

THE BETSY-TACY SOCIETY

Note Book

The Betsy-Tacy Society

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Newsletter deadlines are March 15, May 15, August 15, and November 15 for the spring, summer, fall, and winter issues respectively. Please send news and articles to Patty Warhol, 32228 SeaRaven Drive, Rancho Palos Verdes, CA 90274.

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. Illustrations by Lois Lenski and Vera Neville from the original books are used with permission from HarperCollins.

Note From Our President

Greetings from Deep Valley! My daughter Emily and I were able to attend two special events sponsored by the New York and Chicago Chapters. We had an extraordinary time in New York. The Chapter did an excellent job of organizing the Walking Tour and putting together a booklet, "The City at Their Feet: Maud and Delos in Manhattan." Ordering information appears on Page 8. Thanks, also, to the Chicago Chapter for the wonderful afternoon Tea at the Melborn. This event raised money for buying B-T books to donate to school libraries.

Another thank-you goes to Mark Peterson from the Winona Historical Society who invited the B-T Society to participate at Victorian Days in October. The members who attended had great fun and met many B-T fans from all over the U.S.

I'd like to thank Lupe Johnson for donating her handmade Betsy, Tacy, and Tib dolls to the Betsy-Tacy Society. They will be displayed at the Heritage Center of the Blue Earth County Historical Society.

Please remember that Carlienne Frisch's book *BETSY-TACY IN DEEP VALLEY: PEOPLE AND PLACES*, as well as MHL's *EARLY CANDLELIGHT* and *GENTLEMEN FROM ENGLAND* can all be ordered from the Blue Earth County Historical Society, 415 Cherry Street, Mankato, MN. 56001. (507) 345-5566.

Mark your calendars for the July 7-9, 1995 Great Mankato Get-Together. Cheryl Harness has been busy planning this event. See *Notes and Notices* for more details. I look forward to meeting many of you in the coming year. I wish you all the best in 1995.

Lona Falencykowski

Membership Notes

I often receive notes from concerned members wondering whether their memberships have expired. Renewals are due FOLLOWING receipt of the newsletter with the SAME expiration code on the mailing label as the issue is dated. For example, if the code on this issue's label says 12/94, it's time to renew. Codes are 12/94 for winter, 3/95 for spring, 6/95 for summer, and 9/95 for fall. As I'm sure many of you have noticed, we tend to run late in our publication

schedule. We are trying to speed up production so your newsletters will be more timely. Please make sure to send me address changes as soon as you know them, as bulk mail is not forwarded. Your new phone number would be greatly appreciated! If you'd like to give a gift membership, please indicate this when you send payment. A card acknowledging the donor will be sent to the recipient.

Michele Franck

Where to Send It!

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

Anything having to do with the Betsy-Tacy organization, Board Meetings, starting new chapters:
 Lona Falencykowski
 303 Meadow Wood Drive
 Mankato, MN 56001

Anything having to do with membership:
 Michele Franck
 Post Office Box 2903
 Framingham, MA 01701
 email: mfranck@delphi.com

"What Are You Reading When You're Not Reading Betsy-Tacy?"
 Stephanie Smith
 824 Kirkwood
 Winthrop Harbor, IL 60096

"From Our Mailbox," letters to the B-T Society to be printed in the newsletter:
 Debbie Tranchita
 6221 N. Niagara
 Chicago, IL 60631

Articles, Announcements, Notes and Notices, Features, Drawings, Reports of National and Chapter meetings-- anything you'd like to see printed in the newsletter:

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 Elaine Pappas
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 224 East 11th Street #20
 New York City, NY 10003



Betsy-Tacy Memories

by Marti Paskal
Hanalei, Hawaii

"What about my books? Oh, NO! Where are the Betsy-Tacy's?!" That was among my first frantic thoughts when I discovered that our home on Kauai, Hawaii had been almost completely destroyed by Hurricane Iniki in September, 1992. We had been at a shelter for the duration, and didn't discover the horror of the storm's devastation until the next morning.

Miraculously, by some quirk of fate and nature, the books were unharmed. And I realized (not for the first time) that they are among my treasures, along with my children's baby pictures and family heirlooms. Since I first read the early books in an Ohio library in the late forties, and began collecting them in the fifties, they have been like comfort food to me: I'll reach for one every year or so, when life feels overwhelming.

During the seventies I had delightful encounters with several elderly women, each of whom brought me closer to "Deep Valley." Through a library volunteer program (bringing books to shut-ins) I met two sisters who were from Minneapolis. One, it turned out, had lived quite near the Hart family. She remembered clearly that "Mrs. Hart was always bragging about her daughters!"

In May, 1979 my husband and I spent a day exploring Mankato while taking a cross-country trip. Making the pilgrimage to "Hill Street" was thrilling--and we also chatted with the Wiecking sisters, who lived across from the once-chocolate colored house on Byron Street, and seemed to wish that they'd been part of the Betsy-Tacy crowd.

Shortly after that trip I met Maud herself. I lived near Los Angeles and she was in nearby Claremont; I wrote her a fan letter, she replied with an invitation to visit, and I jumped at the chance. We spent several delightful

hours having tea together on two or three occasions. She was smiling and open always, eager to share her photos ("See, I was the only plain one in the bunch!") and memories with me. She encouraged my freelance writing career and was interested in my little girls; her daughter, she said, was a joy. I also noted some physical similarities: Betsy's famous parted-in-the-middle teeth would have been my fate, too, if orthodontia hadn't rescued me. We also shared the same toes-out kind of walk.

Maud dropped intriguing bits into our conversations, such as a hazy memory about "Bicky" having had a baby daughter who didn't survive. She couldn't remember the details: "It was so long ago," she apologized. Her sister Helen died fairly young, she said; and Kathleen married more than once...Merian, of course, would have the scoop about her aunts. Maud expressed serene confidence that she'd be reunited with all her loved ones in heaven.

My husband, Joe, came with me on one visit, and I think Maud was quite taken with him. Besides the coincidence of his name, my Joe has fair hair, blue eyes, and is very much a determined, self-made kind of man.

Since the hurricane, I've given more thought to why we cherish the things we do. The Betsy-Tacy books strike a chord in those of us who wish we'd lived (or did we??) in that era of innocence and romance. They're charming and beautifully written, and portray the idyllic, close-knit and supportive family many of us wish we'd had--one with just enough sibling "issues" to make it believable. We are all so fortunate to have experienced Betsy's world so intimately through the memories, heart, and talents of Maud Hart Lovelace. Thanks to the Society's founders for bringing us together...soul sisters every one!

Joan Brown Reminisces

by Joan Johnson Brown
Sycamore, Illinois

Joan Brown is a former resident of Mankato and a member of the Chicago Chapter. This article, which refers to a Chicago Chapter picnic, first appeared in the Greater Chicago Chapter Newsletter, Fall-Winter, 1994.

My husband, Luke, and I had fun at the Betsy-Tacy picnic. I confess that it took some explaining and persuading to get him to come with me, but since he is from Mankato too, he soon agreed. Everyone brought food to share and it was pleasant to share ideas and theories about Lovelace's books and to discuss the life of an author who we once thought was known only to a few select persons.

When I told our companions at the picnic table that Luke and I were born and raised in Mankato, we suddenly became the center of attention, quite the opposite of the usual reaction to our origins. Usually when we say we're from Mankato, about 80 miles south of Minneapolis, the conversation is over, concerning Mankato and its charms. But my friends at the picnic table were different. They, like I, know Mankato is special. There is something charming about the town. It lies in a valley formed by the once mighty river Warren, and is circled by the Blue Earth and Minnesota Rivers, which join at Sibley Park and go on north to Minneapolis. The rivers and hills surrounding Mankato are part of its beauty. Mankato is the county seat of Blue Earth County and home of a state university, Bethany College, and Good Counsel. Standing at the river's edge, one sees the gleaming tower of the courthouse, atop of which stands the bronze statue of a woman holding the scales of justice, the spires of the Presbyterian Church and the top of St. Peter and Paul's Catholic Church. The town has such a presence that I can still "see" buildings, streets, and the people who lived there years ago.

After lunch and the fun of telling our new friends a little about our hometown, I walked over to the display where several copies of *BETSY-TACY IN DEEP VALLEY: PEOPLE AND PLACES* lay. As I paged through it, I was excited to find many familiar names and places. There are some additions that can be made to the fine research work that Ms. Frisch has done that help to round out the thumbnail biographies that she has given us. For example, Tony Markham, patterned after Mike Parker (Page 9), had two sisters, Minnie and Caroline. Caroline was my math teacher in junior high, and a very fine and disciplined teacher she was. She was an attractive woman, thin and tall with

beautiful gray hair. Mike, her brother and Hart's high school friend, probably was good-looking, too. Minnie was a grade school teacher with short curly gray hair. They were liked and respected women, always well dressed. I had not known that their brother had known MHL.

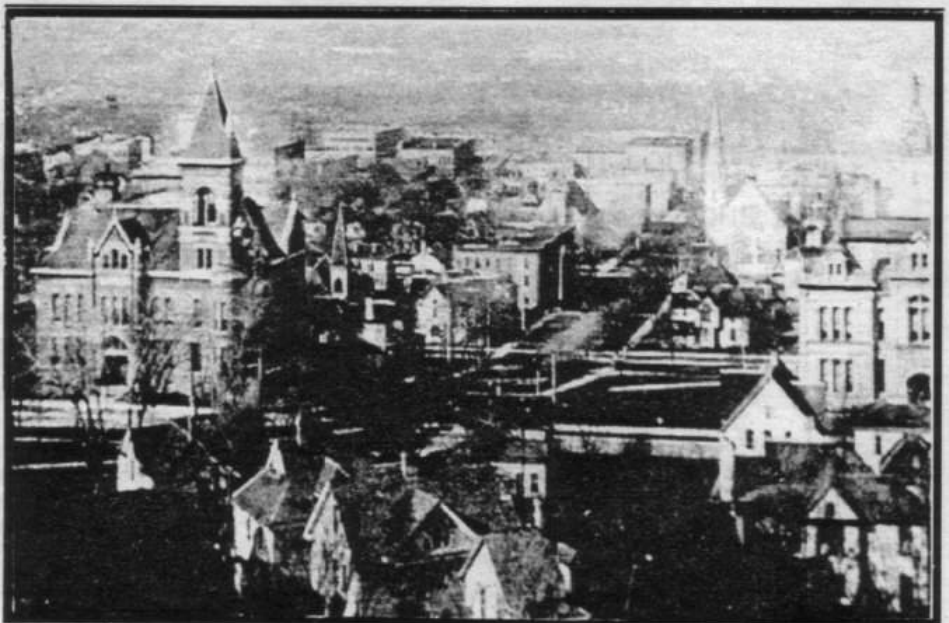
As I continued reading, I came across the name of Dr. Andrews, a physician in Mankato for many years (Page 19). He was an accomplished ice skater who delighted us children with his serious yet graceful performances as he skated at the college. "Our" Dr. Andrews was probably the son of the Harts' doctor.

The Syrian families who lived in Tinkcomville were a mystery to us all, so it is not surprising that Lovelace was not well acquainted with the children (Page 21). Mr. Tinkcom was a mysterious figure. No one ever saw him; he lived in a mansion across the street from the small humble houses of the Syrians. When we walked down James Avenue to the slough we always felt a little scared. There was never any real threat, of course; it was just that it was all very foreign to us. The "Big Hill" overlooked Tinkcomville. It was a marvelous place for picnics and walks. It had a big grassy terrain and once on top of the hill, one could see down into the creek and over to the big hill of west Mankato.

The old Mankato High School was in the block south of the courthouse. The faculty was made up of graduates of Carlton, St. Olaf, the University of Minnesota, and Ohio Wesleyan. Miss Clarke (Page 22) identified as Ms. Comstock, was the daughter of the district judge and May Brett Taylor (Page 22) was the daughter of the well-known Brett family, owners of the largest department store in southern Minnesota.

I was interested to read that Ms. Wiecking knew and loved the little grocery store on Byron Street (Page 31). She, incidentally, lived a block from my home and was a librarian at Mankato State for many years. In my day, a Mr. Nitzkowski and his sons had the store and we loved them and the store. Licorice straps with cut-out trains, balls, and dogs for the boys and dollars, cats, and sleds for the girls were big favorites. The small wax bottles with pink or green syrup were loved because after sucking out the syrup we could chew the wax. The jawbreakers were truly that; the flavor was not that extraordinary but to arrive at the nugget at the center was very rewarding.

The Carnegie Library (Page 33) was like a shrine. Everything about it was perfect. The stairs leading up to the heavy oak
Joan Brown, continued on page 8



"Turn-of-the-century" photograph of downtown Mankato, Minnesota

Merian's Column

It's about time for a progress report on the BETSY-TACY COOKBOOK, which, as I promised back in the spring, is really in the works--with Mrs. Kelly's plain cake and Anna's first-day-of-school muffins and Betsy's lemon meringue pie and much, much more.

My co-author is my friend Brenda Becker, a freelance journalist who has written a great deal about food and nutrition, and who has edited and tested recipes for publications. She's also an inspired cook, and is great fun to work with.

Our most important source is a spiral-bound notebook containing a handwritten collection of Stella Hart's (aka Mrs. Ray's) favorite recipes. Some of them are immediately recognizable as old friends from the stories. You just know that the layer cake with lemon filling and thick coconut icing, proudly titled "Stella Hart's Best Cake," is the cake Mrs. Ray made for the ice cream social in BETSY AND TACY GO OVER THE BIG HILL. Others, although they aren't mentioned in the stories, were real-life Hart family favorites in Mankato and would have been Ray family favorites, too -- like the tasty little corn fritters that Stella calls "Corn Oysters a la Center Street" (Center Street, of course, is Deep Valley's Hill Street.)

Not all the recipes in THE BETSY-TACY COOKBOOK will be Stella's. When the spiral-bound notebook fails to provide guidance on a dish from the stories that we want to include, we're looking elsewhere. The recipes for the Muller family's Christmas cookies come from Merian's mother-in-law Panna Kirchner, who was born in Budapest and raised her family in Munich.

The BETSY-TACY COOKBOOK won't be a complete guide to turn-of-the-century cooking. It won't even include all the foods mentioned in the stories. We've chosen some of our entries because they're so important to the stories, like Betsy's lemon pie or the cookies and fudge that provide after-school nourishment for the high school crowd; some because they're so typical of the period, like molded salads, and marshmallow-and-cream desserts; and still others just because they're so good. Wait till you taste Stella's version of macaroni salad, or her chicken-and-rice casserole, or her orange loaf cake.

The molded salads were a delightful surprise. I'd thought of your basic molded salad as pleasant enough, but not terribly interesting. These are something else. When we tried Stella's Imperial Salad (lemon Jello laced with vinegar, diced pineapple, shredded pimento, finely chopped onion, and thinly sliced cucumber) we didn't think it could possibly work. But it does. It's sweet-and-sour, and it tastes as good as it looks.

Those marshmallow-and-cream desserts are great fun, too. One is a turn-of-the-century Rocky Road that combines macaroons, marshmallows and nuts with lashings of whipped cream.

As you can see, we're having a fine time. And maybe you can help:

If you own or have access to cookbooks printed between the late 1890s and, say, 1915, please let us know. We'd particularly value collections put together by Midwestern church groups or women's clubs. We'd pay for shipment by Federal Express and send the book back within a few days--or perhaps it could be photo-copied at your end. Or if you just happen to have some family recipes tucked away...

You can reach me at (718) 789-1068 or drop me a note at 130 Berkeley Place, Brooklyn, NY 11217. And thanks.

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



Notes & Notices

O Di Immortales!

The eagerly awaited Lovelace biography, **THE BETSY-TACY COMPANION** by Sharla Scannell Whalen, is here! Whether you are a Lovelace fanatic or a casual fan, you'll be delighted by this complete compendium of information about the books and their author. To obtain an order form, write to Fitzwilliam Books, P. O. Box 3216, Allentown, PA 18106-0216 or call (610)481-9253. Be sure to read about Sharla's upcoming book tour on page 8.



Spend a "1900's Day" in Mankato

On April 30, 1995, the 1995 Faculty Research Lectureship at Mankato State University will feature Dr. Louisa Smith speaking on "A Day In Mankato circa 1900 As Presented In Maud Hart Lovelace's Book." The afternoon event is free, open to the public, and will take place in the Student Union. Call Mankato State University at (507) 389-1111 for exact time of the lecture.

Those unable to attend will have another opportunity to hear Dr. Smith's talk. She'll be the keynote speaker at the Society's Summer Get-Together in July. More information is at the bottom of this page.



Want to Trade?

Rhonda Whiting has a 1941 copy of Betsy-Tacy & Tib, published by T.Y. Crowell, in hardcover (30th printing) that she would like to trade for a copy of

CARNEY'S HOUSE PARTY or WINONA'S PONY CART. Rhonda's BETSY-TACY & TIB is in library binding with dustjacket and is a brand-new copy in excellent condition. Contact Rhonda at 142 Acres Ct., Lynchburg, VA 24502; telephone (804) 237-3227.



Anna Quindlen's New Book Is Out

"A work of fiction that is richly imbued with profound insights into the complex lives of men and women." The book described is **ONE TRUE THING** by Anna Quindlen, an active Betsy-Tacy Society member. You may remember with pleasure **OBJECT LESSONS**, Ms. Quindlen's New York Times Best-Seller-List book from 1991, as well as her popular New York Times column. Published by Random House, **ONE TRUE THING** is in bookstores and libraries everywhere.



Request From Abdo and Daughters

Julie Abdo at Abdo & Daughters needs an original dust jacket for **THE VALENTINE BOX** and one for **THE TUNE IS IN THE TREE**. She is also seeking information about the **Eloise Wilkin Fan Club**. If you can help, contact Julie at :

Abdo and Daughters Publishing
4940 Viking Drive #622
Edina, MN 55435

Abdo & Daughters is also the source of the new edition of Maud Hart Lovelace's **THE**

TREES KNEEL AT CHRISTMAS and the new children's biography of Maud written by Ken Berg, the former editor of the Mankato Free Press. To obtain information about these books or to place an order, telephone (800) 458-8399.



Lenski Collection in North Carolina

Jeanne Burton, a BTS member living in Greensboro, NC, has called to our attention the fact that there was an exhibit of artwork and books from the collection of the late children's author Lois Lenski, on display in October at the Jackson Library at the University of North Carolina, Greensboro. Lenski donated a group of 700 early children's books, printed between the late 1700s and 1860, which make up the Lois Lenski Collection. The collection was expanded in September when the popular author's son donated 43 of her original drawings to the library. They went on display on October 14, the 100th anniversary of Lenski's birth.

Jeanne writes, "I went to see the exhibit. It was just wonderful! There is no way to explain the feelings--perhaps the better word is 'senses'--upon viewing first editions and manuscripts. Though the exhibit is over now, if you are in the Greensboro, NC area you may still see any of the books you would like to look at. They issue you a special 'library card,' though none of the books can be borrowed, of course! The librarian is very helpful, and makes you feel so special."



Update on Deep Valley Summer Get-Together: July 7-8-9, 1995

by Cheryl Harness

As I slowly emerge from the welter of deadlines and moving into this new/old house here in the Queen City of the Trails, I realize that our balmy summer weekend is a scant five months away, and many of you, such as Maryellen Digre-Mueller of Minneapolis, are way ahead of me. She has suggested several marvelous ideas for "bats" about Fort Snelling, as well as other Maud-ventures for visitors to Minnesota. More about these in the Spring issue of the Betsy-Tacy Society Newsletter, but you can assure the non-BTS members of your family that there will be activities that they'll enjoy, too!

The key-note speaker for July 8th has been announced! Dr. Louisa Smith will be speaking on "A Day in Mankato circa 1900 As Presented in Maud Hart Lovelace's Book."

Mme. President and I have fondly imagined fried chicken at Murmuring Lake. I am envisioning friends old and new attending the banquet in turn-of-the-century gowns and party dresses. With a clever needle or well-stocked attic, I'm sure we could even replicate one of Maud's party dresses. Wouldn't you feel pretty in blue silk mull?--whatever that is!

Send daydreams to: Cheryl Harness, 2000 N. Farview Drive, Independence, MO 64058. Phone is (816) 257-1624 and FAX is (816) 257-2673.

Mankato Art Center Newsletter

Prepared for the Betsy-Tacy Society

CRISIS AT MANKATO'S OLD CARNEGIE LIBRARY

Winter, 1995

Mankato's Carnegie Arts Center is critically in need of total reroofing. The present roof on this 90-year-old building can no longer stand up under make-do patching. The condition of the roof is causing massive deterioration of ceilings, and walls in the Reading Room, the Rotunda Gallery, and the Fireplace Room. The roof must be completely replaced...now!

In 1901, steel magnate/philanthropist Andrew Carnegie gave the City of Mankato \$40,000 with which to build a library

for the community. The resulting building at 120 Broad Street, an imposing structure for its time, is the library memorialized in Maud Hart Lovelace's Betsy-Tacy books, the same library Lovelace used herself as a child. Literally thousands of Mankato and Blue Earth County residents found a haven and invaluable resource at the Carnegie Library.

Although the library outgrew the Carnegie building and moved to a new home in 1976, the significance of the Carnegie structure has been perpetuated

by its use as a center for the arts under the ownership and management of the private, non-profit Mankato Area Arts Council. The Carnegie is still a vital piece of Mankato's city center, and is now listed on our National Register of Historic Places.

The Carnegie has housed the Broad Street Gallery since 1979, providing exhibition space for regional artists. Exhibits by regional artists are rotated monthly, and classes in the visual arts have been an important contribution to the community.

The Center also provides studio space for artists to rent at minimal cost.

Over the past thirteen years under the ownership of the Mankato Area Arts Council, the Carnegie building has been on a continuous program of restoration and maintenance. To date accomplishments include:

- Exterior sandblasting and cleaning
- Bringing the building up to fire code
- Electrical re-wiring of the entire building
- Updating of plumbing
- Restoration of the

double-doored entryway to its original form and materials.

The ongoing restoration and maintenance has been funded through private cash donations to the Carnegie Restoration Fund and by donations of in-kind services from local contractors and volunteer labor.

Your significant financial contribution is necessary to restore this invaluable piece of historic architecture. Contributions from BTS members would be welcomed!

Send your contribution (tax-deductible) to:

*Mankato Arts Council
120 South Broad St.
Mankato, MN 56001*

Your check should be made payable to: Carnegie Restoraton Fund.

Your help is greatly appreciated.

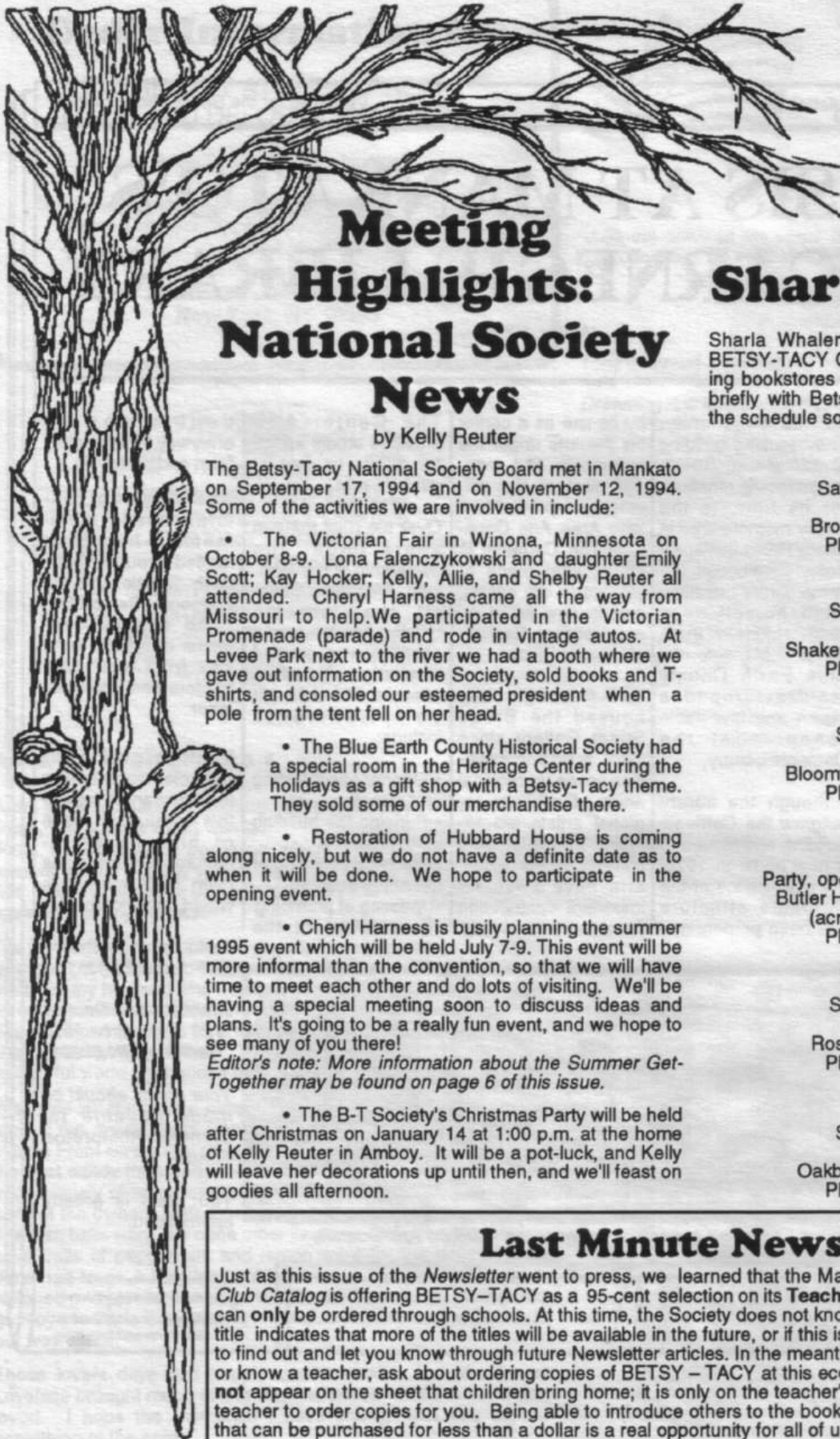


Photograph of the old Carnegie Library, now home to the Mankato Arts Council.

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Meeting Highlights: National Society News

by Kelly Reuter

The Betsy-Tacy National Society Board met in Mankato on September 17, 1994 and on November 12, 1994. Some of the activities we are involved in include:

- The Victorian Fair in Winona, Minnesota on October 8-9. Lona Falencykowski and daughter Emily Scott; Kay Hocker; Kelly, Allie, and Shelby Reuter all attended. Cheryl Harness came all the way from Missouri to help. We participated in the Victorian Promenade (parade) and rode in vintage autos. At Levee Park next to the river we had a booth where we gave out information on the Society, sold books and T-shirts, and consoled our esteemed president when a pole from the tent fell on her head.

- The Blue Earth County Historical Society had a special room in the Heritage Center during the holidays as a gift shop with a Betsy-Tacy theme. They sold some of our merchandise there.

- Restoration of Hubbard House is coming along nicely, but we do not have a definite date as to when it will be done. We hope to participate in the opening event.

- Cheryl Harness is busily planning the summer 1995 event which will be held July 7-9. This event will be more informal than the convention, so that we will have time to meet each other and do lots of visiting. We'll be having a special meeting soon to discuss ideas and plans. It's going to be a really fun event, and we hope to see many of you there!

Editor's note: More information about the Summer Get-Together may be found on page 6 of this issue.

- The B-T Society's Christmas Party will be held after Christmas on January 14 at 1:00 p.m. at the home of Kelly Reuter in Amboy. It will be a pot-luck, and Kelly will leave her decorations up until then, and we'll feast on goodies all afternoon.

Meet Sharla Whalen!

Sharla Whalen, author of the newly-released *BETSY-TACY COMPANION* will be at the following bookstores to sign her new book and to visit briefly with Betsy-Tacy Society members. Here's the schedule so far:

Boston

Saturday, February 25th
3:00 - 5:00
Brookline Barnes & Noble
Phone (617) 566-5562

Cleveland

Saturday, March 11th
2:30 - 4:30
Shaker Heights Barnes & Noble
Phone (216) 295-1600

Detroit

Sunday, March 12th
3:00 - 5:00
Bloomfield Hills Barnes & Noble
Phone (810) 540-4209

Mankato

Friday, March 17th
Party, open to all, begins at 7:00 p.m.
Butler House, 704 S. Broad Street
(across from Lincoln Park)
Phone (507) 387-5055

Minneapolis

Saturday, March 18th
3:00 - 5:00
Rosedale Barnes & Noble
Phone (612) 631-1125

Chicago

Sunday, March 19th
3:00 - 5:00
Oakbrook Borders Bookstore
Phone (708) 574-0800

Last Minute News!

Just as this issue of the *Newsletter* went to press, we learned that the March, 1995 issue of the *Troll Book Club Catalog* is offering *BETSY-TACY* as a 95-cent selection on its **Teacher's Bookshelf** page. Troll books can only be ordered through schools. At this time, the Society does not know if this offering of a Betsy-Tacy title indicates that more of the titles will be available in the future, or if this is a single offering. We'll endeavor to find out and let you know through future *Newsletter* articles. In the meantime, if you have children in school or know a teacher, ask about ordering copies of *BETSY-TACY* at this economical price. The selection will **not** appear on the sheet that children bring home; it is only on the teacher's page, so you'll need to ask the teacher to order copies for you. Being able to introduce others to the book series through even a single title that can be purchased for less than a dollar is a real opportunity for all of us!

Meeting Highlights: Chapter News

Greater New York Chapter

by Merian Kirchner

Our second year got off to an absolutely splendid start with the Maud and Delos in Manhattan Walking Tour on Saturday, October 15. Chapter President Kate Eberline led a two-hour trek through the Greenwich Village that Maud and Delos loved. The weather was sparkling, and we had a turnout of close to 30 tour-goers--chapter members, guests, kids, and even one husband. Among the guests were National Society President Lona Falencykowski and her daughter Emily Scott, and National Society Corresponding Secretary, Michele Franck.

At 36 West 10th Street, where Maud and Delos lived in 1929 and 1930, the group was welcomed by Barbara Love, a charming lady and a long-time resident of the building, who showed off the elegant interior with its Stanford White staircase. The tour ended with lunch at the Waverly Inn, one of the Lovelaces' favorite restaurants. Practically everybody had the chicken pot pie.

If you want your own copy of the tour booklet, it's not too late. Information on how to acquire it appears elsewhere in this issue.

With our membership approaching 70, we've set up an informal steering committee to get more sistren involved in deciding on projects and divvying up the work. We asked for volunteers at the Waverly Inn lunch and got a dozen, and the group held its first meeting early in November.

Instead of one big bookstore party this year, we're trying to set up readings in small neighborhood bookstores and at branch libraries.

Our next big event will be an End-of-the-Holidays Party on Saturday, January 7 at Merian's apartment in Brooklyn. Count on a glittering tree, greens in the Brass Bowl, Lenski-Neville art on the walls, all sorts of fun and games, and, of course, the food for which the Greater New York Chapter is justly famous.

The new Abdo and Daughters edition of THE TREES KNEEL AT CHRISTMAS will be a natural for the Christmas season. (Does everybody know that the Shehadi Family's Brooklyn neighborhood is the one Merian lives in today?)

Greater Chicago Chapter

by Julie Sheffleck

On Sunday, November 6th, nearly 50 members gathered at the Orrington Hotel in Evanston for "Afternoon Tea at the Melborn." Many were in period dress, which added to the Betsy-Tacy atmosphere. Our places were set with Betsy-Tacy pencils and note pads, and a lovely postcard of the real Melborn Hotel. Scones with clotted cream, finger sandwiches, and delicious pastries were enjoyed by all.

We were thrilled to meet our guest speakers, Mr. John Crabtree and his sister, Mrs. Sally Landstrom. Their mother was the real "Sally Day," the little red-haired daughter of the "Hawthornes" in BETSY'S WEDDING! Mr. Crabtree and Mrs. Landstrom spoke to us of their mother and grandparents, and of their friendship with Maud and Delos Lovelace. They brought many photographs for us to see, as well as stacks of their MHL books--inscribed and signed by MHL!!!

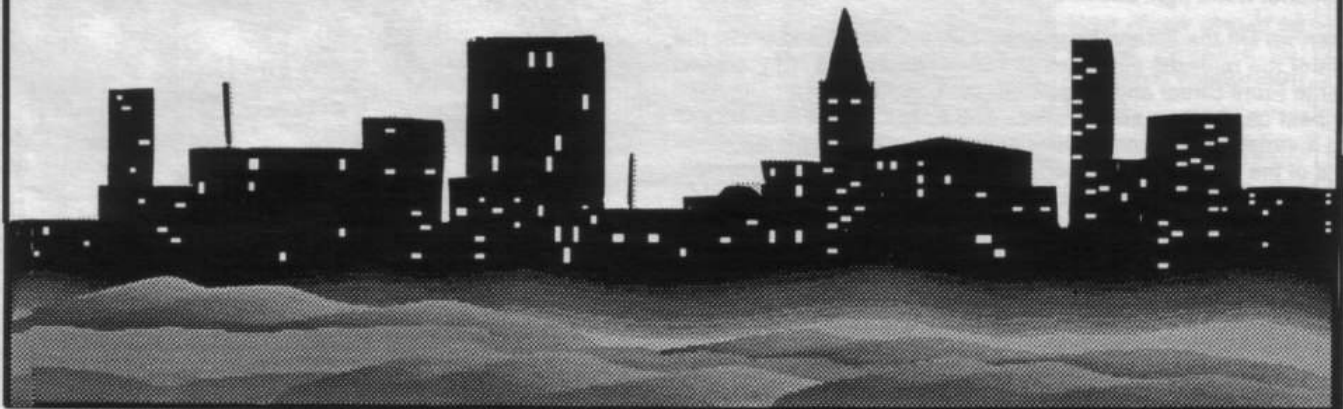
After the speakers, prizes were given to the winners of the "Best Hat" and "Trivia" contests. Betsy-Tacy books and related titles (IVANHOE, etc.) were awarded in the raffle.

It was wonderful to see our members from Milwaukee--Susan Knorr and Julie Rasman, and BTS President Lona Falencykowski and her daughter Emily, who came all the way from Mankato. Thanks to Sally Moore, Katrine Poe, Alicia Grott and the rest of their committee for all the effort they put into this lovely event!

Our next event is the Christmas Party, where we'll recreate some Ray traditions and participate in an ornament and cookie exchange. The Party will take place at the Schiller Park Library on Saturday, November 19th.

Southern California Chapter

The Southern California crowd held an organizing meeting on Saturday, January 14, 1995. We'll be meeting again soon; for information please call Alston Ahern at (213) 344-7123, Mary Kay Adams at (818) 795-6189 or Suzanne Nezin at (714) 770-8236.



Order Information for

THE CITY AT THEIR FEET:
MAUD AND DELOS IN MANHATTAN

Price: \$7.00 + \$1.00 shipping

Send check, made payable to Greater NY Chapter of the
Betsy-Tacy Society, with your mailing address to:

Andrea Shaw
224 East 11th Street #20
New York, NY 10003



Joan Brown, continued from p. 4

doors were wide and welcoming. When we stepped inside those doors, the outside world was gone. To the left of the main inner doors was a bulletin board on which were posted the movie reviews for the coming week. My older sisters always read that first. I went in and over to the right to the children's section to once again visit all my favorites.

The librarians in my childhood days were as charming and helpful as those Lovelace had. Our librarian was Loretta Viegel, who had pretty, wispy hair and who marked the due date in the inside cover as quickly with a device at the end of her pencil as any computer does today. A family lived in the basement of the library; the father was probably the janitor. I always envied them, having that wonderful world right above them.

When we left the library, happy and fulfilled, we walked under the arch of the majestic elm trees to the corner, took a right, walked over to Front Street and on down to the Candy Kitchen. They had the best candy then and forever. The English toffee was broken into a variety of shapes by Nick or Eros Zotalis, the good-looking sons of the owners, with a perfect little hammer I always coveted. The rum balls were like none other I've ever had. The hard, spicy, clear balls of peppermint and lemon were for the days when a dime had to go a long way. Whatever we bought was carefully weighed and placed in a bag. We thanked them and, having said goodbye to Chris Zotalis, who knew everyone by name, we made our way home.

Those lovely days and people are no more. But Maud Hart Lovelace brought much of it to life, and saved what she knew and loved. I hope the memories I have shared with you will do something of the same.



The Music of Betsy-Tacy

by Beth Hudson

"Julia sat down at the piano and she was playing, as only Julia could, the new hit waltz song, *Dreaming*."

*Dreaming, Dreaming,
Of you sweetheart I am dreaming...*

Tony hummed a few bars in his rich, deep voice."

Dreaming first surfaced in HEAVEN TO BETSY but the song wove a theme in later high school books. Betsy, smitten with the T.D.S. (tall, dark stranger) Tony, danced her first dance with Tony to this song in the Ray parlor amid Julia's crowd of friends, who "paid little attention to them. As for Tony and Betsy, they forgot the others were there."

Published in 1906, with words by L.W. Heiser and music by J. Anton Daily, *Dreaming* did not survive the decades like other turn-of-the-century songs, but remained a favorite with Betsy's crowd. As a sophomore in BETSY IN SPITE OF HERSELF, Betsy and Tacy would rewrite the song as they pined away for the dashing Phil-the-great Brandish.

*"Dreaming, Dreaming,
Of your red Auto I'm dreaming.
Dreaming of days when we went to ride,
Dreaming of hours spent by your side...."*



Dreaming

SONG

CHORUS

Dream - ing, Dream - ing, of you sweet-heart I am dream-ing,

Dream-ing of days, when you loved me best Dream-ing of hours that have

gone to rest, Dream - ing, Dream - ing Love's own sweet mes-sage I'm

bring - ing, Years have not changed the old love still re mains, Dream - ing.

WORDS BY
L. W. HEISER

MUSIC BY
J. ANTON DAILEY



From Our Mailbox



"I just received my Winter, 1993 newsletter and am delighted, as usual, with all the great information and articles enclosed. I was especially pleased to read about the opening of the New York Chapter, as I was corresponding with Merian a few years ago. As a matter of fact, Merian told me about the Betsy-Tacy Society when it was in its infancy. My correspondence with Merian came about in an odd way - I had picked up an old copy of EARLY CANDLELIGHT at a used book store in Burbank, California, and it had been signed by Maud Hart Lovelace! One of my four sisters lived in Claremont at the time, where Maud spent her last years, and she looked up Maud's obituary for me at the Claremont College library, where I got Merian's name. Was I thrilled to look up her name in a Brooklyn, New York telephone book at our local public library, and see that she was listed! I wrote to her, enclosing a photocopy of Maud's signature, and asked her if she thought it was authentic. Merian was kind enough to answer me, verifying that it was indeed her mother's signature, and she guessed that Maud had signed the book at a bookstore appearance. I corresponded with Merian for about a year, and she writes great letters!"

Kim Kadletz, Montrose, CA

"On December 18, 1993 I had ordered, from my local bookstore, HEAVEN TO BETSY. It finally arrived on August 12, 1994. Naturally, I read it as soon as I got home. Wonderful! But my joy did not end there. The last four books will be available soon. Three cheers to the Betsy-Tacy Society for their letters and petitions to Harper Collins!!! I am looking forward to these. With them I will have the complete set that I will be able to read again and again (which I already do with the books I own).

Sophie Crow, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada

"I guess this is not news to people familiar with every scrap of writing that Mrs. Lovelace did. But the other day, I started reading a book I bought from *The Horn Book Magazine* entitled NEWBERY MEDAL BOOKS, 1922 - 1955. As I turned the pages, the names Maud Hart Lovelace and Lois Lenski jumped off the page at me. Mrs. Lovelace had written the biographical note on Lois Lenski when she won the Newbery Award for STRAWBERRY GIRL in 1946. The acceptance paper by Lois Lenski followed. This is a bit of the first paragraph of the biographical note: "It must have been due to MR. SMALL or MRS. LITTLE or the other well-known diminutive Lenski creations, but before I met Lois Lenski I felt sure she was tiny. Lois Lenski would be tiny, dark and vivacious. To my surprise, I found her so tall that she towered above me...." Isn't that delicious? The NEWBERY MEDAL BOOKS 1922 - 1955 can be purchased by mail from *The Horn Book Magazine*, 11 Beacon St., Suite 1000, Boston, MA 02108. Their telephone number is (800) 325-1170 or (617) 227-1555."

Mrs. A.T. Burton (Jeanne), Greensboro, NC

"I was delighted to learn something about Lois Lenski, about whom I knew nothing. I am the member with perhaps the longest history of Betsy-Tacy, having read most of them hot off the press (I'm one year younger than Merian) and I remember my disappointment when Vera Neville's illustrations took over. The disappointment didn't last long - they were as appropriate as Lenski's! How about some information on Vera Neville?"

Ann Lee, Chicago, IL

"My friendship with Betsy, Tacy, and Tib began in 1955 in Arlington, VA. I was ten and the library was located in a wonderful little house in an area called Clarendon. The downstairs portion of the house was for grownups or people doing research and the upstairs was the children's section. I remember that I was taken to the library at night because I had to write a report. It was quite exciting to be there after dark and on my own! I worked rather half-heartedly on this report because the pull of the upstairs children's section was too strong to be ignored for long! I climbed the stairs and headed for the shelves in the back and there was a book faced out on the shelf so that it would be noticed. On the cover was a lovely young girl in a wedding dress and the title in bold above - BETSY'S WEDDING. I remember nothing of the report I was there to work on, but I do remember that this marked the beginning of a beautiful friendship! Since that time I have married and had two daughters. The oldest is 22 and has red hair and the youngest is 21 and blond! I introduced both of them to Betsy, Tacy, and Tib and had the good sense to not just check the books out of the library, but to purchase them. We own all but CARNEY and WINONA. A number of years ago (long before the Betsy-Tacy Society was even in the planning stages) I wrote a letter to the Thomas Y. Crowell Co. in New York asking why they did not reissue these books. I don't remember if I received a reply or not. It never occurred to me to begin a society. I'm sure, like everyone else who writes to you, I thought those of us who loved these books were few and far between! Unlike others who have written, I did not write to Mrs. Lovelace. I truly regret this but it never entered my mind that I could write a letter to an author! I think I will atone for this by writing to Merian."

Gail M. Rucker, Brinklow, MD

"In a past edition of the Betsy-Tacy newsletter, it was asked whether society members identified with any particular character. Absolutely! Twenty-five years ago, I was a little girl with 'round blue eyes and yellow hair,' eating kiefel and singing Stille Nacht at Christmas. On Sundays, my grandparents and I attended the Episcopal Church, and on weekdays my grandfather took me to the local preparatory school. Needless to say, my identification was (is) with Tib! I am grateful to the Betsy-Tacy Society for bringing my dear friends, Betsy, Tacy and Tib, back into my life. Whenever I am homesick for my Pennsylvania German background, I simply read about Betsy's Christmas in Milwaukee. Danke schön!"

Laurie Ann Drogin, Louisville, KY

"I actually found a copy of WINONA'S PONY CART through our inter-library borrowing system in Sacramento. The copy came from the local branch in Yuba City. The copy was inscribed to someone by a "Winona." Who knows – perhaps the real Winona gave this to someone in 1961??? It was a fast, delightful read, and I especially enjoyed Vera Neville's illustrations of young Betsy, Tacy and Tib. Now that we've finished unpacking boxes (and zillions of books), I've set up a small bookcase in our bedroom devoted to my "girls' series": the Anne series in addition to the rest of the L.M. Montgomery works; the Little House series; and of course, my hardback collection of all the Betsy-Tacy books, except for EMILY OF DEEP VALLEY and CARNEY'S HOUSE PARTY. Since Bantam Books re-released all of L.M. Montgomery's works, I am confident HarperCollins will do the same some day."

Susan MacCulloch, Sacramento, CA

"Early in June, my husband and I were in Las Vegas. He has a book business which specializes in Abraham Lincoln, and there was a book show at a hotel in Las Vegas. The only book that he purchased was WINONA'S PONY CART. (I have him on the lookout for MHL books all the time.) Later in the week he found BETSY AND THE GREAT WORLD at one of the used book shops in the city. The trip was wonderful for me even if he was unable to find Lincoln books. Last fall he found EMILY OF DEEP VALLEY offered in an antique newspaper that he gets every week. I was practically doing cartwheels over that one!"

Karen Hand, Paris, IL

"I have enjoyed the newsletters very much. They have prodded me into thinking why the Betsy-Tacy books were/are so important to me. To some extent, I think they inspired me to feel self-confident. I believe I placed myself into the characters and approached life in a positive manner. I thought I could do anything! Life showed me differently eventually, but books have been there for me even then – helping to cope, instruct, enlighten, encourage, and guide. It's been awhile since I've read Betsy-Tacy. Our library does not have them. But I know that I must read them again from my present perspective."

Mary Popelka,
Lyndhurst, OH

"I fell in love with Betsy-Tacy a few years ago and read the entire series with the exception of BETSY AND THE GREAT WORLD. I enjoyed the series so much that I began reading the first three volumes to my second grade students every spring. Last year my students were so excited that we celebrated the end of the year with several Betsy-Tacy events such as a coronation for Queen of the Summer, a school entertainment, a sand store, lunch picnic, and more. The children even created music to some of the songs like *Everything Pudding* and *Milwaukee*. The day was lovely and the parents loved it. All of this, and to top off my love of Betsy-Tacy, my own four-year-old daughter has the name Anastasia which is, of course, Tacy's full name."

Amy Poore, Newbury Park, CA

"I've been doing my part this past year to keep the books alive – written several letters to HarperCollins, bought the available paperbacks for myself (I hope also to get a complete hard cover set if ever available), purchased the available paperbacks for our local library (the librarian is now a fan too!) and given them as gifts to several young girls – who really loved them and wanted more. My daughter, now four, loves to hear Betsy-Tacy at bedtime. It's so fun to see how well the stories hold up for yet another generation of young girls!"

Jennifer Johnson, Kaukauna, WI

We'd love to hear from you! Address correspondence to: Debbie Tranchita, 6221 N. Niagara, Chicago, IL 60631. Should you wish to respond to one of the letter-writers whose letter is included in **From Our Mailbox**, please address her c/o Michele Franck, Post Office Box 2903, Framingham, MA 01701.



We Get Letters!



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 Cherry Shupp
Tulsa, OK

Like all Maud Hart Lovelace fans, I too have read all of Betsy's favorite books. I recently have taken an interest in Robert W. Chambers. One of his best, in my opinion, is IN SECRET.

I would like to add that my son Patrick, who is 3 1/2 years old, loves Betsy books. When asked by his Sunday School teacher, "What can you do with your family?" he replied, "Read Betsy!"

So, what does Patrick read when he isn't reading Betsy....dinosaur books!

by Betsy Fiedler
Kenosha, WI

Along with the Betsy books, anything by Louisa May Alcott was read over and over again by me, especially the Little Women books. I won't even watch the movies made from LITTLE WOMEN--no two hour movie could possibly do justice to this book!

I also loved Frances Hodgson Burnett--the SECRET GARDEN and LITTLE LORD FAUNTLEROY were my favorites. (I won't watch THE SECRET GARDEN movies, either.) Along with the Boxcar Children series, CADDIE WOODLAWN, the Great Brain books by John Fitzgerald, the Beany Malone series, anything by Judy Blume, CHARLIE AND THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY and CHARLIE AND THE GREAT GLASS ELEVATOR, I liked BLUEBERRIES FOR SAL by Robert McCloskey.

I liked PIPPI LONGSTOCKING by Astrid Lindgren so much that I even dressed up as her for Halloween. I had an orange yarn wig with braids that had wire in them so they would stick out like hers!

Another series that I really liked was the Seven Deadly Sins by William Pene du Bois. We could never find out if he published all seven--isn't procrastination one of the sins? The titles that I do know are LAZY TOMMY PUMPKINHEAD (about sloth), PRETTY PRETTY PEGGY MOFFITT (about vanity), PORKO VON POPBUTTON (about gluttony), AND CALL ME BANDICOOT (about miserliness).

The adult books that I have particularly liked are CLAN OF THE CAVE BEAR and VALLEY OF HORSES by Jean Auel. I didn't care for the last two that she has written. A WOMAN OF INDEPENDENT MEANS by Elizabeth Hailey is very good.

Any King Arthur retelling will hold my interest, especially MISTS OF AVALON by Marion Zimmer Bradley. I like the John Grisham books and anything by Michael Crichton, but particularly THE ANDROMEDA STRAIN.

If you don't mind a little spice in your books, you will enjoy the time travel books by Diana Gabaldon: THE OUTLANDER, DRAGONFLY IN AMBER, and THE VOYAGER. You will learn a lot of 18th century Scottish history!

Speaking of history, there was a very interesting Irish Clan Chief called the O'Malley. She was a real woman, and people referred to her as the Pirate Queen. You can find a biography of her, as well as the very racy fiction books (five in all) by Bertrice Small, starting with SKYE O'MALLEY.

by Mrs. Steven Talsness
Dunedin, FL

I came across a mention of these books that are reprints of books of Betsy's time--perhaps she might have read them?

BEAUTIFUL GIRLHOOD, originally written by Mabel Hale, revised by Karen Andreola.

HANDBOOK OF NATURE STUDY, by Anna Botsford Comstock.

VICTORIAN FAMILY CELEBRATIONS, by Sarah Ban Breathnach.

COUNTRY DIARY OF AN EDWARDIAN LADY, by Edith Holden.



Spread the Word

by Maryellen Digre-Mueller, Minneapolis, MN

How many years have publishers told us they print books only if they know enough copies will sell to be profitable? How many times have we been reminded to give Betsy-Tacy books as gifts to boost sales? We need to create a grassroots campaign reviving interest in Maud Hart Lovelace and all her books. Our ultimate goal is to excite a new generation of readers so that the B-T books will be reprinted in the 21st century and beyond!

The first thing I do when I walk into a bookstore is check the size of the children's section and to see whether it has copies of the books for sale. When I mention the Betsy-Tacy Society to bookstore staff, I tell them that the newsletter has a column devoted to members recommending books to read. This is an excellent resource for people who are frequently asked the question, "I really liked this book(s). Can you recommend anything else like it?" I bring along a newsletter and copies of the membership form, along with a copy of the "children's page" and Ginee Seo's address at HarperCollins (Editor, Harper Trophy Paperback Books, 10 East 53rd Street, New York, NY 10022) so that customers can be encouraged to write and urge that the books be reprinted. The letter-writing campaign can give children a sense of power that they can directly influence a product. Don't forget to contact your independent booksellers--they are devoted to selling quality books and authors.

There are lots of other avenues members can pursue to publicize the books. We can write articles telling people that the Betsy-Tacy books are wholesome, well-written books, and excellent literature; good places to start are community newspapers, alumni magazines, and any professional organizations we belong to. Vassar graduates can urge classmates to write to Ginee Seo to urge republication of CARNEY'S HOUSE PARTY. Members of Gamma Phi Beta, Mrs. Lovelace's college sorority, can share the story of their famous sister. Consider telling travel agents about Mankato and Betsy-Tacy. Families travel to all of the Laura Ingalls Wilder sites for vacation--why not Deep Valley? What about contacting famous people to endorse the books? Who is the United Nations Ambassador for children?

Assume EVERYONE will be interested in Maud Hart Lovelace's books. You'll be surprised at the power of word-of-mouth.

Do YOU have ideas for spreading the word? We'd love to hear them! Send your suggestions to the Betsy-Tacy Society, c/o The Heritage Center, BECHS, 415 Cherry Street, Mankato MN 56001-3741.

**Betsy-Tacy Society
Membership Form**

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (_____) _____

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

Membership Levels

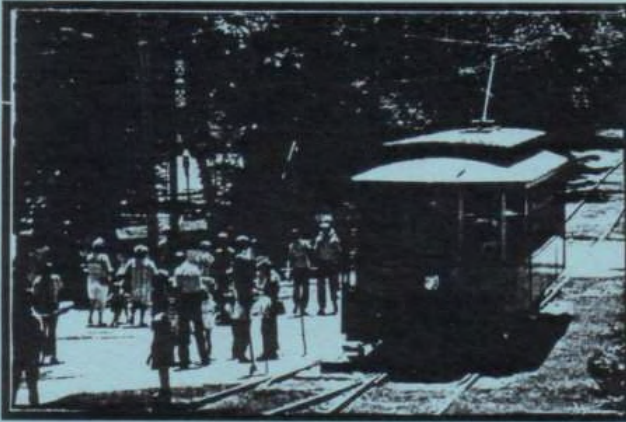
____Sustaining \$100 and up	____Individual \$10
____Patron \$25	____Child \$5
____Family \$15	____Europe or Canada \$15 and up

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, Post Office Box 2903, Framingham, MA 01701

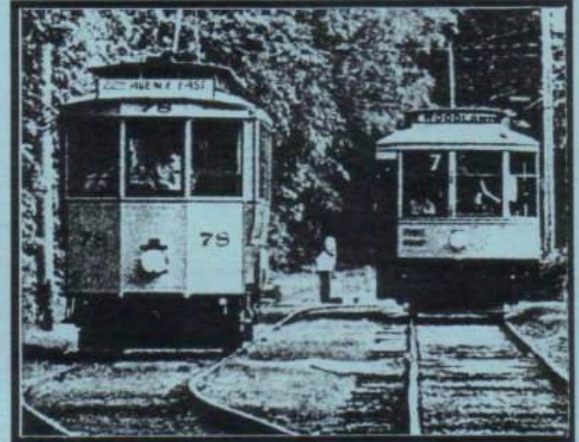
Ride the Streetcar!



Betsy-Tacy Society member Maryellen Digre-Mueller has been working with The Minneapolis Transportation Museum, Inc. to plan a tour of the Minneapolis Transportation Museum sites that relate to the Betsy-Tacy stories. While their eventual intention is to create a self-guided tour that you can take on your own at any time, an escorted version of the tour will be available, as an option, to those of you planning to attend the Betsy-Tacy Summer Get-Together in July. There's information inside this issue about the Get-Together and how to receive a registration packet. Those receiving that packet will get information about this option, too.

Tentative plans for this July 7th option include airport pickup, a narrated bus excursion around Fort Snelling, a visit to the area of Minneapolis where the Lovelaces lived after their marriage, lunch at Minnehaha Falls, and a ride on the Como-Harriet streetcar, pictured here. Refreshments will be served after the ride.

This is an event that will appeal to the entire family! And for those of you who won't be in Minneapolis on Friday, July 7th to take part in this escorted tour, information about the "do-it-yourself" version will be available soon.



Betsy-Tacy Society
c/o The Heritage Center
BECHS
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