

THE BETSY-TACY SOCIETY

Note Book

The Betsy-Tacy Society

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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.

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.

Note From Our President

I'd like to let you all know that the Twin Cities Chapter of the Betsy-Tacy Society has chosen to become a separate group called the Maud Hart Lovelace Society. Memberships in the National Betsy-Tacy Society will not be affected by this change; any TCC member receiving this newsletter is a member of the National Betsy-Tacy Society. We wish the new group well. Anyone having questions about this can call me.

On another note, one of our members, Ann Sand of St. Joseph, Minnesota, wrote to me the following: "I was at a library book sale and was thrilled to find a copy of Maud's book THE TREES KNEEL AT CHRISTMAS. I couldn't believe my good luck! Therefore, I was overwhelmed several minutes later to find a second identical copy of the book. I couldn't leave the second book there, as I feel that all of Maud's books have to be owned by people who will love them and cherish them! I was happy to see in your Fall Newsletter that you accept donated books and memorabilia. I would like to donate Maud's book to the Betsy-Tacy Society to be used for fundraising." We are very grateful to you, Ann, for this treasured contribution, and I will keep you posted as we decide how to use your contribution to raise money for the Lovelace House Fund.

A few minutes after opening Ann's package, I received a phone call from Julie Abdo informing me that Abdo and Daughters will soon publish an updated version of Maud's book THE TREES KNEEL AT CHRISTMAS. Now we will all be able to have a copy of this book. Julie's company will be present at the American Booksellers Association Convention in May in Los Angeles, and the American Library Association Convention in Miami in June. She's asked that BTS members ask their bookstores to order the book in advance of the Convention. For ordering information, contact Abdo & Daughters Publishing, 4940 Viking Drive, Suite 622, Edina, MN 55435 or call 800-458-8399. Publication of TREES is set for October 15, 1994. They hope to release other Lovelace titles if this one does well.

The Betsy-Tacy Society has grown considerably since its inception in April, 1990 from just a few members to over 1,000. We'd like to work on a strategic

plan for future growth and development, and seek individuals who could volunteer to assist us in developing a marketing and promotion plan for the organization. If anyone is willing to help, please contact Kay Hocker, 521 10th Street S.E., Rochester, Minnesota, 55904 or call at (507) 280-8348.

Speaking of Kay Hocker, our Treasurer: she has handled over 200 orders in the last few months using only a pencil as a word processor. We would like to get her a computer and printer to handle our finances, taxes, and shop orders. If someone has a computer and printer that has become obsolete (for your needs), and if you would like to donate it to the Betsy-Tacy Society, please contact me, Lona Falenczykowski, at (507) 345-8103. We need a machine that has at least a 286 chip with 512K of memory. Your contribution would be tax deductible, and would help us very much.

We have many talented members that have contributed so much in so many ways and I would like to thank you all.

Lona Falen

Note From Michele

Thanks again to everyone for renewing your membership. Looking forward to the mail was the highlight of my winter in Boston, where we got a record 90 plus inches of snow. Those of you who pay attention to your bank statements have probably noticed that it takes forever for your checks to clear. We apologize for the delay, and hope to speed up our system. Please remember to notify me right away if you plan to move, so that I can make sure your next newsletter gets to you. Bulk mail is rarely forwarded.

In the Winter newsletter we printed the King of Spain's address in case any of you wanted to write to him. Our member Diane Kipp decided that wasn't good enough for her. She and her family are moving to Barcelona for several years. We'll expect periodic King sightings reports, Diane!

Happy Spring!

Michele Franck



Notes & Notices



PEN PAL WANTED

Interested in being a pen-pal?
Write to:

Casey Schultz (age 9)
5613 Park Place Drive
Shoreview MN 65126



CONVENTION 1997

It's not too early to begin the planning for the next Convention, which will celebrate the centennial of Betsy's 5th birthday party. Cheryl Harness, noted author, artist, and Betsy-Tacy fan, has graciously agreed to act as Convention Coordinator. If you have any suggestions for events, or would like to volunteer to help, Cheryl would love to hear from you. Write to her:

Cheryl Harness
2565 E. Caramillo Street
Colorado Springs CO 80909



CHAPTER STARTING HELP

If you've got an 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 DC, and Cleveland who have expressed interest in setting up chapters. Members hailing from other areas should write to:

National Society
415 Cherry Street
Mankato MN 56001-3741




CATALOGUE OFFER

Betsy-Tacy Products are still available! If you would like a copy of the catalogue pages from Newsletter #13, please send a legal-sized, stamped, self-addressed envelope to:

Kay Hocker
521 10th Street SE
Rochester MN 55904



CHRISTMAS IN MILWAUKEE



A Minnesota and Boston contingent of national board members joined the Betsy-Tacy fans from the Chicago area for a "Christmas in Milwaukee" pilgrimage hosted by the Chicago Area Chapter. We stepped into 1907 and checked into the elegant Astor Hotel.

On Friday night we enjoyed the Schlitz Brown Bottle Pub and in our imaginations, it was the Schlitz Palm Garden of Tib's Milwaukee. Some of us enjoyed "A Christmas Carol" at the Pabst Theatre just as Betsy and Tib enjoyed "Reiterattacke," the German military farce, there. This three level baroque theater, in all its red and golden splendor, was built in 1895 in a Renaissance Revival design.

On Saturday a bus tour took us to see Browner Sem, in reality Downer, now part of the campus of UWM. The red brick buildings and towers looked much the same on the outside as they had in 1907, complete with "roguish gargoyles peering down." The parlor with its ornate fireplace, the hall, and chapel were all very old and Gothic.

Lake Michigan was as awe-inspiring today as it was to Betsy as she and Tib clasped hands and ran, gulls swooping overhead. The statue of Juneau in the park kept vigil

over the vast expanse of icy gray water.

At the Turnverin, where Tib's aunt took the girls to hear the "Messiah," we climbed to the third floor ballroom and the stage where the performance had been. The room was in decay following a long ago fire, but we could see the golden glory it once had by viewing a small section that had been restored as an example of the way it would be again someday. We ate lunch at the Turner's and were delighted to receive a tiny booklet of "Betsy's German," thanks to Susan Knorr's mom.

Betsy's favorite Downtown Milwaukee just wasn't as festive as it was in that Christmas of long ago, but our tour bus and guide, Tybie Taglin, took us past many of the sights Betsy and Tib admired. We visited the Pabst Theater again and ascended to the second balcony for a thrilling view of the stage and a close-up look at the immense sparkling chandelier. We weren't able to have dinner at the "fashionable Deutscher Club" as Betsy did with Grosspapa Muller and family, but it was impressive on the drive by.

A tour of the Flemish Renaissance Revival Pabst Mansion, built in 1893, was a highlight of the trip. It was decorated in all natural and dried florals and each room had a different theme or color scheme. Betsy would have loved the Ladies Parlor resplendent in raspberry, white, and gold or the dining room full of dried pansies, or the cozy library with handcarved Santas to coordinate with the carved paneling on the walls, or the massive open stairway with carolers on the landing, or the kitchen full of gingerbread people or.....Betsy would have loved it all!

We drove past the site of the homes in the book including the sad empty lot where the duplex once stood. I think everyone closed their eyes and imagined that joyous Christmas of 1907. The Hornik Tailor Shop was still there, but much changed. We could see the old dormers on the top floor where we could all catch a glimpse of Aunty Dolly inside, dancing to "The Merry Widow Waltz."

Two doors down from the "Brave Little Tailor's" we shopped at Northern Chocolate Company. Entering the tiny shop was like stepping back in time, as all the chocolates are made right there from antique Victorian

CHRISTMAS IN MILWAUKEE

—continued—

molds which were on display. The chocolate shop "experience" was one we will long remember and joke about, for we will never again see chocolate without thinking that someone will yell at us to "be careful not to bruise it."

Supper that evening was at John Ernst, Milwaukee's oldest German restaurant. Many of us enjoyed sauerbraten, potato dumplings, and schaum torte — a very "Muller" meal. Favors at the table were cross-stitched bookmarks for our own copies of "BETSY IN SPITE OF HERSELF." We returned to the Astor walking past an old Episcopal church, which just might have been the one Tib and Betsy attended.

That evening was spent socializing at a sing-a-long and buying T-shirts, raffle tickets, and "Deep Valley Creations" merchandise for our collections. Thanks go to Lupe Johnson, who donated hand-painted bell ornaments for the raffle. A "spread" of three kinds of German kuchen and old-fashioned fudge was devoured by all.

In the morning, the National Betsy-Tacy Society members met with representatives from the Twin Cities and Chicago Area Chapter to discuss common concerns. Following the meeting, we breakfasted on kringle while unpacking our stockings. Stuffed inside were: an embroidered commemorative mini stocking with candy cane, a vanity bag complete with a rabbit's foot inside, and the beautiful Cheryl Harness print of the Rays' Christmas morning. Thanks go to Alison and "Deep Valley Creations" for this generous gift. Many of us also learned more about the history of Milwaukee from the slide show and speaker on the city's German heritage.

We all bid farewell to the Mullers' Milwaukee, taking with us many treasured holiday memories, just as Betsy did. And also, just as Betsy did, we had to take presents home! Shelby, Allie and I found a German stein for Karl, a pretty pink satin vanity bag (just right for that rabbit's foot), a tiny copy of "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs" along with a set of mini dwarf figures, and my prized treasure from a Milwaukee antique shop — the score to "The Merry Widow."

The next time we meet, I expect we shall all be wearing rouge and be dramatic and mysterious!

—by Kelly Reuter

Joe Willard, the Self-Made Man: a Portrait

by Patricia Nolan Stein

In the fall 1993 issue of the *Betsy-Tacy Society Newsletter*, writer Anna Quindlen referred to Joe Willard's "crabby moods," saying she got tired of feeling sorry for him! But as most Betsy-Tacy fans know, there was much more to Joe Willard than an occasional spell of grouchiness. No one can deny that he was a brilliant portrayal of the self-made man so prevalent at the beginning of this century, even at age 14!

When Betsy Ray first met Joe Willard at Butternut Center in the summer of 1906, it was love at first sight, even though the two of them didn't realize it at the time. What Betsy DID realize, however, was that Joe was different from any other boy she had ever met. Betsy was attracted to Joe's good looks—his blond hair and blue eyes. And equally important, she was attracted by the fact that, like her, he loved to read. When she first spotted him behind the counter at Willard's Emporium, he was reading one of her favorite novels, *THE THREE MUSKETEERS*.

Throughout their freshman year together at Deep Valley High School, Betsy wanted to get to know Joe better, but her friendships with Tony and the Crowd kept getting in the way. Joe took an interest in Betsy, however, and offered to help her study for the Essay Contest, in which they were both competing. Joe even admitted that he was worried about Betsy because he felt—and rightly so—that she hadn't studied enough for the contest. Not surprisingly, he WAS insulted when Betsy opted to walk home from the library with Tony instead.

During their sophomore year, Betsy admitted to Joe that she had read *IVANHOE*, their summer reading assignment, but "wasn't admitting it" to anyone! Joe, ever perceptive, replied to the popular Betsy, "You wouldn't." And that was the year that Joe defended Betsy's description of apple blossoms as "rosy!" However, she couldn't understand why Joe refused to join in any of the Crowd's activities. As she noted, you couldn't feel sorry for Joe—he was so proud, so confident.

Miss Sparrow explained Joe's aloofness to Betsy when she said, "I figure him out this way. He has no father or mother. He has to work for a living. Being barred from the usual things high school students do, the things requiring money and time, he takes refuge in books. He isn't a boy who pities himself. He has to work but he makes that an adventure. But he is a proud boy. He wouldn't like coming to call on you in shabby clothes. He just has to be rude, don't you see?"

Betsy finally did begin to understand Joe's personality and what "made him tick." And when she began her junior year, she was determined to become his girlfriend. However, Phyllis Brandish and her automobile got in the way. Still, as Betsy discovered at the end of her junior year, going with Phyllis had made Joe...suave—and the chip on his shoulder seemed to be gone.

In her senior year, Betsy realized she was in love with Joe, but almost lost him because she couldn't decide who she liked the most: Joe or the handsome and ever-charming Tony. But true love won out, and by the end of *BETSY AND JOE*, when they were both making plans to go to college, they were as good as engaged, even though they didn't call it that. As Joe said, "After Commencement Day, the World, with Betsy."

In college, Betsy and Joe broke up after he went to Harvard as a journalism student and she began dating a young man named Bob. And on her trip to Europe in *BETSY AND THE GREAT WORLD*, Betsy was attracted to several men, but she couldn't forget Joe. And it's no wonder she never lost her faith in him. As always, Joe was the self-made man, working his way through college, learning how to be a journalist, preparing for the Great World.

If he tended to have his up and down moods, so what? He didn't have a mother or father to confide. Everything he achieved and accomplished he did on his own, right from the tender age of 14 when he left his aunt's house in Butternut Center to seek an education.

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MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

NATIONAL NEWS

by Kelly Reuter

The National Betsy-Tacy Society has been busy all winter with new projects and ideas for events as well as taking care of a lot of unfinished old business.

A festive group of National Board members made the "Christmas in Milwaukee" pilgrimage in December. This included National President Lona and daughter Emily, National Vice President Kathy Baxter, National Corresponding Secretary Michele, National Recording Secretary Kelly and daughters Shelby and Allie. It was wonderful getting together with the Chicago Area Chapter to step back to 1907 Milwaukee and relive Christmas with Betsy and Tib. A group of National board members along with chapter board members met at the Astor for a meeting on Sunday morning Dec. 5th. We discussed the sales of National merchandise by individual chapters and the percentage the chapters could keep of the retail prices. There was also a discussion on the "House Fund" and whether each chapter should have their own, or all ear-marked "house money" should be kept in one National Society Fund. These issues would be decided at a future board meeting. It was suggested that in the future the National Society News will get precedence in the National Newsletter and should not get cut by any other columns as this is of interest to all National Society members around the country. It was decided that the Chapters are to send their membership lists to Michele so that they can be compared to the National membership list to make sure that all chapter members are also National members and to try and straighten out the collecting of dues. The consensus of the group was that we must all remember that we are all one and work toward the same goals.

The National Board met on January 8th, 1994 at Kelly Reuter's home for a belated Christmas Party, extending the Holidays as long as possible just as the Crowd did. In the true spirit of Betsy-Tacy, we feasted all afternoon until it was time for supper. Included in the huge array of foods was "English Monkey" made from Winona's (Eleanor Johnson's) own recipe. This was scooped up with big pretzel sticks served in a German beer stein, in honor of Tib and our recent journey to Milwaukee. Mrs Ray's (Stella Hart's) own "Cheese Salad" was served and consisted of cream cheese balls with a walnut pressed into each one and served on salad "with a nice dressing" as specified in her recipe. Casseroles, salads, Christmas goodies, munchies, and rich desserts rounded out the meal. Amidst indulging we also conducted a meeting to take care of business brought up in Milwaukee. It was decided that when a chapter wishes to sell the National products at an event they may keep 15% of the retail price. The mark-up on our products is less than 50% of the retail, because of the costs of screen set-up charges and shipping and handling, therefore the National Board felt that 15% would be a fair commission for the chapters. The National Society has gotten our permission renewed for using the Lenski

and Neville illustration from the books on our products. This time there are more stipulations attached to the use of the designs. All illustrations from the books must be credited to the artist on all items bearing their work. Since we want to maintain good relations with Harper-Collins we will be sure this is done in the future. Any chapter wishing to have souvenir items made to sell during any special event must have them approved by the National Board before production to insure that Harper-Collins rules are followed. There were discussions concerning the legalities of chapters using the National society's non-profit status, tax numbers, etc. A lawyer will be consulted on these matters. Upcoming events were mentioned including a children's tea at the library this summer sponsored by the Friends of the Library. The Mankato Convention and Visitor's Bureau is also planning a celebration of the restoration of the depot and we hope to become involved in this when more is known about it. Suggestions were made for new Betsy-Tacy products for our shop...so be sure to save your pennies for exciting new items for your collection!

The National Betsy-Tacy Society Board met at the Heritage Center on Saturday, February 12th. Renea Ratzloff was there with some new ideas for the children's page in future newsletters. We have received a little more information from the Mankato Convention and Visitor's Bureau about the depot celebration tentatively scheduled for late May. It is possible that the Betsy-Tacy Society may have their own Betsy-Tacy car on a train giving rides to New Ulm and short jaunts to Minneopa. There were some great suggestions concerning decorations, color scheme, souvenirs and goodies. We will be hearing more, hopefully soon, on what we will be able to do with our train car. Think of how much fun it must have been when Deep Valley High School traveled to neighboring towns by train for their football games. We would love to relive those times, and remember, always travel with caramels and a good magazine! It was decided to start another savings account for the Society containing money that can be used for events and/or invested in new products for the shop. Money in the "House Account" is ear-marked for that purpose and cannot be touched. A new guide to Betsy-Tacy places in Mankato is in the works and also a new membership information sheet which can be distributed at libraries, book stores, etc.

The Betsy-Tacy Society was saddened to hear of the passing of Betsy Norum, a dear friend and society member. The Society will be giving a memorial in Betsy's name to a Children's Charity.

Next Meeting: March 12, 1994

Annual Meeting: April 30, 1994, 1:00pm, Heritage Center.



GREATER CHICAGO CHAPTER

by Julie Sheffieck

Christmas in Milwaukee, 1907 (December 4-5, 1993)

What a memorable trip! Co-hostesses Melanie Rigney and Debbie Tranchita from Chicago, and Julie Rasman and Susan Knorr from Milwaukee did a fabulous job! We met early Saturday morning at Chicago's Union Station to take the train to that "place named Milwaukee..." arriving at about 10:00 and meeting up with other members who had arrived earlier. As 48 of us drove around the city, we saw many of the sights that Betsy saw, including the statue of the city's founder, Solomon Juneau, and the clock tower on what used to be the train station. We visited Downer College (Browner Seminary in BETSY IN SPITE OF HERSELF), and saw the bow windows and gargoyles at Turner Hall, home of the oldest civic, cultural and historically prominent organization in the city. This is where Betsy and Tib were taken to hear the "Messiah." Back on the bus, we saw a home where Tib's family lived briefly, and the lot where the duplex stood that Betsy visited. The Hornik tailor shop still stands, though it no longer looks as it did then. Two doors down is a chocolate shop where we were able to buy chocolate and look at a restored building of the era. We toured the Pabst Mansion, and the beautiful Pabst Theater, where Uncle Rudy took Betsy and Tib to see "Reiterattacke." Dinner was a re-creation of that which Betsy ate at the Muller's, including sauerbraten and Schaumtorte. Then back to the Astor Hotel, where Kathleen Baxter led a wonderful sing-along of all the music we've read about in the books. Later, a raffle was held for items including illustrated ornaments, books, and Jockey Club products. Sunday morning began with stockings under the tree, and after a slide-talk about the city, we returned to 1993.

"Christmas in Milwaukee" t-shirts and the video that Cathy Tranchita took are great souvenirs of a wonderful trip. The red t-shirts (in L or XL) are \$15.00 each; the 50-minute video is \$10.00. Either may be ordered by sending a check, plus \$1.50 for shipping and handling (charge is the same no matter how many items are ordered) made payable to the Betsy-Tacy Society, to Melanie Rigney, 5000 N Delphia Avenue, Chicago, IL 60656.

The chapter will be happy to provide more information to anyone who wants to do the trip on her own.

January 22, 1994 - minutes

We had a very good turn-out! We began the meeting with introductions by everyone, including some new members and some we haven't seen for a while.

Melanie Rigney, chapter President, presented our first President (and one of the founders of our chapter!), Diane Gonzales, with a gift certificate to one of her favorite bookstores as a token of our appreciation.

Then came the highlight of our meeting--viewing the video of the "Christmas in Milwaukee" trip! Cathy Tranchita (Debbie's daughter) did a wonderful job taping. Those of us who were on the trip enjoyed the memories, and those who missed it got a

chance to see some of the things we did. Thanks to Melanie Rigney, Debbie Tranchita, Susan Knorr and Julie Rasman for a wonderful trip!

Wendy Gifford is beginning to plan the Essay Contest. It will probably be held at the Schiller Park Library, and will be targeted to 5th, 6th and 7th grades. Several suggestions on format and topic were discussed, and a Savings Bond will probably be awarded to the winner. As yet, there is no committee for this event -- and Wendy will welcome any help!

Planning has begun for a Betsy-Tacy Picnic, tentatively scheduled for June 5th in suburban Lake County. This will be a family event, with "colored sand" among the proposed activities for children.

Our next meeting will be Sat, April 23, 1994 at the Schiller Park Library, from 1-3pm. We'll discuss future events and celebrate Maud Hart Lovelace's birthday (the 25th) with a birthday cake.

NEW YORK CHAPTER

by Merian Lovelace Kirchner

We've gotten off to such a great start that maybe we were due for a spot of adversity. Anyway, adversity struck in the form of a week of snow, sleet and freezing rain that made us decide to postpone the bookstore party at the Barnes and Noble Superstore that we'd scheduled for Sunday, February 13. Getting around Manhattan that weekend was, shall we say, challenging. Getting into Manhattan ranged from difficult to impossible, and we'd been counting on a good turnout from out of town. An intrepid group of Chapter members did mush over to the store to welcome any Betsy-Tacy fans who might show up expecting to find the party in full swing. There were only half a dozen, so we were really glad we'd called it off. But we made some new friends among browsers in the children's department who'd never even heard of Betsy-Tacy. The party will be rescheduled in the spring.

Our first Annual Christmas Party on December 19 was splendid. There were greens in the Brass Bowl, my tree up and mostly decorated (Harts, Lovelaces and Kirchners trimmed the tree on Christmas Eve, remember?) and a collection of original Lenski and Neville drawings was on display. We had a grab-bag - Christmas tree ornaments only. We listened, convulsed with laughter, to a tape of the Cat Duet. We read the Christmas shopping chapter from DOWNTOWN aloud, passing the book around the room. And we did not go hungry. Vice President Linda Duchin made oyster stew, she really did. There were at least a dozen kinds of cookies (including several of Mrs. Ray's) and four kinds of fruit cake. There were bowls of raw veggies with wonderful dips. There were two unbelievable chocolate cakes, a homemade Lady Baltimore cake, hot cider and cold wine, and, and...

Coming up on our agenda for the months ahead, along with the rescheduled bookstore party: walking tours of Maud and Delos' New York. We'll explore the neighborhoods they lived in, find their apartment buildings, and see how many of their favorite places are still there.

Merian's Column...

Remembering Betsy Norum

Betsy Jean Breckenridge Norum was something special—funny and feisty, cheerful and dependable and kind and brave. She died of cancer at her home in Minneapolis on January 19, and there are a lot of us in the Betsy-Tacy Society who will always miss her.

She was a first generation Betsy-Tacy fan, born in 1935, which made her the same age as Betsy Ray when *BETSY-TACY* was published in 1940. I don't like saying that Betsy "had it all." It's such a cliché, and she was an original. But what else can you say about somebody who combined marriage, family and home, career and community work, and had fun doing it?

Betsy and her architect husband, Pete, raised their daughter Jenni and son Tim in a rambling old house on West 26th Street in Minneapolis. Their annual Christmas letter was a delight to read—full of love and energy and involvement with each other and their world.

A Home Economics graduate of Iowa State University, Betsy had a hugely successful freelance career as a food consultant and cookbook editor. (Her first cookbook, *COOKING IN MINNESOTA*, is one of my all-time favorites. It has the best instructions for making piecrust that I've ever read.)

Then there were national and local home economics societies, and Theater In The Round, and the First Congregational Church, and of course the Betsy-Tacy Society, of which she was a founding member.

Betsy's last cookbook was *THE GOVERNOR'S TABLE*. It was put out by the 1006 Summit Avenue Society, of which she was a past president, to raise money for the restoration of the Minnesota Governor's Mansion. There should have been at least one more—*THE BETSY-TACY COOKBOOK*. That was Betsy's and my pet project. We'd been working on it off and on since 1975, and I'm ashamed to say that the "offs" were a lot more my fault than hers. I've resolved to finish it this year, but it will be sad to do it without her.

The last time I saw Betsy was at the Maud Hart Lovelace Centennial Convention, two years ago in Mankato. She laid on a "tasting tea" for the 300 or so attendees, with a sampling of food from the stories—Welsh rarebit and muffins and cookies and fudge and baklava and more.

But my sharpest memory of her goes back to March of 1980. I flew to California to see my mother that month, and then back to Mankato for the unveiling of the portrait that hangs in the Maud Hart Lovelace wing of the library. I stayed overnight at the Norums', flew home to New York, and the very next morning got word that Maud had died. She was almost 88 and very sick, and I knew she was ready, but it was still a hard flight back to California that afternoon. A couple of days later, after a funeral

service at St. Ambrose, the little church that Maud and Delos had helped found, I flew to Minneapolis with Maud's ashes, for a second funeral at St. John's in Mankato and burial in Glenwood Cemetery there. Betsy met me at the airport. I was bone tired



and coming down with the flu, and was I ever glad to see her! She put the passenger seat of her car all the way back and gave me a blanket, and I curled up and rested while we drove down to Mankato through the dark. Betsy was, as I said at the start, dependable and kind. She was, in fact, a rock.

She also loved asparagus, and not just to eat. The house on 26th Street was full of it—on dish towels, pot holders and placemats, on china, pottery and glass and, well, you name it. I'll never see an asparagus oven mitt or salt shaker without wishing I could buy it for Betsy.

Joe Willard's Favorite Books

For almost a year now, Andrea Shaw and I have been sorting through boxes and boxes and boxes of Lovelace manuscripts and research notes, letters and diaries, bits of family history, photographs, and more. It's a real treasure hunt, and we plan to report on it in the next few issues of the newsletter. (Andrea and I got acquainted last spring, after she wrote a letter to Michele, asking about the link between the Lovelaces and King Kong. She didn't know what she was letting herself in for.)

One of the small treasures we've found is a pair of ledgers that Maud used in the early 1920s to record the travels of her short stories and Delos' from magazine to magazine. (Betsy started logging her stories in high school, remember? Mr. Ray used to joke about round trip stamps.) In the first ledger, it's not unusual for a manuscript to make a dozen or more trips. One story of Delos', named "Trails," made 50, starting with the prestigious *Saturday Evening Post*. It finally sold for \$100 to *True Stories*, and was published as "A Woman's Good Name." "Carmelita, Widow," bylined by both Maud and Delos, was turned down by 45 editors before *The Catholic World* bought it for \$25.

By the mid-1920s, the Lovelaces had an agent. Delos' stories were selling regularly to magazines like *The Saturday Evening Post* and *Country Gentleman* for as much as \$1,000. (One of his first big sales was "Wheat," the story he sells to *The Thursday Magazine* in Betsy's Wedding. In real life he sold it to *The Ladies Home Journal* in August 1923, for \$600.) By now, Maud was working on her first novel and the second ledger records an advance of \$500 from The John Day Company for *THE BLACK ANGELS*.

continued next page

Merian's Column, continued

On the inside back cover of the first ledger, we found scribbled a list of authors and books. Here it is:

Trollope ?
 George Gissing ?
 Maurice Hewlett ~~Forest Lovers~~ ✓
 Song of Renny (title is unclear)
~~Wm. J. Locke~~ ~~Beloved Vagabond~~ ✓
 Balzac
 Les Miserables
 Fortitude
 Stevenson - selected
 Vicomte de Bragelonne
 Poe - all
 Shaw - selected
 Wonder Book - Hawthorne
 Alice in Wonderland ✓
~~Sinister Street~~
 Youth's (illegible second word) } McKenzie
 Lord Jim
 Youth } Conrad
 Chance
 Old Wive's Tale - Bennett
 The Harbor - Poole
 The Grey Dawn
 Swinburne
 Rossettie
 Browning
 Tennyson
 Gentleman From Indiana - Tarkington
 M. Beaucaire
 The Turmoil
 Penrod
 McTeague

It took us an hour to decipher these 70-year old pencilings, partly because some of the names were unfamiliar. I have to admit I'd never heard of George Gissing or Maurice Hewlett or anybody named McKenzie or Poole or McTeague.

At first glance I thought what we had found had to be Delos' notes for a take-to-a-desert-island book list, but Andrea had another idea. It might have been a wish list for books that Delos wanted to buy. As you can see, he still had decisions to make. It looks as if he was in doubt about Trollope and Gissing. He hadn't chosen titles to represent Balzac or Stevenson or Shaw. And he'd scratched several selections—but most of these have checkmarks, suggesting that they might have been reinstated. It's not surprising to see LES MISERABLES on the list. Joe Willard told Betsy Ray he thought it was the greatest novel ever written. And of course Dumas is there too. I just wonder why Delos chose THE VICOMTE DE BRAGELONNE over THE THREE MUSKETEERS (the book Joe was reading the first time Betsy saw him, remember?) and TWENTY YEARS AFTER. He loved the whole swashbuckling trilogy. He turned me on to Athos, Porthus, Aramis and d'Artagnan when I was about ten years old. The three Conrad titles were no surprise either. If Delos had had to pick just one novelist for the desert island, I think it might have been Conrad. But there were some surprises. I had no idea he liked Booth Tarkington so much. I wouldn't have expected Swinburne and Rossettie to be on a short list of his favorite poets. I *would* have expected to see Shakespeare, and Melville, and maybe Mark Twain, Carl Sandburg, Walt Whitman. Trollope was a nice surprise, because Berl and I discovered him about ten years ago and became instant addicts.

If Maud made a list of her own that day in 1920-something, she didn't write it down on the ledger cover. But knowing how Betsy loved lists, it's hard to imagine that she wouldn't have played Delos' game with him.

Her list would have included Shakespeare for sure. And THE BELOVED VAGABOND (one point in common with Delos' list), VANITY FAIR, Jane Austen, Edith Wharton, Emily Dickenson, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Wordsworth, Keats, Shelley, Sidney Lanier, James Russell. And of course, LITTLE WOMEN.

Merian Lovelace Kirchner

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



From Our Mailbox



We'd love to hear from you! Address correspondence to:

Michele Franck, Corresponding Secretary, 294 Chestnut Ave., Boston, MA 02130-4440.

Should you wish to respond to one of the letter-writers below, please address her c/o Michele.

"Thank you for your prompt response to my inquiry last week - I got the packet of information in the mail today and could hardly wait until I got my children down for naps to pore over everything. Reading the excerpts from Society members' letters was incredible. I never realized how many fans there were. I discovered the books in my grade school library and would re-read the series every year (particularly the high school volumes) until I finished high school myself. For many years I didn't think too much about Betsy until I began thinking of books I'd like to share with my daughter, now three. I was dismayed to discover I couldn't purchase the books in hard cover, or even all of the titles in paperback, but my letters to Harper Collins will go out this week! Thanks again for your assistance in bringing me back in touch with Betsy. PS. I suggested to Harper Collins that they issue a commemorative hard cover set of all the Betsy-Tacy series in 1997 in honor of the 5th birthday party. Wouldn't that be wonderful?"

Jennifer Johnson, Kaukauna, WI

"This past July my twenty-four year-old daughter (who is also a Betsy-Tacy Society member, but in North Dakota) and I made a pilgrimage to Mankato. Only another true Betsy-Tacy fan could understand the thrill we felt walking the streets of Deep Valley. Sitting on the Hill St. bench was an experience I can't begin to put in words. It was one of the best days Emily and I have ever shared together, out of a lifetime of wonderful days with her."

Nan Denson, Huntsville, AL

"I love being a part of the Betsy-Tacy Society. I love it, I love it. In the latest issue in the "From Our Mailbox" I discovered another Maud Hart Lovelace fan that lives right here in Tulsa, OK. I cannot wait to call her. Each newsletter is wonderful! I read them many times. I read them to my husband, mother, friends and anyone who will slow down long enough for me to pull out the latest issue."

Cherry Shupp, Tulsa, OK

"I've been an avid Betsy-Tacy reader since I was eight years old, and I'm now thirty-one! 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. 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!"

LeAnn Richard, New Market, AL

"My name is Moira Koch, I'm sixteen, and I'm interested in joining the Betsy-Tacy Society. I've been reading and re-reading the Betsy-Tacy books for years, ever since my aunt sent me a set of books when I was about seven. Her gift included BETSY-TACY TO BETSY IN SPITE OF HERSELF. Unfortunately, I have not been able to find BETSY WAS A JUNIOR through BETSY'S WEDDING, even though my grandparents have been searching for them for

me at book fairs for the last year!"

Moira Koch, Ocean City, NJ

"Like (I would guess) many readers of the Betsy-Tacy newsletter, I find my life so full of the "real world" (family responsibility, job, friends, travel) that the "pretend world" of the Lovelace books can seem frivolous. However, I've just read "From Our Mailbox" in the latest issue, and I was struck all over again by what an impact that so-called "pretend world" has had on so many lives, most definitely including my own. "Thank you for preserving a part of my childhood": I could not have said it any better. Another woman writes that "being twenty-four years old, I don't usually confess (that I still read Betsy-Tacy) . . . and I think to myself that such a confession comes more easily at age fifty-nine! As we move through life, through years that are rocky, through times when there don't seem any clear answers, some of us can find much stability in childhood memories. As I read the comments of others, it occurred to me that the "pretend world" memories of Deep Valley can be just as real, just as meaningful, as "real world" memories. I find it hard to express this very well - but I have a hunch that devout Lovelace readers will know what I'm talking about!"

Marjorie Sherrill, Tucson, AZ

"I too, as all your letters state, read this delightful series - I have bought old copies so my granddaughter, Sara, can share part of my childhood. One theme running through all the letters is LIBRARY. What an important part of our lives and how honored we all felt, being able to take books home, the warm oak, chairs sliding, pages turning and staying for hours."

June Huss, Ft. Myers, FL

"I've just found out about the Betsy-Tacy Society and I'm so excited. I just happened to pick up VICTORIA magazine at the grocery store (something I never do) and turned to "Letters to the Editor" (something I never do) and saw letters referring to their July issue's coverage of the Society. In addition to totally loving these books on their own, I always felt a connection to the stories. My grandmother was born in Mankato in 1899 and lived there until she moved to Minneapolis after her marriage. I always wondered if she had known "Betsy."

Nancy Roettger, Vienna, WV

"I love the newsletter. I can't believe a woman of my age is still so interested in Betsy-Tacy but it is great to know that there are many others who love the books as much as I have. I actually am a late bloomer as I read about the convention in Mankato and wondered why I had never been exposed to the books since I grew up in St. Paul, Minnesota. They are a delight and a must for every generation."

Kay K. Riter, Rapid City, SD

From Our Mailbox, *continued*

"Legally, my first name is Elizabeth but my mother never called me anything but Betsy after her favorite childhood character. When I was growing up, all the Betsy-Tacy books were out-of-print but my mother went to great lengths so that every birthday, I would have the next book in the series. Now as a young adult librarian, I have the pleasure of introducing the later books in the series to new teenage readers."

Elizabeth (Betsy) Cronin, Bay Head, NJ

"I am eleven 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. Betsy, Tacy, and Tib seem to be my best friends. Anytime I need a friend I go the Betsy-Tacy books. I feel like I'm there with them, doing what they do."

Julie Shepherd, Tucker, GA

"I was thrilled to see the new Betsy-Tacy releases, complete with new covers, in the local bookstore when I took my daughter in last Thursday for storytime (and thrilled again upon arriving home and finding a Betsy-Tacy newsletter in the mail). My daughter is only three, but she begs me to tell her about Betsy, Tacy, and Tib. When I remind her that those books are packed away until we move into our new house, she begs for me to "read" them "without the papers," meaning from my memory. And as well as I thought I knew these stories, I find I can't remember enough to satisfy her! You can bet that future birthday presents for friends and relatives will be copies of these wonderful books! I checked at our local library to see if they still had copies of Betsy-Tacy, and was surprised to see that they had most of the same copies on the shelf that I read as a child, and even some newer ones I didn't get to read until I was an adult. In a way, I was disappointed to see them on the shelf, because that meant they weren't being read and enjoyed at the moment. I am so glad to know there are other Betsy-Tacy friends out there and a Betsy-Tacy Society."

Dena Fleinchamp, Sedro Woolley, WA

"I have just read my first Maud Hart Lovelace book, HEAVEN TO BETSY. Our library has a limited number of Betsy-Tacy books, and the bookstores do not carry them at all. I am really enjoying the book I have, and I would like copies of them all."

Roxanne C. Hill, Carlsbad, CA

"I read the article in the July, 1992 issue of VICTORIA magazine. This devotion on the part of adults to a series of books I only vaguely remembered piqued my interest. I am a children's librarian and felt it my "duty" to see what all the fuss was about! I found that my library did not own the series. I was therefore forced to interlibrary loan all of the books. They came from all over Louisiana! Well, what can I say? I'm a fan. I hated to read BETSY'S WEDDING because that meant I was finished! I'm ready to re-read the whole series! In fact, I've ordered the series for the library's collection."

Cheryl L. Braud, Franklin, LA

"I just read about your Society and as a very big, long time fan of the Betsy-Tacy series, I would appreciate any pertinent information you can provide. I am anxiously waiting for my eldest daughter to begin the books so I can relive the experience with her. She has heard me talk about them often. Thank you for having such an organization and I regret only learning of it now."

Elizabeth (Betsy) Winslow, San Jose, CA

Joe Willard, the Self-Made Man, *continued from Page 4*

Nowadays it would be unheard-of for a 14-year old boy to take such a bold step totally on his own. But in the early 1900s, before World War I, there weren't any welfare programs, social programs, or scholarships for orphaned boys. Most boys in Joe's situation would have never sought a higher education. But Joe was determined to put himself through high school and college, and he did brilliantly, all on his own.

As a married man, Joe kept the same positive values he had while growing up. In his early 20s he was an accomplished newspaper reporter who saw his personal dream of sharing his life with Betsy come true. He was handsome, sexy, hard-working, and he totally supported and nurtured Betsy's goals to become a writer as well. What more could any young woman ask for in a man?

As a newlywed, Betsy adjusted herself to Joe's low moods, but she certainly was no wimp! With perception, she realized that his childhood years of loneliness had been harder on him than perhaps even he knew. Betsy realized that because Joe grew up as an orphan, he had a more complex temperament than she did. Yes, he was a worrier. But he had ambition enough for ten young men, and he never showed any signs of laziness. Nor did he ever give up in times of trouble. He always met tough times with a challenge. That's something you don't always find in young men nowadays!

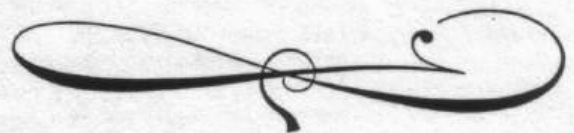
Because there was no television or much "pop culture" in those pre-World War I days, Joe and Betsy amused themselves with books. Their love of reading brought a beautiful dimension to their lives, and their membership in the "Violent Study Club" was extremely important to them.

Joe was never a coward, and he always faced life head-on, with no complaints. When his newspaper boss gave him a hard time for not getting courthouse "scoops" he found a way to "out-scoop" his newspaper rivals. When his widowed aunt was lonely, he invited her to stay with him and Betsy for a while. Luckily for Betsy, Aunt Ruth was enjoyable to live with!

When Betsy's father expressed doubts about her marrying Joe, that certainly didn't stop the wedding! Joe simply convinced Mr. Ray that a marriage between himself and Betsy was the right thing to do. And as World War I approached, Joe was ready to participate, without a complaint.

Joe Willard was indeed an amazing man. It's easy to see why Betsy fell in love with him, and stayed in love, despite all obstacles. Joe was one of those self-made men that we have often heard our grandparents—and others of their generation—speak of with nostalgia. Are there any Joe Willards around nowadays to serve as role models? I certainly hope so!

Patricia Nolan Stein lives in Scottsdale, Arizona. She is the author of numerous magazine articles and operates a news service with her husband.



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 Katie Watts
Petaluma, CA

Highly recommended reading for members is Beverly Cleary's autobiography *A GIRL FROM YAMHILL*. My son Christopher is busy memorizing her books and brought the autobio home. It's way too old for an eight-year-old but great for a grown-up. Anyone who remembers the books or is still reading them (to herself or her children) would enjoy it. After reading the tragedy of her parents' lives, it's intriguing to contemplate the contrast with the wholesome, happy, funny residents of Klickitat Street.

Adult fiction that evokes the same pleasure in re-reading that Betsy books do are: *JANE'S HOUSE* by Robert Kimmel Smith; *A MARRIAGE OF CONVENIENCE* by Elizabeth Rossiter, and *THE DIETER* by Susan Sussman.

New here in the Chez Watts library are Elizabeth Jane Howard's *THE LIGHT YEARS*, and *COLD SASSY TREE* by Olive Burns. The *LIGHT YEARS* is the first of a proposed trilogy and the second volume is *MARKING TIME*.

After reading the excerpt from Robert James Waller's *THE BRIDGES OF MADISON COUNTY* in the Ladies' Home Journal, I went down to the library to request it and found there were several people ahead of me--the book had 141 holds on it!! Look out Danielle Steel!

(Editor's note: His second book *SLOW WALTZ IN CEDAR BEND* is even better)

Finally, the book - Charles Palliser's *THE QUINCUNZ*, which out-Dickens Dickens. I read it almost continuously for four days after Christmas 1991. I was present in body only; my men gave up trying to communicate. Hour after hour I read. When I finally finished I was convinced it was the finest book I would ever read.

If anyone out there in Betsy-Tacy Land would like a battered but complete copy of *AROUND THE WORLD WITH AUNTIE*

MAME, I have an extra. Pay the postage and it's yours.



by Julie Sheffieck
Flossmoor, IL

Of course the Betsy-Tacy books head the list of my favorites-I couldn't even count the number of times I've read them! (*EMILY OF DEEP VALLEY* is my very favorite.) Has anyone else read *THE FAR-DISTANT OXUS*, *ESCAPE TO PERSIA*, and *OXUS IN SUMMER*, by Katharine Hull and Pamela Whitlock? Others I've reread frequently are the Moffat books by Eleanor Estes, *THE SATURDAYS* and the other books about the Melendy family by Elizabeth Enright, *GONE-AWAY LAKE* by the same author, the Narnia Chronicles by C.S. Lewis, the Little House books, the Anne of Green Gables series, books by Frances Hodgson Burnett, *UNDERSTOOD BETSY* by Dorothy Canfield, *ADOPTED JANE* and others by Helen Daringer, all of Rumer Godden's children's books-especially *HOME IS THE SAILOR* and *IMPUNITY JANE*, the Shoes books by Noel Streatfeild, *LINNETS AND VALERIANS* by Elizabeth Goudge, the Green Knowe books by L. M. Boston, and *SWALLOWS AND AMAZONS* by Arthur Ransom. I've fairly recently discovered Dorothy Gilman and have read all the Mrs. Pollifax books and her other books. I also enjoy Anne Perry, Georgette Heyer, and the Dragonrider books by Anne McCaffrey. I think one of the best things about the BTS is finding out there are so many people who like to read the same kinds of things!



by Julie Leonard
Boulder, CO

Children's authors seem to show more imagination about other ways of life, so I often turn to them. Eleanor Farjeon's Martin Pippin books are truly enchanting. (She wrote about her own childhood in *A NURSERY IN THE NINETIES*.) L. M. Boston's series about Green Knowe also

creates a wonderful atmosphere. Some historical novelists I have discovered by browsing in the children's section of the library are Eloise Jarvis McGraw, Virginia Sorenson, Evelyn Sibley Lampman, and Patricia Beatty. My red-headed daughters identify with Pippi Longstocking.

I do also read books intended for adults as long as they're not about someone's divorce. I greatly admire and enjoy the way May Sarton and Robertson Davies use the English language. Also, I just can't stop reading Patrick O'Brian's books set in the British navy about 1800, even though I'm no sailor!



by Stephanie Smith
Winthrop Harbor, IL

I want to thank everyone for all their delightful suggestions. It gives me great pleasure to have a hand in recommending many of my old favorites. There is one adult series by Jane Duncan, a Scottish writer, that I heartily suggest you try. Her Friends books are some of the most delightful reading I have ever come upon. If you like someone with a fascination for language and how we use it, you will LOVE Jane Duncan.



by Jackie Kraemer
Glendale, AZ

Some of my other favorite books that I have read over and over again are any books by D.E. Stevenson, especially the four Mrs. Tim Christie books, they always make me laugh and cry every time. D. E. Stevenson sometimes will use a character from one book and pop it into another, so it's like meeting an old friend again. Also I love Catherine Cookson books. Her Mary Ann series is delightful! Mary Ann's life is so different from Betsy-Tacy's but that wholesome family spirit is constant in both series. Also, I just read *HITTY, HER FIRST HUNDRED YEARS* by Rachel Field and illustrated by Dorothy Lathrop.

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

(continued)

by Teresa Gibson
Mesquite, TX

I've always preferred historical fiction in the same vein as the Betsy-Tacy books. Here are some other children's books in the historical fiction genre on my favorites list -- anything by Louisa May Alcott, Laura Ingalls Wilder, and Sydney Taylor;

--THE INNOCENT WAYFARING by Marchette Chute (life in the times of Chaucer--really quite amusing);

--ADOPTED JANE, DEBBIE OF THE GREEN GATE, and PILGRIM KATE by Helen F. Daringer (the illustrations in these books are much like Lois Lenski's);

--BALLAD OF CALAMITY CREEK and DOC DUDLEY'S DAUGHTER by Elisabeth Hamilton Friermood (both take place in the 1890's);

--CANDLE IN THE NIGHT and A GIRL OF THE NORTH COUNTRY by Elizabeth Howard;

--BEHOLD YOUR QUEEN (about Esther), THE FOREIGNER (about Ruth), and TAMAR (about the life of Jesus) by Gladys Malvern (Biblical historical fiction);

--THE WITCH OF BLACKBIRD POND and CALICO CAPTIVE by Elizabeth George Speare;

--THE SAPPHIRE PENDANT and KATHARINE LESLIE by Audrey White Beyer (both good historical fiction);

--A TRAVELER IN TIME by Alison Uttley (Elizabethan period).

Adult authors who have written great historical fiction include Elswyth Thane (the Williamsburg series), and Anya Seton (just about everything she's written is great; I really like DRAGONWYCK and THE WINTHROP WOMAN).

by Laura Wright
Santa Rosa, CA

I always enjoy finding out what other Betsy-Tacy fans read, partially for my own pleasure and partially to assist in my work as an elementary school librarian. I'm surprised no one has mentioned the trilogy by Jennie Lindquist: THE GOLDEN NAME DAY, THE LITTLE SILVER HOUSE, and THE CRYSTAL TREE. These are probably out of print, but may be available in the children's room at your local library. Of course, Laura Ingalls Wilder's Little House

books are favorites, and the All-of-a-Kind Family series by Sydney Taylor. A pair of young adult novels that I've liked are GOLDENGROVE and UNLEAVING by Jill Paton Walsh. SARAH, PLAIN AND TALL by Patricia MacLachlan is another gem.

Even though they are picture books and not novels, Beatrix Potter's wonderful little books about Peter Rabbit and his friends are among my very favorite children's books!

On the adult reading level, some favorites include anything by Maeve Binchey, A TOWN LIKE ALICE by Nevil Shute, anything by Nancy Thayer (especially THREE WOMEN AT THE WATER'S EDGE), and I've just finished a new little gem by Robert James Waller, THE BRIDGES OF MADISON COUNTY. My mother first gave me Anne Morrow Lindbergh's essay on the hurried lives of American women, A GIFT FROM THE SEA, and I still adore it.

I nearly forgot my favorite book as a teenager, now out of print (again, check your local library), THE RISING OF THE LARK by Ann Moray. It's a beautiful story of a young girl growing up at the turn of the century in north Wales.

by Lindsey Smith
Kirksville, MO

I've been a devotee of the Betsy-Tacy series since my mom brought me my first copy of BETSY AND TACY GO DOWNTOWN when I was eight. But one can only read the series so many times a year! Among the many other books I devoured as a child (and still reread with delight today, at age 22), included LOULY and TWO ARE BETTER THAN ONE, by Carol Ryrie Brink (of CADDIE WOODLAWN fame). These are less well known, but wonderful stories about girlhood in a small town in Idaho.

Sally Watson is another author whose books I highly recommend. She writes in a very literate and entertaining style, and her heroines, who range from pirate queens to Elizabethan actresses and Italian refugees, are all strong, ambitious and enthralling characters. Her English historical novels

include LINNET, LARK, HIGHLAND REBEL, WITCH OF THE GLENS, and MISTRESS MALAPERT. Another series, about the post-World War II settlement of Israel, includes TO BUILD A LAND, OTHER SANDALS, and THE MUKHTAR'S CHILDREN. These books are out of print and can be hard to find, but they are well worth the search!!

by Ann Lee
Chicago, IL

I grew up with Betsy, Tacy and Tib, since I was 8 when the first book came out, and I read every new one as soon as my beloved public library got it. But there was one other book I loved just as much, and that is CADDIE WOODLAWN by Carol Ryrie Brink. There are many similarities--Caddie was a real person (Carol Brink was her granddaughter), and the book is "true fiction," as BETSY-TACY is, and takes place in the Midwest (Wisconsin). However, Caddie lived around the time of the Civil War. When I would bring it or the Betsy-Tacy books home from the library, my mother would always say "What? Again?"

There is a new book I'd like to mention--LAST FULL MEASURE by Richard Moe. It is the story of the First Minnesota Volunteers, which was Emily Webster's grandfather's regiment and of which he was so proud.

A wonderful evocation of Betsy's time is the movie MEET ME IN ST. LOUIS set in 1903. Maud was 11 in 1903, about the time of DOWNTOWN. Just as Maud lived in a small town in Minnesota, and Caddie Woodlawn lived in frontier Wisconsin, this film takes place in a larger Midwest city.

WHAT ARE YOU WRITING.....

Books by Betsy-Tacy Society members.

Carlienne Frisch

-- DESTINATIONS: HOW TO USE ALL KINDS OF MAPS. 1993.

-- HEARING THE PITCH: EVALUATING ALL KINDS OF ADVERTISING. 1993.

-- A CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION: THE MINNESOTA VALLEY REGIONAL LIBRARY. 1993.

THE MUSIC OF BETSY AND TACY

By Beth Hudson



"The Merry Widow" opened in New York on October 21, 1907, two years after a sensational beginning in Vienna, Austria. The romantic love story of Prince Danilo and Marsavian heiress Sonia, set in turn-of-the-century Paris, was a triumph from its very first performance. It quickly became an international success as well, making composer Franz Lehar a millionaire many times over. Fashion designers around the world were quick to copy the wide-brimmed, ostrich-feather "Merry Widow" hats. There were "Merry Widow" shoes and "Merry Widow" gloves. At Heinz's in Deep Valley, there was even a "Merry Widow" sundae!

MERRY WIDOW

FRANZ LEHAR

| | |
|-------|------|
| TEHI | SOP |
| TERHI | ALTO |
| M | M |
| A | U |
| E | N |
| BAR. | TES. |
| BASS | BASS |

MELODY

Hold me tight-ly, Waltz me light-ly, Love is new,
 Hold me tight-ly, Waltz me light-ly, Love is new,

— We're ro-man-cing while we're danc-ing, Love me too;—
 — We're ro-man-cing while we're danc-ing, Love me too;—

— Nev-er yet such bliss, dear, Cu-pid's shot was true,—
 — Nev-er yet such bliss, dear, Cu-pid's shot was true,—

— Lis-ten as each heart beat ech-oes, "I love you"—
 — Lis-ten as each heart beat ech-oes, "I love you"—

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Franz Lehar lived from 1870 until 1948 and though he wrote more than 30 musicals or light operas, he is best remembered for "The Merry Widow." Though many songs from this operetta are memorable, "The Merry Widow Waltz" (music at left) is one of the most familiar waltz themes of all time. It is during this waltz, set in the first-act ball scene, that Sonia realizes she is in love with Danilo...and also where Betsy Ray fell for the great Phil Brandish!

It was "The Merry Widow Waltz." Betsy looked up at Phil and smiled. He smiled back, but neither of them spoke. The waltz rocked through the artless opening phrase. They whirled in happy harmony.

BETSY IN SPITE OF HERSELF



CHILDREN'S PAGE

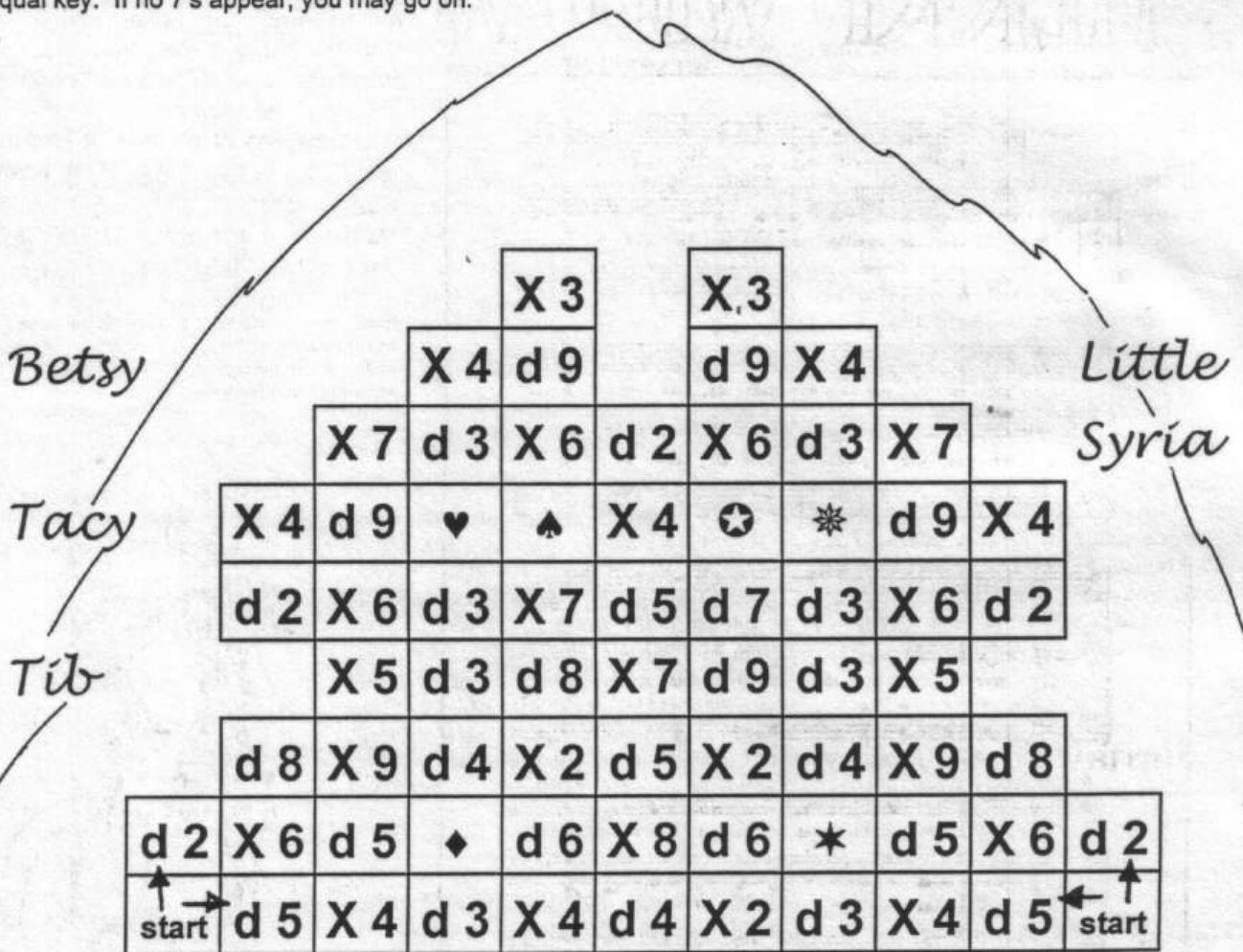
by Renea Ratzloff
Mankato, Minnesota

CLIMB THE BIG HILL

Use two different colored buttons for playing pieces. Put each one on a START square. Race up the BIG HILL, one square at a time, either left, right, up or down but not diagonally. Always move from a yellow square to a pink square, or from a pink square to a yellow square. Before starting the game, color the squares as follows: Beginning with the bottom row, START squares are white, y, p, y, p, y, p, y, p, y.

2. y, p, y, y, p, y, y, p, y. 3. y, p, y, p, y, p, y, p, y. 4. p, p, y, p, y, y, p. 5. y, p, y, p, y, p, y, p, y.
6. p, y, p, y, p. 7. p, y, p, y, p, y, p. 8. p, y, y, p. 9. p, p.

TO MOVE: Enter a three digit number into the calculator (using different digits). Decide which square you will move to. Enter the sum shown on that square and press the equal key. You may move to that square only if there are no 7's in the answer. If a 7 appears, clear your display and let your opponent begin. Once you have moved to your chosen square, you may have another turn. Pick a new square for your next move and WITHOUT clearing the display, enter the new sum and press the equal key. If no 7's appear, you may go on.



COLOR ONLY THE NUMBERED SQUARES!

X = multiply d = divide

**Betsy-Tacy Society
Financial Report**

BTS Checking Account

| | | | |
|----------------------------|--------|--------|----------|
| Balance, February 1, 1994 | | | 7,731.93 |
| Receipts | | | |
| Membership Dues | -0- | | |
| Interest | 5.98 | | |
| Other | -0- | | |
| Total Receipts | | 5.98 | 7,737.91 |
| Expenditures | | | |
| Supplies | 8.49 | | |
| Newsletters | 885.00 | | |
| Postage | 61.22 | | |
| Other | 17.51 | | |
| Total Expenditures | | 972.22 | |
| Balance, February 28, 1994 | | | 6,765.69 |

BTS Savings Account

Balance, March 5, 1994 1,956.40

BTS Shop Checking Account

Balance, February 28, 1994 9,472.67

**Betsy-Tacy Society
Membership Form**

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (____) _____

Please check either: Renewal New Member Have you received a Newsletter? _____
If so, which number? _____

Membership Levels

____ Sustaining \$100 and up

____ Individual \$10

____ Patron \$25

____ Child \$5

____ Family \$15

____ Europe or Canada \$15 and up

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



Dear Betsy-Tacy People,

I've enclosed a photo to show you that we, at the University of Oregon Bookstore, are doing our part to keep Betsy-Tacy alive.

I was born in LeCenter, MN and first read the books there. We moved to Oregon when I was nine and the Public Library here had a full set, so my sisters became Betsy-Tacy fans too. I've re-read them every year for many years. They're wonderful books.

Sincerely,

Cindy Heidemann
General Book Manager

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

Bulk Rate
 U.S. Postage
 PAID
 Permit No. 697
 Mankato, MN

To:

Carol Gaboury 9/94
 315 N. West Avenue #202
 Waukesha WI 53186-4545