I Remember When a Grocery Store...

By Joan Johnson Brown

It’s a bane to write, apples a while in fact, but back in the 1950s, a grocery store was a grocery store without permission of being anything else.

There were no huge parking lots, no giant carts, electronically operated doors did not open before you, and the experiences was a much simpler, easier process than today’s.

Mothers sent their kids to pick up a loaf of bread or a quart of milk for supper, and sometimes, but not always, we were given a nickel for penny candy, the nickel being carefully wrapped in a corner of a handkerchief, or as we call it now. We navigated in front of the candy counter, debating whether a Brach’s was our choice, or would it be a package of Lifesavers? Maybe the black licorice strap with the cutouts of cats and dolls that we had loved. We pushed through the strap. Perhaps a jawbreaker or a wax mini-minature dice with blue or pink syrup. Maybe a roll of Lifesavers; a push through a blue drawer as it lurched open. As we grew older, we regarded the penny candy as too childish, and we went on to candy bars. They were all a nickel, and some have survived the years, others are no more. That night when he was called “Fifth Avenue,” you didn’t know what to do, but a concoction called Malted Milk Balls became a satisfactory replacement.

During the war, chocolate was in short supply, but a concoction called Malted Milk Balls became a satisfactory replacement.

IURP

LQWHUPLQH

FRQÀQHPHQW

RXU

EDJ

5RRW

FRQÀQHPHQW

ZH
**New Members**

January 1, 2016 - December 31, 2016

Rebekah Agnew
Jennifer Alvarado
Karen Anderson
Jadie Anthony
 Jihad Alarabi
Ami Alpert
Sally Alton
Margaret Barry
John Bosco
Anne Borgen
John Brown
Mary Caswell
Mary Christy
Jenni Dauterive
Anastasia Davis
Nancy Eggers
Judy Ehrenzein
Christina Faske
Lisa Fletcher
Jay Fleming
Sue Fugate
Margaret Grice
Danil Haiman
Kathleen Hagens
Elizabeth Kiechel
Kathy Kline
Maxine Kingsley
Kathy Lofstad
Judith Lolley
Lisa Meyers
Jan Nelson
Debi Noble
Karen Nolan
Molly Olson
Elizabeth O'Reilly
Karen Phillips
Bette Phillips
Rebecca Pollock
Brent Pollock
Kate Sandoval
Terri Stasch
Karen Stasch
Linda Sundberg
Lilly Tangis
Aidan Turlis
Kathryn Vanasse
Audrey White
Mary Margaret Walker
Adair White
Inez Wambolt

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**Deep Valley Tours**

Tours, or school groups. Or contact us for

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**Credit cards & PayPal available.**

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**Annual Membership Levels**

- New Members
- Individual
- Family
- Patron
- Sustainer
- Donor
- Founding Member

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**Membership Levels**

- $20 - $199
- $200 - $499
- $500 - $999
- $1,000 - $1,999
- $2,000 - $4,999
- $5,000 - $9,999
- $10,000 or more

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**Donations**

I wish to support the Betsy-Tacy Society by making an

dedication of $__________

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**Address Changes**

I wish to support the Betsy-Tacy Society by making a

dedication of $__________

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**Membership Dues and Monetary Gifts cover a growing part of the**

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**New Members**

Every new member receives a new member packet that includes the most recent newsletter, a history of the BTS,

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**Privacy Statement**

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**Deer Valley**

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### 2015 Donations cont.

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### Volunteers

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Why do you re-read the Betsy-Tacy books? We received many responses to this question posted on Facebook recently. Throughout this newsletter you will find some of them.
Message from the President...

Dear Friends:

I am still happily remembering the Deep Valley Homecoming in June, when we were delighted to welcome both locals and out-of-towners for five festive days of celebrating Maud Hart Lovelace and her books. From the “Betsy-Tacy Goes Downton” play to the closing band concert in Lincoln Park, it was wonderful to see so many old friends and to make new ones. Thank you to everyone who attended all or part of the DVH, and made it a resounding success. Our deepest gratitude goes to Julie Schrader for coordinating the events with her impeccable eye for detail; it was a mammoth job but not too much for Julie! One would think Ann Swartz-Beckius, our new Operations and Outreach Coordinator, had been part of the BTS for years, so ably did she help keep things going. Of course we couldn’t have done it without our board and dedicated volunteers, who worked so hard to make the experience such a good one for all who attended. A huge thanks goes to them for all they did, and continue to do.

As always, we greatly appreciate the support of our members and visitors, whether financial, in-kind or participatory in some other way. We hope you won’t wait until the next Deep Valley Homecoming to come visit us; you are always welcome on Hill Street!

Lona Falenczykowski

Meet our Staff and Board Members

Ann Swartz-Beckius, Operation and Outreach Coordinator

“Since the beginning of April, I have had the great pleasure and privilege of working as the Operations and Outreach Coordinator with the Betsy-Tacy Society. Previously I worked as a librarian as the outreach coordinator and I managed the local Bookmobile. Here is where I first was introduced to the Betsy-Tacy books. I was an avid reader of all of the Maud Hart Lovelace book award nominees and began to learn more about Maud Hart Lovelace.

“Having also spent seven years working in higher education and providing experiences for college students, and local non-profits, I know the importance of being able to look at situations with an open mind. Both of these professional experiences lead me to this amazing position. I have enjoyed learning more about Maud Hart Lovelace, her books and her passion for writing. She has provided girls with true ‘Girl Power’ before it was even known.”

Tom Salsbery, Treasurer, is a semi-retired CPA who spent 36 years in public accounting. My focus during those years was individual and corporate tax, small business consulting, and non-profit organizations. I have served on several non-profit boards over those years.

“My interest in the Betsy-Tacy Society began when I would take my 3 children to the Blue Earth County Library and the Maud Hart Lovelace Wing where they would enjoy story time and selecting books to take home. When asked to serve as BTS treasurer, I felt this was a good way to give back to the Mankato Community where we have lived since 1979.”

Anne Knewtson is new to the Board of Trustees, joining in May, 2015. Having loved the Betsy-Tracy books as a girl, she is “tickled pink” to work with the Betsy-Tacy Society to keep alive the stories and history of Maud Hart Lovelace. Anne admits that sometimes she goes out of her way just to drive by the former homes of Betsy’s crowd.

Says Anne, “My usual route for errands takes me past Carney’s house and I can almost hear the sound of girlish laughter from the house party.”

Kristi Etter is a speech-language pathologist working for Mankato school district.

“I have 2 children, an 11-year old girl and 9-year old boy. We live in the Lincoln Park neighborhood and have attended events over the past few years with my daughter. This is how I became involved with the board, as she is currently playing Tacy for events. In hind sight, it has come full circle, as the first Betsy Tacy book was my very favorite book as young child. My library must not have had any others in the series, because I remember reading that book several times in second grade!”

Stacy Lienemann is the Director of Waseca-Le Sueur Regional Library System and the daughter of a children’s librarian. Before her library career, Stacy spent ten years in book publishing and grew up reading the Betsy-Tacy books.

Meet the rest of the BTS board in the next newsletter.
A Betsy-Tacy Proposal

by Jill Schmidt

It all started when Jason, my boyfriend of 3 years, suddenly expressed interest in reading Betsy-Tacy. He borrowed the tomes and soon after started pestering me to take a road trip to Mankato to see the houses. I became slightly suspicious when he suggested that I “dress nicely, as Betsy would have on a Sunday.” We had a lovely morning wandering Deep Valley, climbing the big hill, sitting on the bench, and visiting the homes of Betsy, Tacy, and Tib. Around noon he suddenly became very insistent that we needed to go out to Murmuring Lake. I told him that I was pretty sure Mrs. Ray’s home was private property, and I wasn’t sure that I’d be able to find it anyway, but he was a man on a mission! We pulled up to the driveway of the Hoehn farm and despite my protests at the “No trespassing, private property” signs he forged on! I agreed to get out of the car, but brought along my Betsy-Tacy Companion, just in case we needed proof that we were trespassing for a legitimate reason!

I soon discovered that we weren’t trespassing, and although the farm house is no longer there, we were met at the famed oak tree by former owners Sharon (Hoehn) and Kenneth Luhring, who told us about the sale of the farm and some of their memories of the area. They kindly served as our photographers as Jason proposed under the oak tree where Mrs. Ray hooked Mr. Ray! Of course I said yes, and in true BT style, Sharon and Kenneth brought us a picnic to share on the hillside overlooking the lake! It was a perfect day!

...2015 Donations cont.

$500 - $999
Kathleen Baxter
Bonny Bolander
Andrea Hopkins
Mankato Area Derby Girls
Maud Hart Lovelace Society

$1000 +
Kathleen Baxter
Nate & Lori Gardner
Helen Gift
K.Kay Lewis
Maud-L Group – Memory of Rachael Rose

Engraved Pavers
Eileen Beha
Barb Fecteau
Maud-L – Memory of Rachel Rose
Maud-L - Memory of Colleen

O’Neil
Linda Lyon
Kelly & Marco Rosenstein-Hanson
So CA Chapter, BTS
Mary Lien
Becky Kritz
Maud Hart Lovelace Society
Julia Nephew
Pat Nelson

For more information about the engraved paver fundraiser and an order form, visit www.betsy-tacysociety.org/membership.

Treasurer’s Report

by Tom Salsbery

Through the seven months ending July 31, 2015, the Betsy-Tacy Society had total income of approximately $62,700, cost of sales of approximately $22,150, and other expenses of $38,050, resulting in a net profit of about $2,500. Merchandise sales accounted for roughly 50% of total income with building expenses, utilities, payroll, and postage and shipping being the major other expenses. The exterior of Tacy’s house was repainted earlier this summer.

Checking and savings accounts total $60,800 and the Endowment Fund, which was set up in 2014, is currently valued at $29,213.

We continue to work at increasing membership and donations and to seek out potential new grant income. We are constantly reviewing our operating costs to hold them to budgeted amounts.
Becoming Friends with Betsy-Tacy

By Helen Gift

How and when did I become friends with Betsy and Tacy?

Surely, it must have been a very good librarian who introduced me to Betsy-Tacy, but I have no specific memory about why that book jumped off the shelf and came into my hands at the end of the first grade in 1950. For example, I did not read any of the Little House on the Prairie books until I was an adult, and one would think those would have been choices at the time.

I was an early reader, since I was the “baby” and participated in reading sessions with two older siblings and made trips to the public library for picture books before I started school (no kindergarten then). So, in any case, Betsy-Tacy was on the shelf in a grade school library in a small industrial town in east Tennessee 65 years ago, and the series became a part of my early reading life along with The Bobbsey Twins, Nancy Drew, and other chapter books. My approach was to reread the previously-read books each year (or more often) and then immerse myself in the next book. So in the second grade I reread Betsy-Tacy and then read Betsy-Tacy and Tib, and so on until I reached the point of waiting for the later books—alas, being published later, they were slow to get on the shelf for me. As an adult, I bought my own set, which I can reread in sequence at my pleasure.

So, it is logical to ask why a young hillbilly identified with the characters and stories in the Betsy-Tacy series. (One could make the argument that my family history is more relevant to Little House on the Prairie, since my grandfather was born on a homestead in Kansas in 1875.) My interest originally was not in the stories’ representations of the historic time period for the lives of the Deep Valley families, although that has become an interest as an adult, particularly after engaging in the conferences over the past 15 years. The appeal to me was the similarities I saw in the early reading life along with The Bobbsey Twins, Nancy Drew, and other chapter books. My approach was to reread the previously-read books...

Louise Everett King: An Appreciation

by Amy Dolnick Rechner

May 9, 2015 was a beautiful spring day, one of those days where the blue sky, soft breeze and burgeoning lilacs make one feel slightly drunk with post-winter ecstasy. It was fitting that on this “sweet May morning” people gathered at Minneapolis’s historic Plymouth Congregational Church to celebrate the life of Louise Everett King, who had died in December after a long illness. She was 91.

Fans of the Betsy-Tacy books knew Louise as “Carney’s daughter”, and in many ways Louise was exactly what one would expect her to be. Her mother, Marion Willard Everett, had instilled in her daughter a love of classical music, nature, needlework and gardening. Louise had the grace, honesty and generosity of spirit that generations of readers associate with her mother’s fictional counterpart, Carney Sibley.

Since the earliest days of the Maud Hart Lovelace renaissance, Louise was an enthusiastic participant, delighted and amused by her minor celebrity. As one of the earliest members of the Maud Hart Lovelace Society, she attended conventions in Mankato and events in the Twin Cities. She happily shared her memories of...
**Orange Blossoms and Iris Blossom**  
By Krista Barrett

Other characters in the Ray family and Betsy-Tacy books have long interested me. While proofreading the reprint of Orange Blossoms Everywhere, I became immersed in Maud’s 1954-57 diaries, and particularly her mention of Helen (Margaret) and Frank Fowler and their adopted son, Al. When Maud moved to Claremont, California, Helen had multiple sclerosis and she and Frank were living in Orange County. Maud mentions several times that Al and his wife Patsy and their children, Cathy and Frankie, were joining them for dinner or birthday celebrations, and that Helen was reading the children Betsy-Tacy.

Last year, on the Maud listserv it was mentioned that the orphanage in Owatonna, Minnesota was where Al and his sister Iris and brother Bruce had been placed, and that Iris has written a book about her experiences there. In her book Iris Blossom and Boxing Gloves she tells about Al being adopted by Helen and Frank, and Al’s fondness for Helen.

Iris adds some letters at the end of her book. In one letter, Al writes to Bruce and Iris in 1944 and tells them “And say Bruce about seeing your mother I doubt if I’ll ever see her again because I now have a new mother and dad and nothing to gain by my seeing her”. In Maud’s July 7, 1954 diary entry used in Orange Blossoms Everywhere, she writes “On to the trailer where Frank had the patio ready for a party. Patsy [Al’s wife] and children came...
Feeding Generations: Boarding House Fare and Family Oral Tradition: A Collection of Recipes

by Helen Gift

I started a family cookbook project about 15 years ago to piece together memories of taste, smell, sensations, and family bonds. It was an effort to salvage piecemeal experiences with my mother while she was still alive, and of course to set in stone recipes for my favorite desserts. My intent was to preserve the “original” recipe and type a current usable one. The process resulted in printing my tested and documented favorite family recipes and incidentally, and more importantly, created an understanding of the lives of the women and girls in one of my ancestral families. Food preparation is so important in family traditions that it serves as a wonderful focus for a memoir [think of Mr. Ray and the onion sandwiches]. For example, my actual earliest memory, probably age 2-3, is standing on a stool at the kitchen sink “helping” my mother sort green beans. Many conversations of my mother and aunts centered around cooking and eating. In other words, I had a lifetime of stimulation to move me forward on the project.

I never really thought about relating my experience preparing my family cookbook (focusing on my Great Grandmother and her family in the 1890-1920s with the Betsy-Tacy stories until Lona Falenczkowski asked me). We fans of the Deep Valley folk, however, are interested in the time period and curious about life seen in a variety of settings.

Maud created her memoir through fictionalized stories for her daughter. Some of us want to create a memoir for ourselves or one of our ancestors, creating an experience from assumed memories, oral traditions and actual evidence. The fodder for memoirs is memory—a favorite cookie, for example. Mostly, we begin with some bit of information (the sounds of a train coupling in the middle of the night when I was three years old) that wanders from the deep recesses of our brains through folds of storage by way of imagination and tricks of time to be words written down or spoken. But other routes of memory are equally important: eyes—a tree that reminds you of one previously climbed; ears—winds bringing forth the feelings of a comforting bed at camp in a storm; smell—a spring storm that creates the association of visits to your grandmother; taste—a blackberry making you smile thinking about picking with friends 50 years ago; touch—comfort from a pillow, associated with that being your only solace without painkillers when you had stitches when you were ten years old; or a dream bringing back a picture of high water coming up to the running boards of the family car driving over a bridge in a flood on the Mississippi River. If we’re lucky, memories come together providing pictures of events and people of our past—good or bad, important or insignificant. Having a focus, e.g., food preparation, for a memoir sets the stage for discovering other dimensions of life.

My project was based on a variety of sources: primarily recipes, notes on recipes, letters/diaries, and, to confirm context, printed materials, e.g., newspapers, local and general history books, and The Time Tables of History.

Recipes are interesting artifacts. Often they are only lists and not complete. Cooking depends on touch and feel, not just a combination of ingredients. Many of the recipes I found in my mother’s and aunts’ files were well-used, soiled, blurred, written over older versions. The oral history of most of the family recipes was that they came from my Great Grandmother’s boarding-house, or my Great Aunt’s Tea House in the time period from 1890-1930. As known to me, the recipes (mostly desserts) had survived the Great Depression, World War II, and the 1950s and 1960s. I suspected, or was actually told, that the recipes had been adapted (butter was not available during World War II, so margarine was listed as an ingredient in many recipes—in use, while the “original” recipe indicated lard or butter), so my curiosity led me to determine the “possibility” of the recipe in the 1890s. Was pineapple available in northern Alabama then? Was Crisco available?—we know not. What I know is that even after testing and confirming recipes, they will never produce the same final product as that in the 1890s. Our food processing and controls have simply changed a great deal resulting in alterations in taste. Also, these women did not write these recipes down; they were written later, in some form, for the next generation. The original cooks struggled to give a list of ingredients and amounts, e.g., a fist-full of flour. They did not include their substitutions or their quotidian processes and the tacit knowledge that resulted in a final meal, e.g. seasoning, using what was available.

Letters and diaries, if available, provide us impressions of reality at the time they were written, not facts, (as the rosy glow of a newly-wed will influence the description of the first dinner prepared).

Library Research: With a genuine interest in how women created a meal over 100 years ago, you need to think about growing, producing or buying components and understand transportation, storage, division of labor. Both my great grandmother and great grandmother were widows at very young ages, each raised their children with their own wits and social support from the extended family. Given the time period around the turn of the century, other questions arise—how did these women provide for their families, where did their funds come from? Research on
women working at this time is fairly limited and primarily about conditions in factories where young single women went to work. Widows supporting children on their own has not been well researched, so finding out as much as possible about the lives of these women in absence of documentation was an interesting challenge leading to more fodder for a memoir. Through library research, I learned that refrigerated rail cars came into use in 1868, so knowing that the railroad came through my Great-Grandmother’s town, I can assume that she could get refrigerated foods in 1890. Coconut was introduced in 1876 at the Philadelphia Fair, and bananas were imported in 1885, so both could have been in recipes from the late 19th century. Other evidence may show up from general history. For example, in addition to running a boarding house and being a mother to five children, my widowed Great-Grandmother was essentially a southern farm woman—a demanding life. The lives of such women were described based on a USDA survey in 1914:

“The routine work of the southern farm woman is about as follows: …she is up at 5 a.m. preparing the breakfast, often building her own fire; milks the cows, cares for the milk—churns the cream by hand. Puts the house in order, gets the dinner, eats with the family at noon; leaves the house in disorder, goes to the cotton fields and picks cotton all the afternoon, often dragging a weight of 60 pounds along the ground. At about sundown she goes to the farmhouse, puts the house in order, washes the dishes left over from the noon meal, prepares the supper—most of the time too tired to eat; gets the children to bed, and falls asleep herself—and so it goes on from day-to-day. Somehow she finds the time to do the washing and ironing, mending, knitting and darning between times.”

My Great-Grandmother did not own a cotton farm, but she would have had gardens and livestock, and had tasks associated with running the boarding house, with several teenagers to help with some chores. Maintaining rooms and preparing meals for guests was a significant effort. One report shows the extent of meals at a boarding house in New York in the 19th century:

**All Meals:** meat, hot vegetables, hot “new” bread, rolls and butter

**Breakfast:** hashed or minced left-over meat with cold vegetables, “served hot”: pork or mutton chops, beef-steaks or sausages, occasionally salt mackerel, shad or other fish, apple sauce, sometimes peach sauce, seasonal radishes, peppergrass, onions, cucumbers, boiled beet-root plain or in vinegar, coffee

**Dinner:** stewed meat joints with fish or poultry, many and many and diverse vegetables including sweet potato, squash, Indian corn, eggplant, pies, puddings, tarts, apple sauce, sometimes peach sauce, seasonal radishes, peppergrass, onions, cucumbers, boiled beet-root plain or in vinegar, coffee (never beer)

**Tea:** cold meats from dinner, dried or smoked beef, salt fish, Sweet cakes, sweetmeats, stewed peaches, pears and other fruits apple sauce, sometimes peach sauce, seasonal radishes, peppergrass, onions, cucumbers, boiled beet-root plain or in vinegar, tea

Examining newspapers is one of the most exhilarating approaches in documenting a memoir. I started looking at newspapers with the intent of establishing social context, but found several issues of 1894-96 newspaper with stories describing events at my Great-Grandmother’s Boarding House (one time when I definitely was not quiet in the library!) The descriptions, the “evidence” for the food/recipes, the list of “characters” was rewarding beyond expression. One transcribed example which sounds like some of the Betsy-Tacy events:

“A Most Delightful Entertainment: The young gentlemen of Leighton tendered a most enjoyable entertainment to the visiting young ladies of Leighton, at the Cribbs Hotel on last Monday evening. Delicious ice cream and cake were served in abundance for all. Mrs. Cribbs and Miss Gazelle having the entertainment in charge, exerted themselves unceasingly to make their guest have a jolly good time and well did they succeed. Music, games, promenading, laughing, talking, courting, and goodness knows what all, were engaged until an early hour (next morning)” (City Notes Leighton News 6/8/1894).

If you are interested in creating a memoir of earlier times in your family, you need only to do an evidence-based, progressive investigation of trails, following them as they develop. Genealogical approaches offer starting points; interviews with remaining family members and friends (importance of sharing stories over time in transmitting culture and skills) are helpful; library research is valuable to establish life-style and contexts; family records, letters and diaries are confirming; getting immersed in the local area provides context; role-play provides understanding—as how would I have done this activity in that time period?—and so on.

Oral history is a value and a bane. If one accepts a diary entry as fact rather than an individual’s perception or a recipe written down in 1950 as representing food preparation in 1890, then the story lacks depth. It is fun to discover historical support for your oral history. You may find that your story is as much fun as Betsy-Tacy.

(Feeding Generations: Boarding House Fare and Family Oral Tradition, a collection of recipes, by Helen Gift is available in the BTS shop online or by mail order)
My Love Affair with Betsy-Tacy

by Monica Kennedy-Kouter

My introduction to Maud Hart Lovelace’s Betsy-Tacy books was a very personal one. You see, my uncle was married to her daughter, Merian (Bettina). I met Maud when I was very, very young. Unfortunately, I don’t remember. But, I do have an autographed copy of Betsy-Tacy from that meeting.

I truly believe my love of reading is a direct result of the Betsy-Tacy series. I was very close to my Aunt Merian and Uncle Bobby. I think I was the child they never had. Once I was old enough to travel by myself, I spent every spring break in NYC with my aunt and uncle, first in Greenwich Village, and later in Park Slope. And, every summer we would spend two weeks in August at their summer cottage in Fair Harbor, Fire Island. I loved listening to Merian talk about Maud and the books. It made me feel my connection to them even more strongly. And, without going into detail, the books helped me escape the real world. I was so unbelievably heart-broken when, first Bobby and then Merian died. I received many priceless mementos from Merian, including a complete set of books written by the Lovelaces; some are autographed and some are first editions.

I studied acting in college and dreamed of creating a Betsy-Tacy television show. (Alas, it never came to fruition.) Later, when I was studying for my masters’ degree in early childhood education, I based my final student teaching integrated curriculum plan on the books. It was a wonderful experience to introduce the books to a new generation of second graders and see them fall in love with the characters as I had.

Upon graduation, life threw me a curveball. There were no teaching jobs in my area. I became a Nanny. Originally, I told myself it was just for one year. One year turned into 13. Then, I got married, and while expecting a child, I gave a presentation on the Betsy-Tacy books at a children’s library. It was wonderful to see the excitement regarding the books on those children’s faces. I had intended to continue to do so after my baby was born. But, once again, life had other plans for me. My son was born in October 2006. He was 4 weeks premature and immediately had issues. I had no time for anything, outside of caring for my son.

As he approached his first birthday, I had him evaluated by early intervention and my suspicions that he had some developmental delays, all across the board. In 2009, my family relocated to upstate NY for my husband’s job, and then my son was diagnosed with High-Functioning Autism.

A year ago, I pulled my son from public school and began homeschooling him. I have learned a great deal about him and myself over the last year. I love teaching him. Now eight, he is learning and thriving in a way in which he never had in school.

I also learned that the Betsy-Tacy series is a favorite among homeschoolers. This revelation made me nostalgic and I revisited the series. I had tried to introduce my son to the books before I had begun homeschooling. He was unable to comprehend the stories. Because he has made such great progress this past year, and has grown to love books as I do, I am going to try again.

Once a week, I co-teach with another homeschooling mother and her eight year old daughter. I want to read the first book to both of them, and see if they are ready to love them as much as I still do. It would be magical for me to share this love with my son.

In my spare time (?!), I plan on revising and expanding that old integrated unit and creating a unit study on the books for homeschooling. It is an ambitious project, but I know it will be a labor of love. Eventually, I would like to publish it as a companion to the books.

I imagine Maud and Merian are looking down from heaven, watching the love affair all of us have and continue to have with Betsy-Tacy. I am certain they are beaming with delight!

“Betsy-Tacy was the first chapter book I read as a child, and to reread the books is like visiting with old friends.”

--Aubrey Wetzel
"One Stayed at Welcome"
By Maud and Delos Lovelace

The Eden Prairie Historical Society announces several upcoming events to celebrate Maud and Delos Lovelace’s book, One Stayed at Welcome. Discover the characters related to real pioneers that settled in Eden Prairie, Minnesota! The Eden Prairie Historical Society invites Betsy-Tacy Society members to attend these events. If you don’t already have this book in your Lovelace collection, books can be ordered online at www.betsy-tacysoociety.org or www.mnheritage.com or purchase at Tacy’s House or the Eden Prairie Historical Society.

UPCOMING EVENTS

JOIN US at reading this wonderfully written historical fiction novel, first published in 1934, by Maud and Delos Lovelace
YES! "Welcome" is Eden Prairie!
Discover the characters related to real pioneers that settled in Eden Prairie!
The first pre-empted land in Eden Prairie IS the CPG House site!
Attend any or all THREE special events:
All events are at the
CUMMINS-PHIPPS-GRILL HOUSE
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BOOK EVENT
SUNDAY
September 13th, 2015
1:30 - 4:00 PM
One Stayed at Welcome
by Maud and Delos Lovelace!
Join us for a lively discussion!

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC
GHOST WALK
SATURDAY
October 24th, 2015
7:00 - 9:00 PM
Open Tours of the One Stayed at Welcome neighborhood
Meet at the CPG House
Tour the sites from the book!

TROLLEY TOUR
SATURDAY
May 21st, 2016
Noon - 4:00 PM
Meet at the CPG House
Tour the sites from the book!

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“I am almost 64 and I reread the books at least once a year. I was an only child and had few friends in school. My books were my friends, I suppose. I loved Betsy’s parents and sisters and friends as if they were my own!”
-Sue Roy

...Orange Blossoms cont. from page 7
over—and later Al. Patsy brought a birthday cake and we had a lovely party for Helen who was radiant as the grandchildren played around her.”

Iris Blossom and Boxing Gloves is a lovely book, with an authentic recounting of the displacement of five siblings, and their subsequent reunion and how they made lives for themselves.

(The books Orange Blossoms Everywhere and Iris Blossom and Boxing Gloves are available in the BTS shop, online or by mail order)
Restoration Report

by Candy Laven

The steps to the 2nd floor bedrooms in Betsy’s house were originally located in the back parlor and the pattern on the floor where the stairway attached is still visible. When Tom and Stella Hart were expecting their 3rd child, they realized that they needed more space, so the addition of the main floor bedroom and kitchen were constructed. The new floor plan incorporated the relocation of the back parlor stairway to the area between the new kitchen and new bedroom and the space under the stairway became a much needed bedroom closet for Mrs. Hart—a luxury in those days. However, when the stairway was moved, it didn’t properly fit the new space. The stair risers are not the same height and the pitch is very steep. The Betsy-Tacy Society is working to redesign the steps and add railings to make the stairway safe for visitors. Watch for updates as Betsy’s stairway is restored.

Wish List

Betsy House items
- Kitchen
  - Wooden Bread Bowl, wooden spoons and spatulas
  - Small metal bath tub (child size)
  - Wooden Butter Churn
  - Enamel Splatterware pans
  - Wall-mount holder for kitchen bar soap
  - Small wood box for Kitchen stove wood
  - Small Coffee grinder
  - Old hand-made broom
  - Kitchen wall pictures
  - Old baskets, crockery
  - Kitchen jars, spice or dry ingredient tins
  - Small wooden butcher block on legs
  - Ceiling light for center of kitchen

- Dining Room
  - Telephone chair
  - Dining Room wall pictures in frames

Front Parlor
- Small wall antique frames for family photos

Main Floor Bedroom
- Bedroom wall frames with pictures
- ¾ Bed with Mission-style high head and foot boards

Upstairs Bedrooms
- Youth Bed
- Bed tables
- Small dresser w/drawers and wash stand
- Floor rugs
- Ceiling lights

Tacy House items
- Heavy doorway drapes for bedroom doorway
- Violin on stand

Other
- Small Tools, devices of the late 1800s – early 1900s period, child-size play tables, child’s porcelain tea sets, small wooden trunk for programs, and shop vac.

Cash donations are appreciated to allow us to purchase some of these items from the Wish List. Thank you!
Grocery Store continued from page 1

Back in the ‘30s and ‘40s, these stores were scattered throughout Mankato and North Mankato neighborhoods. They were of modest size and proportion, without the warehouse ambience of today’s huge markets. They carried modest supplies of Wheaties, Corn Flakes, and Rice Krispies alongside canned vegetables, with jars of coffee, sacks of flour and sugar, not on aisle ten, half a block away in today’s supermarkets, but on the adjoining shelf. Although they may have varied in size and shape, some larger, some with a meat counter, some without, they were alike in that they had a sort of intimacy about them. No one was a stranger once you walked in the door.

Sieberg’s Grocery on Byron Street was named for its owner, as were Devlin and Kiffee on the corner of Fifth Street and Warren, Aumonds on Van Brunt Street, Eckhardts and Ewalt’s on North Front Street and Farhos on Byron and So. Front in Mankato. In North Mankato on Belgrade Avenue, Deignaus’ and Roxins stood a few doors apart and each prospered. These were just a few of the 49 grocery stores that were once sprinkled throughout Mankato.

Alike in many ways, each store had its own stamp or personality. Pete Sieberg’s store across from Lincoln School was known as Mrs. Chubbock’s in Maud Hart Lovelace’s Betsy-Tacy books. Typical of its times, it was a small, intimate, and very convenient place to shop for those necessary items one needed for baking, after-school treats, and a great many other purposes. It was the store frequented by housewives, school children, and the casual shopper who needed something from the store, be it a ten-cent bag of walnuts, a popsicle, or a loaf of Silver Cup bread. The smooth, concrete steps leading into the store were bordered by iron railings that we swung on and performed a sort of somersault routine before we entered. It was attached to the kitchen of the Sieberg’s home, with steps leading down from the house into the back of the store. Pete had a good meat counter, with a big butcher block and sharp knives to slice steaks or chops. Shoppers lay in their porcelain trays in the meat display, and we loved them for our “weinie roasts” that we held in the Slough, come the cool days of fall. He often “threw in” a big soup bone for the dog. If we weren’t there on an errand for mother, an ice cream cone or popsicle was a must for the hot summer days. Would it be, instead of the predictable chocolate or vanilla, strawberry, locally grown and made by Model Dairy down on Cherry Street? Or maybe peach, made in August at the Dairy? As we stood debating and consulting, we watched in fascination as Mrs. Sieberg generously scooped out the ice cream, made with fresh strawberries or fresh peaches available only in June and August. She used an ice cream scoop, rinsing it from time to time in a bowl of milky water, and always took care to pack in the ice cream fully to the bottom of the cone.

Farho’s was run by the sisters Jo and Ann. In the front window hung a huge stalk of bananas, and, wielding a sharp machete-type knife, they cut off a single banana or a bunch with one slice. Their big Persian cats, marvelously equipped with six toes on each paw, lay comfortably in the sunny front window by the display of fruit, or twined themselves about our legs as we bought a popsicle or an ice cream cone. Jo and Ann were usually in the back of the store, an area enclosed by a curtain, and didn’t emerge until they heard the door open. Emigrants from Syria, they lived in Tinkomville where their mother had a smaller, darker store. She didn’t speak English, and we were not sure just how to speak to her, but Ann and Jo spoke perfect English and talked and laughed with us as we petted and admired their big cats.

The Aumond brothers’ store on Van Brunt Street was a quiet, dim store pervaded by the smell of elderly men and tobacco. They were our conspirators in that we brought empty milk bottles to them to be redeemed for a nickel each (our mothers suspected our illicit trade, I think, but tolerated it). Sieberg’s, Farho’s, and the Aumond brothers were within six blocks of one another, yet each made a living for their owners, as did the other stores throughout Mankato.

Some were set in the middle of block, others in a more prominent position on a corner such as Devlin and Kiffee, on a triangle formed by Warren Street, Fifth Street, and Glenwood Avenue. Their store was a bit more up-scale with delivery of earlier-ordered items. Patrons called the store, chatted pleasantly with the owner, usually Mrs. Devlin, and then placed their order, conferring and selecting with her help. Later that afternoon, the groceries were delivered by a quiet, efficient young man who, after knocking at the back door, entered and placed the items carefully on the kitchen table.

Some stores dotted North and South Front Street. Ewalt’s at the North end had the advantage of being next to two good bakeries, and when one ordered groceries from them one could request a bakery item and one of the employees would pick up the bakery goods as well as the usual groceries. They delivered as well as Devlin and Kiffee, and both were in business for years. Farther on down Front Street was Hanson’s, tucked in-between two saloons. They were two brothers who had emigrated from Norway and always had good cheese and lutefisk at Christmas time.

In the middle of the downtown area was Eckhardt’s, run by the two Eckhardt sisters. Theirs was a dark, long and narrow store that had a faint musty air to it. The sisters rarely spoke to one another; the atmosphere was somewhat tense and apprehensive, ...cont. on page 23
The BTS hosted the 2nd annual Deep Valley Homecoming from June 26 – 30th. This 5-day event, to celebrate author Maud Hart Lovelace and her books, brought fans from 13 different states and across the state of Minnesota.

For some attendees this was the first time they had visited the Betsy-Tacy sites in Mankato. Some local attendees knew nothing about Maud Hart Lovelace, her books or the historic literary homes until this event. It was great see old friends and meet new ones!

The event took place in various locations in Mankato including the “Betsy” and “Tacy” houses, Kato Ballroom, Lincoln Park, Carnegie Art Center, First Presbyterian Church, Sibley Park Pavilion, Old Main Village, Blue Earth County Heritage Center, Elks Nature Center, Children’s Museum of Southern MN, and the Blue Earth County Library. Activities ranged from a mystery dinner theater play, “Betsy and Tacy Go Downton,” “Maud Sings Maud” concert by Maud Hixson, narrated horse-drawn trolley rides, guided house tours, young artist competition, Deep Valley Book Festival, Victorian Tea, speakers and special guest authors Melissa Wiley and Nancy McCabe, vintage car show, living history exhibits, and much more.

Many volunteers are needed to host an event such as this and we’re grateful to everyone who helped. Thanks to the Prairie Lakes Regional Arts Council for grant support to help us bring this event to you. Thanks also go to our sponsors listed on page 11.

For more photos, visit our facebook page, click on photos and there is an album for the Deep Valley Homecoming 2015.

The 3rd annual Deep Valley Homecoming is planned for June 2016. We hope you will join us! Registration forms will be posted online in January 2016.
“I read these books over and over as a child. Now, whenever I’m feeling blue or life gets rough, I read them again for the sense of peace they give me. The characters are warm and loving and not perfect.”

-Kelli Austin

...cont. from page 6

by her minor celebrity. As one of the earliest members of the Maud Hart Lovelace Society, she attended conventions in Mankato and events in the Twin Cities. She happily shared her memories of all the real people behind the Betsy-Tacy books, as well as her mother’s scrapbooks and photo albums. Every person who wrote a book about Maud Hart Lovelace and her writing (including me) benefited from her generosity.

Louise focused her energy and enthusiasm on many other organizations as well, chiefly the Friends of the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra and the Bach Society. It was fitting that her memorial service featured a program of Bach organ music, performed by internationally-acclaimed organist Philip Brunelle and noted soprano Maria Jette. She was also a proud alumna of Vassar College, and compared her college years - largely free of male visitors due to World War II - with her mother’s experiences in the 1910s. They both “represented Vassar on every occasion.”

From the first day I met Louise, I spent the rest of our acquaintance earnestly hoping she would continue to like me. I needn’t have worried – not because I’m so gosh darn likable, but because Louise always intended to like everyone, unless they proved themselves unworthy. She was always gracious, polite and smiling. However, like Miss Marple, the sweet-old-lady veneer hid an intellect that was lethally sharp and curious, as well as a strong sense of fair play. I am so very grateful that I had the chance to know her.

Whether you knew Louise personally or not, you will have a connection to her in your shared love for the Betsy-Tacy series. The next time you read Carney’s House Party – and you do know that there will be a next time – you will find her there. Read the scene with Grandma Hunter more closely than usual. Four generations later, her great-granddaughter Louise could have answered to that same description.

Goodbye, Louise. We’ll see you the land of dreams.

In Memoriam

Colleen O’Neil

June 11, 1947 – May 28, 2015

It is with much sorrow that we acknowledge the death of Colleen O’Neil, who was instrumental in organizing and running the silent auction for the Betsy-Tacy Convention in 2009, which raised a considerable amount of money for the BTS. She was also an integral member of the 2012 Convention committee. A talented and dedicated teacher and an inveterate traveler, Colleen’s bright personality and infectious good humor brought joy to all who had the good fortune to know her, whether in person or through the Maud-L list serv. We are deeply grateful for her efforts on our behalf. She will be greatly missed.

Roderick Elbert

February 21, 1941 – July 30, 2015

We are saddened at the loss of our faithful volunteer and friend, Rod Elbert. For many years, Rod volunteered his time to mow the lawns at the Betsy and Tacy houses. He took pride in his work and kept the landscape well manicured. Rod always had a smile on his face and will be missed by many.

Richard Orchard

April 24, 1951 – July 18, 2015

Our deepest sympathy goes out to Susan Orchard (past BTS director) and her family on the death of her husband, Richard. As his obituary said, “He lived his life rooted in faith, family, and friends.” He often stopped by Tacy’s house to get Susan at the end of her work day. His support of Susan and her job meant he sometimes volunteered behind the scenes for the Society. Richard was a quiet and gentle man ~ plus a Minnesota Twins fan, “Papa” to his grandchildren, and Susan’s husband for 42 years. Richard is truly missed by those who knew him.
The Present of a Friend: Rachel Rose

The world of Betsy-Tacy fans has lost a true and wonderful friend. Rachel Rose of Maplewood, New Jersey, died in May at age 75.

Rachel was an active and prolific contributor to the Maud-L e-mail list, an online “coffee klatch” and free-wheeling discussion group devoted to the Betsy-Tacy books. She introduced herself to the List on October 10, 2008:

“I started reading the BTT books when I was 9, and tomorrow I’ll be 68½! Can’t believe it—the numbers get funnier and funnier. But you can see I have been a big fan of BTT for decades.”

A favorite List tradition is “calling roll” at the beginning of each school year, and Rachel joyfully participated in her first roll call in September 2009:

I joined The Violent Study Club in NYC about ten years ago, I think, after seeing the article in the New York Times about book clubs; you can’t imagine how excited I was to know there was a group about an hour from where I live!!!

Over the years, we got to know her family: husband Marvin (“who patiently accepts the role of BTT in my life, though he and my sons do roll their eyes occasionally!”), sons David and Jonathan (to whom Rachel read all the BT books), and granddaughters Jessica and Emma, who accompanied Rachel to the 2009 Convention and sang the Cat Duet!

Like Betsy Ray, Rachel changed her name, from Rochelle to Rachel, though unlike Betsy she waited until age 50 to make the change. Also like Betsy, Rachel was the middle girl of three sisters.

“My sisters and I once made Everything Pudding when we were little. I emphasize the word ONCE.”

Rachel’s sister Sheva remembers this well: “Hot chocolate, ketchup . . . oh, it was awful.” She also remembers going to the library as girls, climbing the stairs to the second floor, and then walking 10 blocks home carrying a heavy stack of books (“No one thought of backpacks back then!”). While Sheva read the Betsy-Tacy books as a child and then stopped, Rachel read them over and over, well into adulthood.

Throughout her life, Rachel had many brushes with literary greatness. Sydney Taylor (who wrote the All-of-a-Kind Family books) was her camp counselor, and Rachel also met Harriet Stratemeyer (who wrote the Nancy Drew books—the Stratemeyer family lived in Maplewood). Rachel owned several Nancy Drew hardcovers, signed by “Carolyn Keene”! But the event that will mean the most to BT fans occurred on August 18, 1975, when Rachel wrote the following letter:

Dear Mrs. Lovelace,

My family and I had occasion this summer to visit Mankato, Minn., for me a childhood dream come true! With the help of the librarian, we received a “Deep Valley” map, and thoroughly enjoyed our tour of Betsy-Tacy land. As a child, my friends and I loved your books, and now I hope my children will too. After 25 years of loving your books, I finally decided to write and tell you how much they meant to us! To this day, my friends and I still slip into the children’s room at the library and read through all the books. Just thought you might enjoy knowing—we often did many of the things you did—but T.C.K.C.—we made T.J.K.C.—J for Jewish!

Sincerely yours, with affection,
Rochelle Rosenberg Rose

On August 25, Rachel received this reply:

Dear Mrs. Rose,

Thank you very much for your kind letter. I was delighted to hear about the T.J.K. Club, added to the B.H.M. Club and the C.K.C. Club. No doubt you saw my old home, 333 Center Street, with Tacy’s across the road. My father put in the maples on the front lawn; my desk was in one of them toward the back of the lawn, in a cigar box. I hope you saw Tib’s beautiful home on Byron Street. Happy wishes to you and yours.

Maud Lovelace

Always the soul of generosity, Rachel distributed copies
of these letters to each attendee of the 2012 Betsy-Tacy Convention. Rachel attended two Conventions, in 2009 and 2012, and those of us who were fortunate enough to meet her were delighted to find her “real” self to be as charming as her online persona.

Those who only knew her through their computer screens nonetheless felt like they knew her intimately, as Rachel’s vibrant spirit always came through in her cheerful and upbeat posts to the List. Some examples:

The New York Times ran an article about ideas and events that changed the world. Long ago I had decided that the three most important life-changers were flush toilets, eyeglasses, and eyelash curlers. But two years ago in Ireland I met a wonderful lady who named the best and most important changer of all: TAMPAX!!!

My puffy ankles went down slightly. They had told me that they may NOT go down. I know it is frivolous of me to worry about the ankles, but they and my feet are the last of any of my features to still look really good. Sigh. I feel like Ruby Gillis in Anne of Green Gables, but still, I did want to keep my nice ankles and feet.


That reminds me of the time my husband and I went to a Salvation Army store looking for cheap bookcases we could paint and add to our “collection”; we didn’t find any bookcases, but we came home with two big bags of books.

I thought The Fighter was excellent, with superb acting from the whole cast, and this is from someone who hates boxing even more than I dislike football. Now don’t laugh at me, but it took me two or three scenes of seeing Christian Bale smoke a cigarette stuck into a plastic container before I realized this was not a nice polite way of smoking and not letting the smoke get into the room to bother others . . .! I guess I move in the wrong circles.

I am sorry to have to tell you that on January 23 I had a massive heart attack and have been in hospital ever since. This Wednesday I am scheduled for major heart surgery. It is all extremely serious and I just have to hope for the best. Love you all. You have brought great pleasure and fun and love to my life. I don’t want to be overly grim, but the truth must be faced—my condition and the operation are very serious indeed.

We hoped against hope that that valiant little heart of hers would keep beating forever, but it was not to be. Rachel lost her fight on May 5, 2015.

Rachel once wrote:

I have friends from infancy and early childhood; from elementary and high schools; from camp and college and trips to Israel; from work; from the old neighborhood; from the new neighborhood; from synagogue; friends who are relatives and relatives who are friends; from study groups; friends nearby and in far-away states and in further-away lands; and the BTT List. I can’t imagine my life without all these friends. I’ve been very very blessed.

According to Sheva, Rachel’s funeral was attended by friends from her elementary school days all the way through college and beyond.

We loved her, we miss her, and we always will. As one Maud-Ler said, “She had the gift of sharing her true self with her friends, and somehow, all of us became her friends. What a wonderful woman she was!” Another added, “It’s hard to explain to people that I am crying because I miss a woman I never met in person so much.”

May her memory be for a blessing.

—by Jennifer Davis-Kay, who is honored to share a name with Rachel’s “Grandma Jennie Davis.”
Maud Sings Maud
A Musical Betsy-Tacy Companion

The Betsy-Tacy Society is asking for your help with the production of musical companion to Maud Hart Lovelace’s Betsy-Tacy books.

Maud’s series of books about growing up in Deep Valley (Mankato, Minnesota) at the turn of the 20th century documents a now-vanished way of life. At their center is a rich trove of family traditions, social customs and popular culture of the day, including the songs that their characters enjoyed. The Betsy-Tacy books have been beloved by readers since the 1940s, but most of the songs have faded from memory, so there is a need for an annotated musical companion to further illustrate the music so prominently featured in these stories.

The Betsy-Tacy Society is eager to be able to offer just such an aid to further education and enjoyment. Twin Cities singer Maud Hixson and pianist Rick Carlson have created a program of this music along with brief narratives from the Betsy-Tacy books. Maud and Rick recently performed at the Society’s Deep Valley Homecoming in Mankato, and we have asked them to record a CD of this material. As an added enticement, soprano Maria Jette will lend her talent for a cameo appearance on the Cat Duet.

How can I help, you ask? We’re launching a Kickstarter online fundraiser. For the next 60 days we’re accepting pledges to raise the money to pay for the recording, design and manufacturing costs. No money changes hands unless the goal is reached, so there is no risk to you. Our financial goal is the minimum amount needed to produce this project. Any funds pledged beyond this number will go toward the promotion and marketing of the CD.

Rewards for your pledge range from an advance copy of the recording with exclusive updates for a minimum pledge of $20, to a parlor concert in your own home for a $1000 pledge. For more information and to make a pledge, go to www.kickstarter.com/projects/maudsingsmaud.

Hurry, this fundraiser is only good for 60 days. If the goal is not reached this project will not happen. Please join us in adding a soundtrack to the Betsy-Tacy stories!
Book review: Iris Blossom and Boxing Gloves
written by Avis Iris Wright (Iris Avis Segelstrom)

reviewed by Julie Schrader

This memoir is a series of essays that tell the story of life for siblings Iris, Bruce and Alfred Segelstrom living in separate cottages at the State Public School Orphanage at Owatonna, MN in the early 1940s. The Segelstrom family fell on hard times after the Great Depression and a series of unfortunate events led to the three of the youngest children being taken from their parents and sent to live in the orphanage.

The author shares her memories and those of her siblings in their own words. Their stories will touch your heart. Of particular interest to Maud Hart Lovelace fans, is that Alfred Segelstrom was adopted by Frank and Helen (Hart) Fowler. Helen is Maud Hart Lovelace’s youngest sister and the character of Margaret Ray in the Betsy-Tacy books.

Alfred was nearly 10 years old when he was taken to the orphanage and remembers spending his 10th birthday there on March 10, 1939. He shares his memories of home life, foster homes and living in the orphanage.

In March 1943, Alfred went to live with Frank and Helen Fowler in Forest Lake, MN and was adopted by them in 1944. I wrote to Iris after reading her book and asked what she remembered about Frank and Helen. She replied; “The Fowlers owned two movie theaters and a roller rink. Frank was a brusque, harsh person, as I recall. Helen was a slender, very fragile-appearing person and was so kind and good to Bruce and me. Helen must have been a wonderful mother to my brother Alfred. He wanted Frank and Helen to adopt Bruce and me, but our foster parents, Ralph and Ellie Sutherland, would not give us up, though they never adopted us.”

“Bruce and I were invited to visit Alfred and his parents, Frank and Helen Fowler, at one time. I still remember seeing a movie. “Ah! Sweet Mystery of Life at Last I Found Thee” was the theme song. (ed note: this movie was Naughty Marietta from 1935). I still remember Alfred, at age 16, flying a Piper Cub Airplane from Forest Lake, MN to the Sutherland farm near Fountain, MN and landing the airplane in our farm field. He was checking on his younger siblings. His living situation was very different from the Sutherlands, who did not have indoor plumbing or electricity, when Bruce and I went to live with them.”

Helen Fowler was soon diagnosed with multiple sclerosis, and she and Frank moved to Florida and then to California. When they moved to Florida, Alfred (age 15) went to live with Frank’s parents in Minneapolis and finished high school.

Iris wrote; “When I graduated from Chatfield High School in 1952, I worked at a Chatfield insurance company. Alfred, then married to Patsy O’Brien and living in Santa Ana, California, invited me to come visit them in the summer of 1955. Patsy is a very vivacious lady. I did learn to stand up for myself from Patsy. She also helped me to shop for clothes, as Patsy and Al owned “Patsy’s Clothes Closet,” a retail second-hand clothing store. So occasionally I did see Frank and Helen at that time. Helen was a gracious, gentle lady. I do remember that Frank had white, curly haired dogs—what breed I do not know. I can still see Helen in my mind’s eye, so slender, so unassuming.”

Iris Blossoms and Boxing Gloves is a story of hardship and the breakup of a family in the 1930s, and how they managed to reunite years later.

The Return of the Hitching Block

Many years have passed since there has been a hitching block in front of Betsy’s and Tacy’s house on Hill Street (Center Street) in Deep Valley (Mankato, MN). Those hitching blocks were a favorite meeting place for Betsy, Tacy and Tib. In the early 1900s, the horse and buggy was replaced by the automobile and streets were improved with boulevards, curbs, gutters, and sidewalks. No longer needed, the hitching blocks were removed.

In October 2014 the hitching blocks were returned to these literary landmark houses! Two Kasota stone blocks were cut and handcrafted into period-looking hitching blocks. BTS board member, Julie Schrader worked on this project with Maryellen Coughlan, from the Coughlan Companies, Inc., who donated the stone. Each stone block weighs nearly 900 pounds! Local historians, Tom Hagen and Ken Ziegler were advisors for the project. Tom had an iron ring that was

...cont. on page 21
**Boy in Blue Civil War Memorial Dedicated**

“Lincoln Park was a pie-shaped wedge of lawn with a giant elm tree and a fountain on it.”

*Betsy and Tacy Go Over the Big Hill* by Maud Hart Lovelace

![Image of the Boy in Blue Memorial]

The new “Boy in Blue” memorial was dedicated on May 30, 2015.

On May 30, 2015, a replica of the fountain Maud Hart Lovelace referred to in the Betsy-Tacy books was dedicated to the memory of Blue Earth County Civil War Union soldiers. Hundreds of people packed the little park for the ceremony and to witness the unveiling.

The ceremony, planned by the Boy in Blue Memorial Project committee members, closely followed the original dedication ceremony that occurred on May 30, 1893 when Maud was just one year old. Imagine, Mr. and Mrs. Hart probably attended with their two young daughters.

A military parade began at the corner of Lewis and Center Streets in front of the Betsy and Tacy houses and marched to Lincoln Park. Costumed Civil War living history members from the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 5th MN Volunteer Infantry Regiments and the New Ulm Battery were led by a fife player and drummer. They were followed by veterans from subsequent wars and the Daughters of the American Revolution.

Civil War era patriotic music was played by Schell’s Hobo Band Quartet, and soloist Barb Dunker and the Mankato Children’s Chorus sang several songs that were performed at the 1893 ceremony. Following several speeches, the red, white and blue drape was removed from the Boy in Blue statue and the water began to flow from the fountain. Nearly 100 years later, the “Boy in Blue” has returned to his post in Lincoln Park.

A paver walkway surrounds the fountain pool. Engraved pavers will continue to be sold until the walkway is filled. The Betsy-Tacy Society purchased two engraved pavers – one in honor of Maud’s grandfather, Solomon Palmer, a Civil War veteran, and the other for the society. All funds raised continue to go toward the cost of the memorial and future maintenance.

For more information about the project or to purchase a paver, visit www.boyinblue.org or to see more photos go to www.facebook.com/BoyinBlueProject.

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**We are looking for people for “The Crowd”!**

The Betsy-Tacy Society is looking for people who are interested in becoming part of “The Crowd.” This is a great opportunity of people who are interested in celebrating the spirit of the Betsy-Tacy books and sharing the life of Maud Hart Lovelace.

The Crowd has many opportunities to fit anyone’s schedule.

Interested in a one time only event – come help us with special programs or events. Interested in a more regular opportunity - we are looking for individuals who are interested in serving as tour guides and shop staff. Or are you looking to play a bigger role in The Crowd? We have committees where you can help with programming, writing newsletters, marketing, and fundraising. We are also looking for new members for our board.

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**Has your email address changed?**

Contact us with your new email address at betsy-tacy@gmail.com to continue to receive the most up-to-date information from the Betsy-Tacy Society.

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**Membership Information**

As your membership expires, you’ll receive an e-mail reminder to renew. Please renew promptly to save the BTS staff time and postage for sending renewal notices via USPS. You can renew online at www.betsy-tacysociety.org/membershippurchase.

The BTS is very grateful to all its members for their ongoing support.
The Deep Valley Book Festival Brings Back Memories of Maud

by Anne Kerr

June 28, 2015 found me in Mankato at the Deep Valley Book Festival, part of the 2015 Deep Valley Homecoming weekend sponsored by the Betsy-Tacy Society. Mankato is known to Betsy-Tacy fans as Deep Valley. Maud Hart Lovelace, author of these well-known books, grew up in Mankato and wrote about herself as Betsy, an aspiring author. The Deep Valley Book Festival is an important part of each year’s festivities, with many Minnesota authors and illustrators invited to attend. I was pleased to be invited.

As a child growing up, I fell in love with the Betsy-Tacy books. They were being published as I grew, so I received the latest Betsy-Tacy book each year for my birthday. As an added bonus, my friend Romie (Rosemund) Lundquist was Maud Hart Lovelace’s niece. Romie and I have been friends forever. We attended Robert Fulton grade school and Southwest High School in Minneapolis, and belonged to the same Brownie and Girl Scout troops.

I was invited to Romie’s house with several other friends one day in 1946 when Maud Hart Lovelace was visiting. Romie and I were 11-12 years old at the time. It was a thrill to meet Maud in person and be invited to ask her questions. We were all delirious. I spoke with Romie this week to ask for corroborations of dates and also to ask if any photos were taken that day. Romie currently lives in an assisted living facility in Boulder, Colorado and did not recall ever seeing photos of that day. She told me that 1946 was the last time she saw her Aunt Maud as well, although there were phone conversations and correspondence between them until Maud died in 1980.

Romie told me something I hadn’t remembered; that her mom helped Maud with several chapters of a manuscript about one of Maud’s characters going to college, Carney’s House Party. Romie’s mom shared some of her Milwaukee Downer College memories for Maud to use. About ten years ago Romie donated the original manuscript that Maud had hand-written, with Romie’s mom’s written notes in the margins, to the Betsy-Tacy Society.

Back to Mankato a month ago, imagine my delight to find author Faith Sullivan at the very next table. Faith is a very popular fiction writer. Her successful titles include Cape Ann, Gardenias and The Empress of One. Coming out this fall is her latest, Goodnight, Mr. Wodehouse.

Thank you to the Betsy-Tacy Society and your gracious and helpful volunteers for my great experience at the 2015 Deep Valley Book Festival. Keep up your important work. And heartfelt thanks to Maud for providing such wonderful reading as I was growing up.

We also enjoyed horseback riding at Shady Valley. (Romie is at the far right and I am next to her.)

We sung in the Southwest High School choir, pictured here on a choir trip in 1952. (Romie is on the far left and I am next to her.)

...Hitching Block cont. from page 19

We also were camp counselors at Lyman Lodge (YWCA Camp at Lake Minnetonka) in 1950. (Romie is on the far left and I am the third from left.)

originally used for an old hitching block; this ring was used by a blacksmith as a pattern to handcraft four iron rings for our reproductions. Ken shared his experience with the process of attaching the iron rings to stone using lead. Jason Reese from Jordan Sands (a division of Coughlan Company) installed the blocks at the houses. On October 25, 2014 the BTS dedicated the new hitching blocks that add one more historical feature to these literary treasures for visitors to experience. Thank you Coughlan Companies and all involved in this project!

Betsy watched a bluebird take off from the maple...“What can we do?” she murmured, watching him. “I know!” she said. “We’ll learn to fly.” ... “We’ll begin with our hitching block,” said Betsy, and she ran out to the hitching block and jumped off, waving her arms. “It’s easy!” she cried.

(excerpts from Betsy-Tacy and Tib)
not like the bustling feel of the other grocery stores. They also had cats, which one day went berserk and attacked the women. That was a scary conclusion to their grocery days!

Many farmers from the Madison Lake area and other rural areas did their big weekly shopping at Mocol’s. After finishing their chores early on Saturday, families piled into cars and drove into town for the week’s shopping, bringing eggs to trade or to pay for the groceries. It was a social event, and visiting and catching up on the news was a big part of the Saturday night getaway. The shopping completed, the eggs traded for groceries, the families hurried home to watch the free outdoor movies held in Madison Lake’s town park.

Each store had its own personality and style, a clear reflection of its owner. Some were cleaner than others, some better stocked, some with fruit, others with the advantage of a nearby bakery. All of them were alike in that shopping there was always a friendly,neighborly event. It was a simple affair of the grocer, or his wife or brother, following you with a basket into which were put the items. Once the purchases were made, the grocer produced a pad with a carbon sheet, entered the items, and then placed the original on a metal frame that hung behind the counter. At the end of the month, having paid the bill, the shopper was given candy bars as a treat.

Over the years the grocery stores dwindled down to fewer and fewer, and now Mocol’s could well be the last of a neighborhood tradition, a grocery store just a few blocks from home. Mocol’s is a worthy, successful testimonial to the days before the supermarket. In its own way it is a super grocery store, in the best definition of the word. Check it out sometime; it’s across from Franklin School on North Broad Street. You’ll like it!

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Reviews on Amazon help authors sell more books! Readers choose books based on recommendations. Leaving an Amazon review is like telling your friends how much you enjoy a book. Did you know that after 20-25 reviews, Amazon includes the author’s book in “also bought” and “you might like” lists? This increases visibility on the site and helps boost sales. After 50-70 reviews, Amazon highlights the book for spotlight positions and its newsletter. This is a HUGE boost for an author.

Write a review for the Betsy-Tacy books, Lovelace’s historical novels, and books by other authors that have written about Maud. This shows others how much these books are loved and will encourage new readers and sell more books to ensure they will stay in print!

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When contacting the BTS....

By Mail – Always send mail to the following address:
Betsy-Tacy Society
P.O. Box 94
Mankato, MN 56002-0094

Do not use the address printed in the back of the older issues of the Betsy-Tacy books and do not address mail to us at the Center Street location. We do not have a mailbox at either house, and the mail carrier cannot deliver to these addresses.

By E-mail – When sending an e-mail, ALWAYS use “Betsy-Tacy” in the subject line. This will help ensure your message does not get caught in spam filters.

By Phone – Our phone number (507) 345-9777 – reaches an answering service. Please leave your message and it will be returned by someone with the society who can best help you.

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“I like to reread [the books] to visit with old friends--I will pick up one of the books and dive right in, wherever the pages happen to fall open. The characters are real people who remind me of my childhood and of who I dreamed of becoming.”

-Elizabeth Power

“I re-read the Betsy-Tacy books because they continue to take me back to an enchanting time where youth managed to have a good time within the family household. The parties & celebration that are pictured always calm my spirit with the simple things of life & how they can actually be done.”

-Nancy Lee McAvoy