CAROL: GIFT OF THE MAGI by O. Henry, YES, VIRGINIA, THERE IS A SANTA CLAUS by Francis Church, and chapter 27 in A TREE GROWS IN BROOKLYN by Betty Smith which begins "Christmas was a

charmed time in Brooklyn."



by Nancy Rootland
Highland, CA

Like so many of your members I enjoy the collective works of L. M. Montgomery, Laura Ingalls Wilder, Beverly Cleary, Tasha Tudor, and Maud Hart Lovelace. These authors have had a profound effect on my life. Now, I have gone one step further in my relationship with their writing. It has become very important to me to find out as much information about these authors and their personal lives. I am interested in seeing how closely their lives paralleled their writing, where their personal lives ended and their professional lives began. That is why I have been reading autobiographies and biographies about these authors.

The titles include: THE SELECTED JOURNALS OF L. M. MONTGOMERY, VOLUMES I, II, AND III edited by Mary Rubio and Elizabeth Waterston, THE WHEEL OF THINGS: A BIOGRAPHY OF LUCY MAUD MONTGOMERY by Mollie Gillen, THE FRAGRANCE OF SWEET-GRASS: L. M. MONTGOMERY'S HEROINES AND THE PURSUIT OF ROMANCE by Elizabeth Rollins Epperly, A LITTLE HOUSE SAMPLER: LAURA INGALLS WILDER AND ROSE WILDER LANE edited by William T. Anderson, A GIRL FROM YAMHILL, A MEMOIR by Beverly Cleary, DRAWN FROM NEW ENGLAND, TASHA TUDOR by Bethany Tudor, and THE PRIVATE WORLD OF TASHA TUDOR by Tasha Tudor and Richard Brown.

I am looking forward with anticipation of learning more about Maud Hart Lovelace in THE BETSY-TACY COMPANION by Charla S. Whalen. These books, both informative and enriching, have given me insights into my favorite authors' lives as well as my own.



by Mollie L. Pryor
Woodland, CA

I especially treasure the Williamsburg series by Elswyth Thane: DAWN'S EARLY LIGHT, YANKEE STRANGER, EVER AFTER, THE LIGHT HEART, KISSING KIN, THIS WAS TOMORROW, and HOMING. When I finish re-reading HOMING, I'll have read this glorious series three times, and will repeat the series! I will always take Elswyth Thane's books with me wherever I live.

Another author who left a rich legacy of books is L. M. Montgomery. The Anne of Green Gables series is unforgettable. Anne sure is plucky. I do own the Emily series, but as yet, yours truly hasn't read these novels.

Elizabeth Peters' books are terrific reading. Her sly sense of humor is not to be missed. I always enjoy reading an Amelia Peabody novel; the Jacqueline Kirby novels are never dull; and Vicki Bliss certainly keeps the reader entertained. Thank goodness bookstores are now stocking her books, as she deserves to be a terrific-selling author. Much merriment has been brought into my life by Elizabeth Peters' books.

Jude Devereaux's novel A KNIGHT IN SHINING IN ARMOR is an entertaining book. I haven't read any of her other books, so it looks like much pleasure is ahead.



by Melinda Sutton
Pittsburgh, PA

As a junior at the College of William and Mary, I have little time to indulge in "pleasure" reading, but I have a few suggestions. Of course, I'm sure everyone has read L. M. Montgomery's Anne books, but the Emily books and PAT OF SILVER BUSH and MISTRESS PAT should definitely not be overlooked! Anything by

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

continued

E. M. Forster is also enjoyable, especially *A ROOM WITH A VIEW* and *HOWARD'S END*.

The British author K. M. Peyton has also written a wonderful series of books. They are: *FLAMBARDS*, *THE EDGE OF THE CLOUD*, *FLAMBARDS IN SUMMER*, and *FLAMBARDS DIVIDED*. The series begins in 1908 when 12-year-old Christina Parsons, an orphan, is sent to live with her uncle and two male cousins in Essex. She is thrown into a life that revolves around fox hunting and class distinction. The series continues up to about 1920. The first three books were made into a 13 episode television series in the late 1970s. K. M. Peyton has also written a number of other books for young adults that are set in English horse country.



by Laura K. Grieve
Garden Grove, CA

I am named for Laura Ingalls Wilder and of course claim those books as favorites! My other favorite books are the Williamsburg novels and *TRYST* by Elswyth Thane--a writer with a small but very devoted following. Some of the books I first read during childhood or adolescence which I still read today as a mom of two little ones: *MRS. MIKE* by Benedict and Nancy Freedman, *JEMIMA*; *DAUGHTER OF DANIEL BOONE* by Margaret Sutton (I would cheerfully kill for a copy!), *LITTLE WOMEN*, *JACK AND JILL* and *EIGHT COUSINS* by Alcott, All-of-a-kind family books by Sydney Taylor, *JOY IN THE MORNING* by Betty Smith (I like this one even better than *A TREE GROWS IN BROOKLYN*), *PAPA'S WIFE* by Thyra Ferre Bjorn, *I REMEMBER MAMA* by Kathryn Forbes, *MEET ME IN ST. LOUIS* by Sally Benson, the Saturdays books by Elizabeth Enright, the books of Lois Lenski, especially *BLUEBERRY CORNERS* and *INDIAN CAPTIVE: THE STORY OF MOLLY JEMISON*, the Childhood of Early Americans biographies, *CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN* and *BELLES ON THEIR TOES* by Gilbreth and Carey, *AS THE EARTH TURNS* by Gladys Hasty Carroll, and *THE EDGE OF TIME* by Loula Grace Erdman. Right now I am enjoying the

books of Russell Hoban (*FRANCES*) and Margaret Wise Brown, among others, with my little girl Caitlin Elizabeth, who is, at four years old, also a *BETSY-TACY* fan!



by Dorothy Romanoski
Linden, NJ

Here is my list of some of my favorite books. I love all the favorites already mentioned by your readers. In addition there is Carroll Watson Rankin who wrote *DANDELION COTTAGE* about 1906 and other titles. Lucy Fitch Perkins wrote a *Twins* series. My special favorites were *THE DUTCH TWINS*, *THE FARM TWINS*, and *THE AMERICAN TWINS OF THE REVOLUTION*. Janet Lambert was one of the first writers of modern teen-age stories. The early ones took place during World War II: *STAR SPANGLED SUMMER*, *DREAMS OF GLORY*, *GLORY BE*, and many more. She wrote well into the 1970s.

Elizabeth Enright wrote *THIMBLE SUMMER* and her Saturdays series. Two other titles I really loved were about girls taking care of babies: *THE YOUNG AUNTS* by Alice Dalgliesh and *BABY ISLAND* by Carol Ryrie Brink.

Adult authors I've loved include Joseph C. Lincoln--Cape Cod settings, wonderful family stories written in the early 1900's; Mazo De La Roche--a Canadian author who wrote the *Jalna* series; Inglis Fletcher wrote historical novels set in colonial North Carolina; Sigrid Undset wrote *KRISTIN LAVRANSDATTER*, a powerful, lengthy historical novel set in the Middle Ages in Norway; D. E. Stevenson--all her fiction. Light romantic novels set in England, similar to Rosamund Pilcher.



by Sandra Haines
Las Vegas, NV

I am a fickle reader and my tastes often vary. I like to jot down authors' names as they're recommended by other Betsy-Tacy fans, so I can run and look them up at the library or bookstore!

I loved *A ROOM WITH A VIEW* and *HOWARD'S END* by E. M. Forster. Although the novels far outrank the films, I enjoyed the costumes and cinematography in those movies, as well.

My fiance introduced me to the works of David Eddings. At first I turned my nose up at the thought of Fantasy novels, thinking they were all Dungeons and Dragons stories. But I gave them a try, and found myself thoroughly engrossed! His series, including *THE BELGARIAD*, *THE MALLOREON*, and *THE ELENIUM*, remind me of *The Chronicles of Narnia*, by C. S. Lewis.

Other favorites (none as beloved as the Betsy-Tacy) include *THE LITTLE PRINCESS*, by Frances Hodgson Burnett, and the *Mrs. Piggle-Wiggle* books by Betty MacDonald. My second grade teacher read a *Mrs. Piggle-Wiggle* story to us every day until we had heard them all!



by Cornelia R. Lepvy
Holland, MI

I have enjoyed Susan Allen Toth's wonderful books of personal essays for years. In *BLOOMING* the Macalester College English professor wrote of growing up in the 50s in Ames, Iowa, and then of going off to Smith College in *IVY DAYS*. Then came *HOW TO PREPARE FOR YOUR HIGH SCHOOL REUNION*. I'm still looking forward to reading *A HOUSE OF ONE'S OWN*, about building a new house with a new husband, James Stageberg. Toth's newest book, which I just finished, is *MY LOVE AFFAIR WITH ENGLAND* (I've had one, too, my whole life--due to reading, of course!), which any traveller, armchair or airplane, will enjoy. And guess what? In the introductory chapter, writing of images from childhood reading, both English and American, Toth writes, "...I wandered with Betsy, Tacy, and Tib through Deep Valley, Minnesota." How about that? Having come to know Susan Allen Toth from growing up in the same period I did, to adult life, I'm not surprised, just pleased!

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 read about your organization in VICTORIA magazine. I was overjoyed, as I've been a fan of BETSY-TACY books forever!"

Jaye Franchell, Albuquerque, NM

"When I was nine years old my best friend moved away. Lonely, I visited the library frequently and soon Betsy, Tacy, and Tib became my closest friends. I'm twenty-three now and I still read Betsy-Tacy. I've bought some of them at library book sales. When my librarian saw the article about the Betsy-Tacy Society in VICTORIA magazine she clipped it and gave it to me. I was relieved to read that I wasn't the only person to invent fictional nieces and cousins."

Patty Mitchell, Pickering, Ontario, Canada

"Please send me your information on joining the Betsy-Tacy Society. Ms. Lovelace's books were among my most favorite. I even named my daughter Betsy and joy of joys, she sings in our church choir (Episcopal) and she writes poetry! Thanks for joining us all together."

Margaret Jordan, Augusta, GA

"I have loved these books since childhood, and I thought I was the only one who had ever read and enjoyed them. I have often sneaked into the Juvenile section of the library to reread these wonderful stories, and I was thrilled when my oldest daughter could read well enough for me to introduce her to Betsy, Tacy, and Tib. I have often wondered why these books have not been reissued in paperback, say in a boxed set like the LITTLE HOUSE books. Also I have been curious as to the fate of CARNEY'S HOUSE PARTY, a book that I have not seen in a library since elementary school."

Kathryn Mehlhorn, Springfield, MO

"I read with great interest the article concerning the Betsy-Tacy Society. I first met Betsy and Tacy 35 years ago and own most of the series. I read the books once a year."

Barbara Ledin Smith, Mena, AR

"I was delighted to read about the Betsy-Tacy Society - what a revelation! My sister and I (both in our 40's) thought we were the only ones still reading these books. My eight-year-old daughter is enthralled with BETSY & TACY GO DOWNTOWN, and I'm reliving the whole series again - what fun!"

Patricia Danch, Vernon Hills, IL

"I plodded all through school without discovering the Betsy-Tacy books - when I first read them a few years ago as a school library aide, I was immediately entranced, and read the whole series from beginning to end, buying copies of some of them for myself, and even giving one to my already-grown daughter! (I had never realized she was deprived!)"

Elizabeth Redman, Kalispell, MT

"After years of being a faithful fan of Maud Hart Lovelace's Betsy-Tacy books, I am delighted to have discovered that there is a Betsy-Tacy Society. Certainly I get a warm glow from the knowledge that these wonderful books are still being enjoyed by children, adults, and young adults!"

Kerry Kristine McElrone, Swarthmore, PA

"Both my sister and I have read and reread all the Betsy-Tacy books. I am always surprised when I mention the books to people, that everyone hasn't read them. Maud Hart Lovelace had such a knack for writing. I have some of the books and hope to eventually have all of them."

Suzi Freeman, Woodinville, WA

"I just read about others who remember Lovelace's books from childhood and are still fans. I am delighted to find there are others who loved the Betsy-Tacy series as much as I did."

Lynne Gordon, Berkeley, CA

"Dear Betsy-Tacy Society - How wonderful those words sound! I was delighted to recently stumble upon an article about you in an old VICTORIA magazine. Thank you for making me realize that I'm not alone in my love for Betsy-Tacy books!"

Jennifer M. Jackson, Winston-Salem, NC

"Please send me more information on the Betsy-Tacy Society. These books very definitely shaped my life."

Carolyn Corcoran, Bay Village, OH

"My heart skipped a beat when I realized there was a society for followers of Betsy-Tacy. I thought I was the only one!"

Pat Abney, Tulsa OK

"Via the July 1992 issue of VICTORIA magazine, I discovered Betsy-Tacy. The books I have read thus far are absolutely enchanting! Unfortunately, our library had only three books.

S. A. Crow, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada

"I can't imagine how I missed the Betsy-Tacy books when I was a child; but that omission is being remedied now. I am currently rereading EARLY CANDLELIGHT - one of my all-time favorites! Copies of this in the public library system are becoming almost extinct."

Joan M. Schumacher, Commerce Twp., MI

"What a thrill to read about your Society. Betsy and Tacy (as well as Tib) have lived in my heart for the last forty-seven years."

Suzanne Nezin, Lake Forest, CA

From Our Mailbox, continued



"When I was about 14, I wrote to Mrs. Lovelace and told her how much I enjoyed the books and how I wanted to be a writer. I also told her how alike Betsy and I were - we both hated cooking and sewing. I was thrilled to receive a handwritten response from her a few weeks later. It was a postcard with Betsy's picture on it and in it Mrs. Lovelace advised me to pursue my writing career but to also learn to cook and sew so that I wouldn't have the problems Betsy had when she first married Joe! Somehow during the next few years (and through several moves), I lost the card. To this day I can't believe I was so careless! As I reached my twenties, I decided to order the books so that when I had a daughter, she could enjoy them as I did. Unfortunately, I have never had any children, but I did introduce the series to my younger sister and to my niece. I have the books and still enjoy reading them once in a while, especially during stressful times in my own life. I hope Mrs. Lovelace knew how much enjoyment her books gave to all of us, and I'm sure she would be happy to know about the Society."

Sue Eberhardt, Plainview, NY

"I was delighted to read of your existence. I've loved the Betsy-Tacy books since I was a little girl, and have read all the books many times since then (though I've never been able to put my hands on the one called CARNEY'S HOUSE PARTY)."

Maria Champlin, Berkeley, CA

"Can't tell you how pleased I was to discover the Betsy-Tacy Society. Until then, I thought I was the only adult who smuggled copies of the Betsy books home from the library with a polite murmur to the librarian that maybe my nieces would like to read them - then devoured them myself - over and over and over!"

Donna A. Patton, Hillsboro, OH

"We are fourth generation fans of Betsy, Tacy, and Tib. My grandma and great-grandma lived in Mankato for many years, and my grandma met Maud Hart Lovelace when she returned to "Deep Valley" for background information on her first books. Grandma was a little girl like I am now. My parents are missionaries in South America, and I grew up in both Peru and Bolivia, where I read Betsy, Tacy, and Tib and shared them with my friends. We are going to Minnesota this summer and my mom has already planned to take me to Mankato to visit."

Katie McCune, Santa Cruz, Bolivia

"Thank you for speedily getting my Winter newsletter to me - this is truly a wonderful society. Sitting down with my Betsy-Tacy Newsletter is like having a wonderful conversation with friends with whom I have much in common! So many of the comments you have printed touch me so personally. I want to say "I thought that, also" or "I like to read that, too!"

Vicki White, Winters, TX

"Imagine my surprise and delight when I read that a Betsy-Tacy Society exists! My mother, four sisters and I have had our own Betsy-Tacy Society for years. We've always been extremely fond of the Betsy-Tacy series and still read the books over every year. My sisters, who have daughters, have introduced them to the stories and they love them as much as their moms do. I've

just begun to read the early books to my five-year old daughter, Emily Rose, and it won't be long until she is reading them on her own. This year on Emily's first day of kindergarten, I made homemade muffins for breakfast so she would start her school years on the right foot!"

Rosemary A. Einolander, Lompoc, CA

"I was interested to see that the Betsy-Tacy books were included in the new non-sexist bibliography. This small notice in the Spring newsletter made me start thinking about the Betsy-Tacy books and what some of their themes could mean to readers in the 90's. BETSY WAS A JUNIOR, probably more than any other of the Betsy-Tacy books, really made a big impression on me. The girls forming the Okto-Delta club and then the repercussions from it, especially when Betsy was not allowed to take part in the essay contest, could be relevant today, when we think of "inclusion" and "exclusion" of different peoples and races. The girls in the book learned their lesson the hard way about forming exclusionary clubs.

Teresa Gibson, Mesquite, TX

"I am a twenty-four-year-old graduate student of comparative literature, and I have been reading the Betsy, Tacy, and Tib series every year in the spring since I was in second grade."

Lorinda Cohoon, Glen Mills, PA

"I am writing for information regarding the Betsy-Tacy Society. I am twenty years old and was introduced to Betsy Ray at the age of seven. I can't remember how many times I've read the whole series. The idea that so many others share my interest amazes me."

Sarah Dudley, East Lansing, MI

Answers to People Puzzler

Joe Willard = Delos Lovelace
 Betsy Ray = Maud Palmer Hart
 Bonnie Andrews = Constance Davis
 Irma Biscay = Mildred Oleson
 Cab Edwards = Jabez Lloyd
 Dennie Farisy = Paul G. Ford
 Winona Root = Eleanor Johnson
 Katie Kelly = Theresa Kenney
 Tacy Kelly = Bicky Kenney
 T. Markham = M. Parker (probably)
 Alice Morrison = Ruth Williams
 Tib Muller = Midge Gerlach
 Julia Ray = Kathleen Hart
 Margaret Ray = Helen Hart
 Mr. & Mrs. Ray = T. & S.P. Hart
 Carney Sibley = Marion Willard

Notes and Notices

More Good News From HarperCollins

It's definite: HarperCollins now plans to bring out all 10 of the mainstream Betsy-Tacy books as Harper Trophy Paperback Books with new cover art.

We won't see HEAVEN TO BETSY and BETSY IN SPITE OF HERSELF until Fall '94; the Diane Goode covers won't be ready till then. But after that things will move right along, with BETSY WAS A JUNIOR and BETSY AND JOE making their appearance in winter '94-'95, BETSY AND THE GREAT WORLD and BETSY'S WEDDING in spring or early summer '95.

HarperCollins is still not ready to commit itself to reissuing any or all of the three Deep Valley stories, CARNEY'S HOUSE PARTY, EMILY OF DEEP VALLEY, and WINONA'S PONY CART. So it's up to us to keep the cards and letters coming.

Add to your list of contacts at HarperCollins: Ginee Seo, Editor, Harper Trophy Paperback Books. Merian has met her and says she's a delightful person and a real fan.



Chapter-starting Help

If you've got the itch to start a Betsy-Tacy chapter, help is on the way! A new manual offers tips on how to get going and how to get publicity. It also offers some potential program ideas for new chapters. Copies have already gone out to national society members in San Diego; Washington, D.C. and Cleveland who have expressed interest in setting up chapters. Members hailing from other areas should write the national society at 415 Cherry Street, Mankato, MN 56001-3741 to get a copy. The manual was compiled by Lani Jordan of the Twin Cities Chapter and Melanie Rigney of the Greater Chicago Chapter, with input from National Board members and the Presidents of both chapters.



Shop Note

We have a few items in stock from last year's catalog in limited quantities. They cannot be offered in our new catalog, but we can sell out the remaining stock. If you are interested in any of the following, drop a note to Kay Hocker and she'll send them out.

<i>Betsy, Tacy and Tib pewter figurine set</i>	\$22.50
<i>Betsy, Tacy and Tib on the bench, pewter pin</i>	\$10.00
<i>Quilt Block Set</i>	\$25.00
<i>Book Plates by Cheryl Harness</i>	\$ 5.00 per packet

Send check to Kay Hocker, 521 10th Street S.E., Rochester, MN 55904. Please use the delivery charges from the new catalog (see page 18, this issue).



Potential Donors, Please Note:

Anyone wishing to donate books or memorabilia to the Betsy-Tacy Society, please send the items to the Blue Earth Historical Society, Attn: the Betsy-Tacy Society, 415 E. Cherry Street, Mankato, MN 56001. Please indicate whether you would like the item to be used for fundraising or kept as an artifact.

It's That Time Again!

Renewal time is here! Membership in the Betsy-Tacy Society includes the quarterly newsletter, to which you are invited to contribute articles and information of interest to other members, as well as notification of Betsy-Tacy related events and products which are available through the Society. A choice of membership levels is listed on the form in the back of the newsletter.

With this issue we are moving from a September to September membership cycle to a rolling renewal system, where members will receive four issues of the newsletter from the time they subscribe. For most of you, dues will still be payable following receipt of the Fall newsletter. If you are not sure of your status, please check your mailing label. New members and those who have recently renewed will see a code on the label which states their renewal date (i.e. 6/94 or 9/94, meaning that you should renew after you receive next Summer or Fall's newsletter, depending on what date is listed). If there is no code on your label, it's now time to resubscribe.

Complementary copies of this issue have been mailed to former members and others who have requested information about the Society. We invite you to join or rejoin. There are exciting times ahead, and we'd love to have you with us!



Children's Membership

The Betsy-Tacy Society Board has decided to reinstate the children's level of membership. The rate will be \$5 per year. Many children have expressed interest in being members, and even though many of us adults think of the books as ours we must remember who they were written for in the first place! Welcome, children!



Betsy-Tacy Mailroom

The officers and board of the B-T Society wish to extend grateful thanks to the volunteers who help process our voluminous incoming and outgoing mail: Bonnie Snider, Ann Bailey, Susan Radovsky, Janet Hamilton, and of course, our corresponding secretary, Michele Franck.

Notes, continued

Deep Valley Creations

Deep Valley Creations has spent the summer working on some exciting items soon to be announced. Cheryl Harness has designed a *beautiful* new Christmas '93 ornament to add to your collection, and there will be stationery products, pewters, and books. For those who were unable to get a 1992 ornament because they were sold out, DVC will be making that design available, in limited quantities, in pewter.



Invitation From the Chicago Chapter

The Greater Chicago Chapter of the Betsy-Tacy Society invites you to explore Milwaukee with us December 4-5, just as Betsy did at Christmastime in 1907! Events Saturday will include a guided tour of the historic Pabst Mansion; lunch at an authentic German beer hall; a drive by the Pabst Theater, other sites mentioned in *BETSY IN SPITE OF HERSELF* and the areas in which the Mullers and Gerlaches lived (our thanks to Sharla Whalen, whose painstaking research turned up these addresses). We'll dine at Mader's, one of Milwaukee's finest German restaurants. For those who stay overnight we'll be at the Astor Hotel, which is on the National Register of Historic Places. Sunday will bring a light breakfast at the Astor, followed by an address on the Germanic community's contribution to Milwaukee's development. There's shopping and used bookstores nearby you won't want to miss--and don't forget your stocking! We've got a few surprises in store.

Registration deadline is October 21. The charge for members of the national B-T Society is \$55 for Saturday, \$60 for Saturday and Sunday, not including transportation to Milwaukee or hotel. The Astor is quoting a single occupancy rate of \$55; double occupancy, two beds, is \$68. Registration packets will be sent to those members of the Minneapolis chapter who have indicated interest in the trip and to all members of the Chicago area chapter. For more information contact **Melanie Rigney**, 5000 N. Delphia Ave., Chicago IL, 60656 or phone (312) 625-2430.

Meeting Highlights

Twin Cities Chapter

by Kathy Baxter

The June 12 Betsy, Tacy and Tib Day at the College of Saint Catherine in Saint Paul was an unqualified success! Around 275 Betsy-Tacy fans from all over the state (and many from around the country) gathered on the campus to hear keynote speaker and *New York Times* columnist Anna Quindlen discuss *Betsy Ray: Feminist Icon* and answer questions. She was a sheer delight, as was her introducer, author Susan Allen Toth. After a box lunch and a long autographic session, attendees heard an informative biographical talk by Joanne Ray, author of the article on Mrs. Lovelace in *WOMEN OF MINNESOTA*, and met four extended family members of the Everett clan, children and grandchildren of Carney and Sam. Listening to them made us more determined than ever to get *CARNEY'S HOUSE PARTY* back in print.

The Betsy-Tacy quilt raffle was won by Kathleen Schneider, our treasurer, and the day concluded with a sing-along and more food, of which there was an abundance. It was great to see so many Betsy-Tacy friends, and to purchase copies of books by Toth and Quindlen as well as *GENTLEMEN FROM ENGLAND* and the new Betsy-Tacy paperback with cover illustrations by Diane Goode.

Upcoming plans include another bus trip to Mankato on October 16, co-sponsored by the Friends of the Minneapolis Public Library and the national society. Sites will include "Canoe Place" and the "Bow Street" apartment in Minneapolis; the library; Tacy's home; lunch at Merrays in Mankato; and a stop at Wanda Gag's home in New Ulm on the way back.

It was decided that the Society will begin working on a new guide to Betsy-Tacy-related places in Mankato. This will include many more than the current map has. We want to make sure that the true fans don't miss anything on the special visits to Deep Valley.

Plans are being made to possibly have a bus tour going to the "Christmas in Milwaukee" event sponsored by the Chicago Chapter. Contact the Society

for more information on this trip. We are still hoping to sponsor a *BETSY AND THE GREAT WORLD* tour in the summer of 1994. For information, call Travel Innovations at (800) 222-3898.

Marcia Marshall has created wonderful Betsy-Tacy lesson plans for teachers. To get a free copy, drop a note to **Barb Edwards**, 34834 Pebblestone Lane, Freeport, MN 56331.



Greater Chicago Chapter

by Julie Sheffick

Some of the Chapter members met in June and said goodbye to Sharla Whalen, who has moved to Pennsylvania. We'll really miss her!

Some others were able to attend the Betsy-Tacy Picnic, north of Chicago in Lake Villa. Cate Brusenbach did some wonderful planning, and the 30 people who attended enjoyed her hardboiled eggs, lemonade, cake, and even hot cocoa in a pail! Other members brought food to share, too, along with the trivia, memorabilia, and talk. The weather was perfect and everyone had a grand time.

Beginning in the fall we hope to have monthly meetings. Debbie Tranchita is checking into possible locations for Saturday afternoons.

The chapter invites all members of the Betsy-Tacy Society to participate in its "Christmas in Milwaukee" event on December 4-5. (See "Invitation From the Chicago Chapter" elsewhere on this page.) *Please Note:* All registrations must be postmarked by October 21!



Flash!

There will soon be a New York Chapter of the Betsy-Tacy Society. Merian Lovelace Kirchner and Andrea Shaw of Manhattan plan to launch it with an Open House at Merian's Brooklyn apartment early in October.

✉ My Letter From Maud ✉

by Barbara Millard
Otisville, MI

I was ten at the time I wrote to Maud Hart Lovelace and received a response (a mere 44 years ago) and I remember it very well. I could not believe that a "real writer" would bother with a fan letter to a ten year old. I was an only child and an avid reader even at that age. My mother willingly kept me supplied with books as presents and through trips to the library. She bought me BETSY IN SPITE OF HERSELF, BETSY WAS A JUNIOR, and BETSY AND JOE as Christmas presents the years they were published.

When I read BETSY AND JOE, I was so worried! I thought that since they had graduated from high school, Mrs. Lovelace might finish with them. My mother said, "Write and ask her." I was a rather shy child, so I'm sure she never thought I would. On my own, I wrote a letter and mailed it to the publisher's address in the book. I received a handwritten letter from her that I read and reread hundreds of times.

It was the one and only fan letter I have ever written. She was so kind — she thanked me for taking the time to write her. She said she always enjoyed knowing when someone was enjoying her books. She told me the books were based on her life as a child, and I remember her writing that some of the stories she expanded to make them more interesting or funnier, but that many of the things were true. She said she was taking Betsy on a trip around the world and it was almost finished and that she was going to be writing BETSY'S WEDDING soon. She hoped I would enjoy both books and would be happy with her letter.

I reread the letter several times as an adult. My Betsy-Tacy

books always went with me -- to my first apartment with a friend and to England when I married. When we returned, they came back and joined the books I had left at my parents' house. I believe the Lovelace letter was still there then. However, I sat down with my mother and sorted through a lot of books and gave away many, especially childhood books to friends or the local library — the letter must have disappeared.

I have the original paper covers of my five hardback books. They are yellow and tattered but they show the price of each book as \$2.50. The cover lists some books written by Maud Hart Lovelace, such as CARNEY'S HOUSE PARTY, which I read several times. I liked the way it wrapped up the romance between Carney and Larry. The cover also lists the Thomas Crowell Company's address with a note saying the publishers had prepared "an attractive, illustrated booklet" about Maud Hart Lovelace which you could send for. I wish I had done that. I wonder if any of the other Betsy-Tacy readers out there were smarter than I was.

I often take a two or three day period and reread all ten books. I consider my dollhouse village to be a tribute to Betsy, Tacy, and Tib; my very first dollhouse had to have a piano for the dollhouse family to recreate those Sunday night lunches at the Ray household.

I am very much interested in how you and others became interested in "my books." I hope other fans will see what a truly nice lady Mrs. Lovelace was to take time to read and answer a child's letter.

Discovering Betsy

by Geraldine Brower
Tom's River, NJ



I want to share with you how I first "met" our dear friends of Deep Valley. While looking through a reduced book bin at a K-Mart in 1987, I found a Harper Trophy softcover edition, 1980, of HEAVEN TO BETSY. I was 18 years old at the time I bought and read it, since I always did and still do enjoy reading children's literature. I enjoyed this book so much that I decided to look for the rest of the series at our county library. I found most of the earlier books there, but the last four weren't there. I continued to watch the shelves and finally, in the summer of 1989, the last four suddenly appeared! I have since completed reading the Betsy-Tacy series and also read PETTICOAT COURT by the author.

While reading Newsletter #9, I was surprised to realize how rare CARNEY'S HOUSE PARTY is. In November, 1989, while browsing through a thrift shop, I discovered a blue book with its cover well worn, as if it had spent many a year in someone's cellar or attic. Could this book be filled with some of my new-found friends? Flipping through the pages, I discovered that, yes, it was another in the series! So, after paying a mere 25 cents, CARNEY'S HOUSE PARTY was mine! What a bargain!

I so enjoyed reading the Betsy-Tacy series, always wishing there were more — if only I had known about them as a child! They remind me of my childhood days spent at my grandmother's house, which was built in either 1899 or 1900. I can just imagine how some child may have lead a life like Betsy, Tacy, or Tib's, many long years ago in that house and roaming through the nearby fields and woods. Oh, if only there was "the Big Hill!"

I was surprised to read in VICTORIA Magazine about the Betsy-Tacy Society. I couldn't believe there were others who shared my interest in this wonderful series! I'm so happy we can all share our thoughts about our beloved author and friends of Deep Valley through the Betsy-Tacy Society Newsletter. When I received my first Newsletter, I read it from cover to cover! I do hope Harper is sincere about repackaging the books, as I'm sure future generations would be just as enchanted with Deep Valley as we are. It just breaks my heart to see these and other beloved books set out on discard racks. The Betsy-Tacy series should be considered children's classics.

Children's Page People Puzzler

by Renea Ratzloff
Mankato, Minnesota

Who's who in the life of Betsy, Tacy and Tib? As you know, Betsy, Tacy and Tib of Deep Valley, Minnesota were characters of fiction, but were representing people who really did live in Mankato, Minnesota in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Listed below are the fiction names of the characters in the Betsy-Tacy books and the true-to-life names of these characters. See how many of the fiction names you can match up with the true-to-life names by drawing a line between the two columns to connect them. (HINT: If you have the book *BETSY-TACY IN DEEP VALLEY, PEOPLE AND PLACES* by Carlienne Frisch, you would find all the answers there.) Answers are on page 9.

Fiction

Joe Willard
Irma Biscay
Dennie Farisy
Alice Morrison
Carney Sibley
Margaret Ray
Tacy Kelly
Tib Muller
Bonnie Andrews
Betsy Ray
Katie Kelly
Winona Root
Tom Slade
Tony Markham
Julia Ray
Cab Edwards
Uncle Keith Warrington
Mr. & Mrs. Ray

True-to-Life

Theresa Kennedy
Kathleen Hart
Helen Hart
Marion willard
Frank Palmer
Ruth Williams
Midge Gerlach
Constance Davis
Delos Lovelace
Mildred Oleson
Maud Palmer Hart
Bicky Kenney
Mike Parker (probably)
Tom Fox
Jabez Lloyd
Eleanor Johnson
Paul G. Ford
Thomas & Stella
Palmer Hart

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.



THE BOTANY OF BETSY



by Nancy Cleaveland

It was very early; the sky was the color of Betsy's mother's opal ring. The air was cold, and up on the Hill Street Hill where Betsy and Tacy went to pick flowers for Aunt Dolly, the grass was wet with dew. When their arms were full of goldenrod and bright purple asters, they went down to Hill Street and sat on Tacy's hitching block. It was too early yet to go to Tib's. BETSY-TACY AND TIB



Autumn in Deep Valley presented a showy season, when fields and roadsides were alive with the brilliance of many exuberantly flowering plants, all blooming side by side. Autumn wildflowers were bright and bold, many of them echoing the color of the sun. Others could rival the trees and sky, displaying bright purples or deep blues among dark green leaves. They flourished in open meadows and along the roadsides, their very brightness making them easy to find. No wonder Betsy and Tacy could fill their arms with blossoms!

Goldenrod and asters were often picked by Betsy on her way to school. They grew in vacant lots and covered the Big Hill in the fall. She noticed them growing near Murmuring Lake. Tony and Cab included goldenrod and asters in a bouquet they picked and presented to Betsy after football practice. In *BETSY AND JOE*, Betsy, Tacy and Tib "...stretched out on the hillside, a slanting coppery sea of goldenrod," to talk about their pending and most important senior year of high school.

Goldenrods (*Solidago spp*) have long been a mainstay of the English perennial garden, while here in the country of their origin they are neglected as "weeds." A carefree perennial, goldenrod forms big clumps and blooms for long periods in late summer and early autumn. The plant has dense, narrow, green foliage, with long plumes of small, yellow flowers. Goldenrod has long been maligned as the cause of hay fever, due to its appearance in the fields during heavy pollen time. The real culprit, however, is ragweed.

Asters (*Aster spp*) consist of numerous species of hardy herbaceous perennial plants, flowering in all but the coldest seasons, and in a huge range of heights and colors. All have small, narrow, pointed leaves, and are grown for their daisy-shaped flower clusters with yellow centers. Many forms are invasive and should be kept from more delicate plants.

(A trivia question... Can you name the man in the picture??)

Betsy-Tacy in Second Grade

There are 21 second-graders in Lincoln, Massachusetts who've made Everything Pudding! They stirred it up in a crockpot in their classroom at the Hartwell School under the benevolent eye of their student teacher, Monica Kennedy.

Monica, who received her Master's degree in education from Boston's Wheelock College in August, is my niece by marriage and a Betsy-Tacy fan almost from birth. Last spring she developed a three-week lesson plan for her Hartwell School class that used the Betsy-Tacy stories to help teach every subject in the second grade curriculum. She read BETSY-TACY out loud to the kids before the unit began, and introduced them to selections from the other books as the three weeks moved along.

The Everything Pudding project was BETSY, TACY, AND TIB's contribution, and not too surprisingly, Monica calls it "the noisiest, messiest, and most chaotic lesson I did. It was wonderful. The kids loved it."

It also gave them a chance to compare the contents of the Ray family's kitchen with the contents of their own kitchens at home.

After the mess was cleaned up, Monica gave the kids a beginning lesson in fractions, using kitchen measuring cups and spoons.

And later on in the unit, they did some real cooking—they made Mrs. Kelly's plain cake. (Sorry, all you chocolate people; it was a basic two-egg yellow cake.)

The kids made spelling lists, using new words from the books. They wrote their own Betsy-Tacy stories and poems and drew their own pictures. They learned to sing "My Merry Oldsmobile" and "K-K-Katie."

Betsy's visits to farms were the springboard for talk about farming at the turn of the century and now, and for a science lesson on how plants grow. Each second-grader got two marigold seeds to set out in a cut-down milk container and nurture on a sunny windowsill.

The story in DOWNTOWN about the arrival of Deep Valley's first horseless carriage led to discussion of all the new things that have come along since Betsy-Tacy days, and of what it's like to encounter something new. The kids' homework assignment that night was an essay about "The First Time I Ever..."

Perhaps the most important lessons came from OVER THE BIG HILL—from Betsy, Tacy, and Tib's meeting with Naifi, their discovery of the Syrian community, and Naifi's crowning as Queen of Summer. Monica asked her second-graders to think and talk about friendship and prejudice, ethnic diversity and the immigration experience, and their own families' origins and traditions. They even got an introduction to the history and geography of the middle east.

In addition to the books themselves, Monica's source materials included the tape of a Maud Hart Lovelace interview from the 1950s; Kathy Dorn and Carlienne Frisch's video, "Tell Me About Betsy, Mama"; and Carlienne's illustrated booklet, "Betsy-Tacy in Deep Valley—People and Places." And then there was the jade

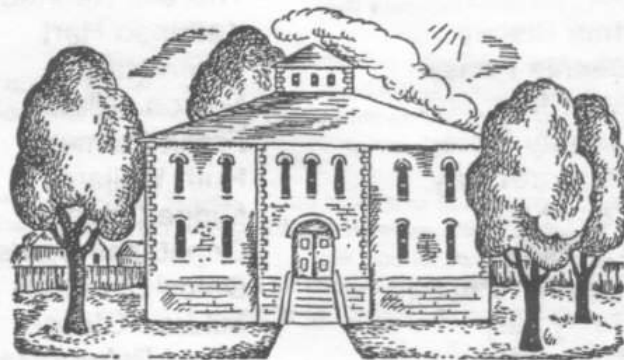
ring that Betsy-Maud's father gave her for her 18th birthday. I gave it to Monica when she graduated from high school, and the kids thought that was pretty neat.

If any teachers in the Betsy-Tacy Society would like copies of Monica's lesson plans with her comments on how it all went, you can write to her at 15 Newman Way, Apartment 21, Arlington, MA 02174.

She'd love to hear from you.

Merian Lovelace Kirchner

Merian Lovelace Kirchner is Maud Hart Lovelace's daughter, and a regular contributor to the Betsy-Tacy Newsletter.



Dear Betsy-Tacy Society,

I am 11 years old. I love Maud Hart Lovelace's books. I just started reading them last summer. I'm almost through with my second time through on the Betsy-Tacy books. Betsy, Tacy, and Tib seem to be my best friends. Anytime I need a friend I go to the Betsy-Tacy Books. I feel like I'm there with them, doing what they are.

I am also very much like Betsy, Tacy, and Tib in many ways. I love to write like Betsy. I'm an alto like her, too. I have red hair, blue eyes, fair skin, and freckles like Tacy. I'm also shy like her. I love to cook and sew like Tib. These three make perfect friends for me. I am so glad for Maud Hart Lovelace's books.

Julie Shepherd
5776 Andover Way
Tucker, CA 30084

OF MEAT PIE AND OTHER THINGS



by Beth Hudson

Out in the kitchen she lit the gas light and foraged. Finding milk, cold sausages, and part of a chocolate cake, she tiptoed with them back up to her room.

BETSY AND JOE

More often than not I find myself actually getting hungry while reading Betsy-Tacy books, largely because Maud did such a delicious job writing about the foods she and her family enjoyed. Her zest for nourishment was infectious and contributed to my hobby of collecting old cookbooks. I've attempted Lord Baltimore cakes, always add a dash of nutmeg to waffle batter, and toss hard-boiled eggs into the picnic basket. Many Ray/Hart traditions have been incorporated into my own family traditions, including muffins on the first day of school (though so far that's only preschool). Blueberry muffins are also likely to turn up on our table several times a week. Fudge, the ultimate "Betsy food," is a challenge, but a wonderful family entertainment, even if we end up having to eat it with a spoon! If it has to be perfect, I'm forced to rely on the old marshmallow creme recipe. Otherwise, I stick with the following:

CHOCOLATE FUDGE (from *Your Home and You: A Unit Course in Home Economics*, 1948)

5/8 cup cocoa
2 cups sugar
1/4 teaspoon salt
2/3 cup milk
2 tablespoons light corn syrup
2 tablespoons butter
1 teaspoon vanilla

Put all ingredients except butter and vanilla into a saucepan. Stir and heat over a low flame until the sugar is dissolved. Continue heating, stirring occasionally to avoid scalding. When a candy thermometer registers 236 degrees, or when a soft ball forms in water, remove the saucepan from the fire.

Add the butter and set aside to cool, but do not stir. When the temperature drops to 110 degrees or when the bottom of the pan is not uncomfortably hot, add the vanilla. Beat the mixture until it is thicker and no longer glossy. Pour into a square buttered pan. When the fudge is cool, cut into squares.

Guest columnists for OF MEAT PIE AND OTHER THINGS are encouraged to write about their favorite Betsy-Tacy foods along with favorite recipes. Check for newsletter deadlines and mailing information.

Book Review

Gentlemen From England

Maud and Delos Lovelace's GENTLEMEN FROM ENGLAND, originally published in 1937, has been reissued. The book is set in Southern Minnesota in the years shortly after the Civil War. The story focuses on Richard Chalmers, a "second son" looking to establish his own estate in the United States, since he can't inherit his father's in England. Chalmers is not the only Englishman to relocate in the fictitious town of Rainbow, Minnesota (based on Fairmont, Minnesota), as many have been lured by tales of riches to be found in the cultivation of beans. Enough of them gather to create a "Little England" in the town. The story includes the struggles with weather, grasshoppers, and the problems involved in creating a society where none existed before. On the romantic side, there is the conflict within Chalmers; will he pick the woman he wants, or the woman who is so obviously right for him?

This book has a lot to offer the reader. The plot itself is a real "fish out of water" story. Seeing how the English adapt in a different world gives a fascinating twist to the typical English story of fox hunts and balls (although those events are present in the book). The book is also interesting because it was written by both Lovelaces. In an interview with Hamline University students, Maud explained that she did most of the research, but that she and Delos split the writing. When asked about the potential problems of writing with your spouse she further explained that there were no arguments, no dirty looks, no disagreements. Reviewer Lisle Bell described the book as "unusually interesting and out of the beaten path of fiction." I think you will agree.

Reviewed by Susan Stanfield, Manhattan, Kansas



BERRY MUFFINS (from *Lowney's Cookbook*, 1907)

1/2 cup butter
1 cup sugar
1 egg
2 cups flour
4 teaspoons baking powder
1 cup milk
1 cup berries
1/4 teaspoons salt

Cream butter; add sugar, yolk well-beaten, flour mixed and sifted with dry ingredients, milk, white of egg beaten until stiff, and berries. Bake in buttered muffin pans or in buttered cake pan.

Betsy - Tacy Society Shop Catalog

Our primary goal is the purchase of Maud Hart Lovelace's childhood home in Mankato, Minnesota for use as a museum and visitor center.

Please allow 6-8 weeks for delivery.



A



B



C



D



E



K



F



G



H



I



J

The following items are available with the corresponding design(s):

1 RUBBER STAMPS

Designs: A B C D E F..... each \$4.95

2 T-SHIRT Design: G [raspberry shirt]

Child size M each \$9.95

Adult sizes S, M, L, XL each \$9.95

2A Adult size XXL each \$12.95

3 T-SHIRT Design H [pink shirt]

Child size M each \$9.95

Adult sizes S, M, L, XL each \$9.95

3A Adult size XXL each \$12.95

4 T-SHIRT Design I [aqua shirt]

Adult sizes S, M, L, XL each \$9.95

4A Adult size XXL each \$12.95

5 APRON Design K

[blue ink on white apron] each \$9.95

6 TOTE BAG-LARGE Design J

[green ink on beige bag] each \$9.95

7 TOTE BAG-SMALL Design H

[blue ink on beige bag] each \$6.95

8 PENCILS Set of six

..... each set \$3.75



A Ray's Shoe Store
Deep Valley, Minnesota
Wear Queen Quality Shoes
[navy pencil]

B I ♥ Maud ♥ Lovelace
[pink pencil]

C Deep Valley High School
Class of 1910
[silver pencil]

D Zet! Zet! Zetamathians!
[blue pencil]

E Philo! Philo! Philomathians!
[orange pencil]

F The Betsy-Tacy Society
303 Meadow Wood Dr.
Mankato, MN 56001
[white pencil]

All proceeds go to the non-profit Betsy-Tacy Society

Betsy - Tacy Society Shop Catalog



DON'T FORGET!



9 POST-IT NOTES Set of four each set \$4.00

A

"Betsy was always making lists..."
2"x3" vertical
[green ink on green note]

B

Lois Lenski drawing of Betsy, Tacy & Tib on their bench.
2"x3" vertical
[blue ink on blue note]

C

SHOWN ON LEFT:
Lois Lenski drawing from page 53 of Betsy-Tacy and Tib with "DON'T FORGET"
2"x3" vertical
[brown ink on pink note]

D

Vera Neville illustration of Betsy by her trunk with "Perhaps people who like to write always made lists...just for the fun of it."
3"x6" vertical
[green ink on white note]

Betsy-Tacy Convention
Deep Valley Minnesota
July 10 - 12, 1992

Maud Hart Lovelace Centennial
The Betsy-Tacy Society
303 Meadow Wood Drive
Markato MN 56001

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10A
Memories of Maud
Shirley Lieske

10B
Classic Girls' Series
Kate Emburg

10C
Women Who Drew Deep Valley
Cheryl Harness

10D
Collector's Hints
Colleen Timmins

10E
A Heroine Flourishes
Mary Atwell

10F
Characters & Counterparts
Sharla Whalen

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10G
My Love Affair
Kathy Baxter

10H
Home is Where
Susan Stanfield

10I
Kerlan Collection
Karen Hoyle

10J
Great World Revisited
Beth Hudson

10K
History of Little Syria
Gail Palmer

10L
MN Women Authors
Lyn Lacy



BOOKS

11 WINDOWS TO THE PAST
by Rene Ratzlof
A book of games & puzzles for children
..... each \$5.00

12 THE LAST STORY
by Maud Hart Lovelace
Betsy and Tacy go to Spain
..... each \$2.00

Please Turn The Page For Order Form

10 CONVENTION BOOKMARKS 1 1/2" x 5 1/2"
Set of 12 each set \$6.00 Single bookmark each 50¢
Each of the twelve speakers at the convention chose a Betsy-Tacy illustration to appear on the bookmark given at her presentation.

All proceeds go to the non-profit Betsy-Tacy Society



Betsy - Tacy Society Shop Catalog

ATTENTION: Kay Hocker • 521 10th Street SE • Rochester MN 55904

QTY	CODE	SIZE	DESCRIPTION	PRICE	TOTAL
___	1A		Rubber Stamp	\$4.95	___
___	1B		Rubber Stamp	4.95	___
___	1C		Rubber Stamp	4.95	___
___	1D		Rubber Stamp	4.95	___
___	1E		Rubber Stamp	4.95	___
___	1F		Rubber Stamp	4.95	___
___	2	___ *	T-Shirt [raspberry] .	9.95	___
___	2A	XXL	T-Shirt [raspberry]	12.95	___
___	3	___ *	T-Shirt [pink]	9.95	___
___	3A	XXL	T-Shirt [pink]	12.95	___
___	4	___ *	T-Shirt [aqua]	9.95	___
___	4A	XXL	T-Shirt [aqua]	12.95	___
___	5		Apron	9.95	___
___	6	L	Tote Bag - Large	9.95	___
___	7	S	Tote Bag - Small ...	6.95	___
___	8		Pencils set of six	3.75	___
___	9		Post-It Notes		___
			..... set of four	4.00	___

* If additional sizes are desired, please note on separate, attached sheet.

QTY	CODE	SIZE	DESCRIPTION	PRICE	TOTAL
___	10		Bookmarks set of 12	6.00	___
___	10A		Memories of Maud BkMk .....	.50	___
___	10B		Classic Girls BkMk .....	.50	___
___	10C		Women Who Drew BkMk .....	.50	___
___	10D		Collector's Hints BkMk .....	.50	___
___	10E		A Heroine BkMk .....	.50	___
___	10F		Characters BkMk .....	.50	___
___	10G		My Love Affair BkMk .....	.50	___
___	10H		Home is Where BkMk .....	.50	___
___	10I		Kerlan Collection BkMk .....	.50	___
___	10J		Great World BkMk .....	.50	___
___	10K		History of Syria BkMk50	___
___	10L		Women Authors BkMk50	___
___	11		Games & Puzzles Book	5.00	___
___	12		"The Last Story"	2.00	___

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Delivery Charge _____

Total Payment

Please make checks payable to: Betsy-Tacy Society

Please send check & order form to:

Betsy-Tacy Society
ATTENTION: Kay Hocker
521 10th Street SE
Rochester MN 55904

PLEASE PRINT

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Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone (_____) _____

merchandise sub-totals	delivery charge
up to \$30	\$2.95
\$30.01 - \$ 65	\$4.35
\$60.01 - \$95	\$5.65

All proceeds go to the non-profit Betsy-Tacy Society



Left: BETSY-TACY. Portrait of Maud at age five all ready for her birthday party. Pictures are of Maud's (Betsy) and Frances Kenney's (Tacy) homes. Additional picture is of Pleasant Grove School (Lincoln School), where the girls attended elementary school. The next two pictures are original artwork from BETSY, TACY AND TIB by Lois Lenski, plus a mixing bowl depicting the making of Everything Pudding. Photo by Barbara Carter.

Right: From BETSY'S WEDDING there is a photo of Maud and Delos taken near the time of their marriage. The collection of photographs are of Maud and her family. The door knob and numbers 905 are from the actual house located at 905 West 25th Street in Minneapolis. There is also original sheet music, and Jack and Jill magazines that contain short stories for children written by MHL. Photo by Barbara Carter.



**Betsy-Tacy Society
Membership Form**

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (____) _____

Please check either: New Member Renewal

Membership Levels

_____ Sustaining \$100 and up	_____ Individual \$10
_____ Patron \$25	_____ Child \$5
_____ Family \$15	_____ Europe or Canada

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

Make checks payable to the Betsy-Tacy Society and send, along with this form, to:

Michele Franck, 294 Chestnut Avenue, Boston, MA 02130-4440



Betsy, Tacy and Tib Day Display

On June 12 the Twin Cities Chapter of the Betsy-Tacy Society sponsored Betsy, Tacy and Tib Day, an event which drew society members from all over the country. One of the special features was a display of each of the books from the Betsy-Tacy series, plus the other Deep Valley books, all of which are first editions owned by Colleen Timmins. The display, which occupied the main showcase in Saint Joseph's Hall of the College of Saint Catherine in Saint Paul, was put together by Colleen Timmins, Nancy Erickson, and Linda Shaw from their own materials and other items that were borrowed from other members of the society. For close-ups of some of the display, see page 19.

The Betsy - Tacy Society
c/o The Heritage Center
BECHS
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Mankato, MN 56001-3741

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