



Betsy and the Great World / Betsy's Wedding

Maud Hart Lovelace , Vera Neville (Illustrator)

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Betsy and the Great World: Betsy Ray is twenty-one and on the adventure of a lifetime: a solo tour of Europe! There's even a handsome Italian, Marco, who's going overboard for her—if only she could stop thinking about her ex-sweetheart Joe Willard.

Betsy's Wedding: When Betsy's boat docks in New York, Joe is waiting there . . . with a ring! But she's going to learn that marriage isn't all candlelight, roses, and kisses. There's also cooking, ironing, cleaning, and budgeting—and will she be able to find time to forge a writing career?

Betsy and the Great World / Betsy's Wedding Details

Date : Published September 29th 2009 by William Morrow Paperbacks (first published 2009)

ISBN : 9780061795138

Author : Maud Hart Lovelace , Vera Neville (Illustrator)

Format : Paperback 688 pages

Genre : Classics, Fiction, Young Adult, Historical, Historical Fiction, Romance



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Katrina Forman says

A beautiful finish.

I have loved this series ever since it was first shown to me in my 20s. I reread it every few years, and am always sad to get to the end. Betsy, Tracy, Tib and Joe are like friends. I love watching them all grow up, and being part of the Crowd.

Courtney says

Oh Betsy! Oh Joe! Oh joy in reading Betsy-Tacy yet again!

My only qualm in the re-read is that Betsy didn't go to see the King of Spain on her European tour. Such an oversight!

Moey17 says

Loved the Betsy series as a young girl, still charmed by them as an adult! Loved revisiting Betsy, Joe, the Rays, and the rest of the "old crowd". Lovely nostalgic stories!

Malia says

Man. Oh man. These books. There is something about them. A certain timeless charm, a magic, really. They are so simple. Yet, somehow, through the honest, realistic words of these books, Maud Hart Lovelace manages to depict such lovable, authentic, genuine, dimensional characters - characters whom I have grown sympathize with and to love. I was in joyful, affectionate, bittersweet tears as I read the final words of the final book.

I absolutely adore this series, primarily the last 6 books (the "older" B-T books). They are filled with timeless lessons. There are, for example, so many qualities and characteristics of Betsy, Julia, Tib, Tacy, Margaret, Mrs. Ray, Anna, that I admire and aspire to obtain. I adore the era, the simplicity of life. I love the way Betsy enjoys the little things in life. As a writer, she observes everything and really lives life well. I admire that.

I could go on and on about every little thing I love about these books. But for the sake of time and sanity, I will end with this: these books hold such a special place in my heart, and I truly cherish them. Thank you, Maud! <3

Erin says

Okay - I'm breaking my pledge to review each book individually in favor of writing a single review of this complete series.

The Betsy-Tacy books revolve around the life, family, and friends of Betsy Ray. When we first meet Betsy, she is five years old, and living in a small town in Minnesota in the early 1900's. Each book in the series is written to the level of Betsy's age in the book, starting with elementary school and taking us through to young adulthood, and eventually marriage.

I read the first book in all of an hour and couldn't wait to see what adventures unfolded next for Betsy and her friend, Tacy, now that they were two years older. This cycle continued through all nine books in the series until I found myself sitting on the couch finishing the final book last night instead of doing my planned cardio workout.

I truly enjoyed watching Betsy and her friends grow up - from young children to teenagers, to wives and mothers. I became connected to the characters and often found myself cheering for them. It made me long for simpler times - making fudge and singing around a piano with friends, having a picnic.

It was also interesting to see how little things have changed. Teenagers are still in constant contact. Though not on the brand new telephone, but via text or email. Highschoolers still go cruising in their automobiles, although going 20mph might not seem all that fast to us now.

I loved reading the historical information at the back of the books - how they were based on the author's friends and life. Seeing the photos of the people who actually inspired the characters was great. I also loved the descriptions of the fashion.

I'm so glad that my friend recommended these books to me. I know that should I have a little girl one day, that these books will find their way onto her bookshelf. I also have a feeling that the next time I'm feeling bogged down with life and technology, that I will pick up these books again and escape to Betsy's life.

steph says

[But that ending. Man oh man I love that ending and I work my way through the book JUST for that ending. (hide spoiler)]

Posie says

First off: I am a huge Betsy-Tacy fan. Starting when I was little, I loved reading about Betsy and Tacy's adventures; they're friendships and troubles, and picnics up on the Big Hill. And as they got older, first crushes and parties, and family happenings. And all of this took place back in the early 1900s', which delighted me (and still does). It was wonderful.

In this two-books-in-one, the first book is Betsy and the Great World. This was one of my very favorite Betsy-Tacy books, because it took Betsy away from her hometown and out into amazing places. I followed

her through a cruise on the S.S. Columbic, and trips to Munich, Venice, Paris, and much more. She made tons of friends, and survived some relationships too. Through this book, she can't stop thinking about her ex-sweetheart, Joe Willard. In older Betsy-Tacy books, he was one of my very favorite characters. I was excited to see how he would end up back in the story! Towards the end of the book, she finally gets an excuse to write him a letter. A casual, I-don't-mind-if-you-write-back-or-not kind of letter. And then, after waiting and waiting, she gets a response. And a very heartening one at that! A response telling her that he hopes their war is over, and he wants her to come home.

Well. Plans are made for her to come home almost immediately. She writes Joe to tell him to meet her when she gets back. As soon as her boat docks and she sees Joe, it's obvious their relationship is rekindled.

Hence the name of the next book: Betsy's Wedding.

Read them!

Kelly says

I am so sad that I have now read all the Betsy-Tacy books. They are such treasures!

Daniela says

I just love grown-up Betsy!

Not going to lie, the huge time gap between "Betsy and Joe" and "Betsy and the Great World" was disappointing. Having to catch up on the "university years" in one chapter was a little sad, especially after the blow-by-blow of the past four books. However, once I got over that, following Betsy through Europe had its charm. It was even nail biting when Betsy was trying to get out during the start of WWI! The question remains, did Mr. Ray ever write that letter to Mr. Brown?

I read another review that said something about how "Betsy's Wedding" should really be called "Betsy's Marriage" since she gets married in the beginning of the book. I love the description of her newlywed life. It also reinforces the benefits of teaching your children how to do chores! Betsy had quite the learning curve. While the ending was a sort-of cliff hanger, it also nicely sewed up the open seams, (a strange juxtaposition), but seemed a little rushed.

I really enjoyed the notes at the end of the new editions (combined volumes) with information about MHL and her life, especially since it was quasi autobiographical. Its fun to see the photos of characters in "real life".

As usual, I was sad to leave Betsy's world at the end of the series. It was fun to reread them as an adult (and more than the first four books!), especially after visiting Mankato (Deep Valley) and knowing all the landmarks. On to MHL's 'spin offs'- "Emily of Deep Valley", "Carney's House Party", and "Winona's Pony Cart"!

Carol says

Found these loveable classics on a discarded book shelf (no worries -- they were old copies) and decided to read them again for old times' sake. But wait -- they are just as good now as they were when I was a tween. I so appreciate now how Lovelace makes Betsy a fully-realized character with true charms and vanities and the nuanced opinions of a smart girl in 1917. Even the attention to mundane detail, from how Betsy curls her hair to how she reacts to others' quirks, is delightfully immersive. O Betsy! I missed you, old friend!

Ruth says

I didn't think I would like Betsy and the Great World because so much time has passed between the last book and there were no familiar characters prominent in the story, but it was delightful. Every place Betsy travelled, I felt like I travelled there too. The new characters were equally charming and I might have squealed for joy at the ending of the book and a certain note.

Betsy's Wedding made me laugh and cry. I dread reading the last book in a series because I can't stand to leave my lovely friends, and I was sad to leave all these charming characters and their lovely world, but it was a satisfying ending.

This series is one that I will want to reread and cherish.

S B says

Didn't like the Great World, but it was fun to see her adventures. I just missed the characters I love.

Wedding was great. Joe is very admirable. I love to hear about Betsy trying to figure out domestic life and the couple trying to start their own literary careers.

Victoria says

Betsy's Wedding more than made up for Betsy and the Great World. Great World saw too much flirting and too little Mr and Mrs Ray. But Wedding was just chock full of heart. Newlyweds! Housekeeping! Babies! Aunts! More love and sacrifice than my little heart can handle!

Claire says

Such a great series! It is really fun to read and easy. Everyone should read these books.

Jennifer Hughes says

These were charming, old-fashioned books, but I lost patience with them a bit as an adult reader. I wished I had discovered Maud Hart Lovelace as a girl because I know I would have loved the Betsy-Tacy books like I love Beverly Clearly's teen novels.

I'm late to the Lovelace game, but if you have a tween/teen daughter, you really ought to share the Betsy-Tacy books with her now while she can still enjoy all the magic.
