



Margaret celebrates 50th Birthday Family helps Bud organize surprise party

Although the official date for Margaret was not until March 6th, it was decided to hold the celebration early, on February 26. In an attempt to maintain some degree of uncertainty Francie took Margaret on a Saturday afternoon shopping spree. Inasmuch as neither one is very big on shopping, this action in itself might have been a tip off that something was going on. Also, Margaret revealed after the fact that she suspected something as soon as she came home and saw that the living room blinds were drawn shut. Her comment was "whenever the blinds are drawn I know something is going on". Future event organizers, take note!

Once Francie and Margaret were in the house the large crowd of family and friends joined in the fun, and partook of lots of all kinds of delicious snacks. Once the food and drinks had been disposed of the official program was launched. The RFNL a cappella choir belted out an original song, (composed by Listy and Bob) and set to the tune of the old "Beverly Hillbillies" TV show.



**Come listen to a story about a girl who's aged
She's gone turned 50 and the family's in a rage
She's speeding up the sands of time, by turning
5 and 0
And we'd rather not admit, that's the way we all
will go!**

Middle aged that is.... Growing Old

Margaret's been around for quite some time you know.

Married to Big Bud for 20 years or so.

She has 2 kids, a boy and girl to keep her in the groove.

But they are growing up too fast and already on the move.

College, that is real debts

**Now she's a professor, playing the learning game
Trying to perfect her art, while adding to her fame
Her eyesight is now fading and she's falling all apart.**

**We'll still remember Margaret from the very start.
Big braids..... CAT glasses**

Happy beads and peace signs were common things she wore

**So proudly independent, right to her very core
And Lo those many years ago, while walking down the aisle,**

**She hedged her bet, and don't forget
She's staying Margaret Riel!**

Happy Birthday

The next item on the program consisted of a series of stories about Margaret's early life. Ed, Frank, Francie, Carol, Robert, Bud, Michael, and Megan all told little stories, some humorous, some serious, but all shedding light on Margaret's past. There was lots of laughter, and everyone got a big kick on hearing about past incidents in Margaret's life.

The next item was the opening of presents, and everyone watched while Margaret enjoyed many surprises. The best one was a NEW CAR, from Bud. Finally, there was the traditional birthday cake with 50 (about) candles which really light up the dining room. Thus ended the party - see page 2 for some pictures of the people and action.

The Riel Family Newsletter

Catch the News

March, 2000



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Birthday calendar for March

Margaret Riel	March 6	50
Jessica Benesch	March 17	17
Craig Hartman	March 19	17
Jeffrey Benesch	March 23	48

Tim Riel wins first professional acting role

The Cast

Sganarelle	<i>Michael Rasberry</i>
Martine , his wife	<i>Therese Schneck</i>
Monsieur Robert , his neighbor	<i>Bashar Rahal</i>
Géronte	<i>Robert Bourassa</i>
Lucinde , his daughter	<i>Anita Brooks</i>
Valère , steward of Géronte	<i>Rett Becker</i>
Léandre , suitor of Lucinde	<i>Bashar Rahal</i>
Lucas , peasant	<i>Tim Riel</i>
Jacqueline , his wife ...	<i>Alicia Holdner Campen</i>

Artistic Director, Scenic Design & Art Work
Blair D. Marino

Producer & Owner of "Théâtre de Poche"
Danièle Arnaud



Moliere

a wealthy upholstery merchant and Valet de Chambre to the King. That was the stage name of Jean-Baptiste Poquelin, the son of King of France. At the age of 21, Moliere resigned a court appointment purchased for him by his father, and with a company of actors, founded the "Illustre Theatre." Considered the father of French comedy, Moliere's works are considered a history of the manners, tastes, and fashions of the 17th century. Moliere's plays were a satire of society and some, such as "Tertuffe", were very controversial and forbidden to be performed in public for years. In 1655 the Company was playing at the Palais-Royal when Moliere suddenly fell ill and died the same evening. The troupe survived, gratefully, and became the forerunner of the "Comedie-Francais".

The play was very funny, and a side room in the restaurant on 4th street was filled to overflowing. Tim did a great job, and we all enjoyed the show very much. The hope is that it will be booked at various restaurants in the downtown area, as part of a dinner and show program. Judging from the audience reaction to this final dress rehearsal, it appears that the play will be popular and may be in for a long run in the Gaslamp District. We wish Tim the best of luck and hope that this is the beginning of a long and successful

Moliere De Poche - Theatre - A French Comedy by Moliere

Winter Theater at
"La Provence"
Casual French Mediterranean
Restaurant

Directed by: Danièle Arnaud



THE PHYSICIAN IN SPITE OF HIMSELF

Preview Night
February 27, 2000
7:00 pm

For Tickets / Reservations
call - 619.544.0664

308 4th Avenue, San Diego-Downtown, CA 92101

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career in Showbiz! We have the following picture, taken right after the performance.



Some more Showbiz

In the last issue of RFNL we reported the soon to open play "The Hobbet" starring our own Dustin Benesch. We will have a full report plus pictures by next month. However, Carol called a few days ago to alert us to the fact that the show would be publicized by Channel 9 on the morning local news segment. We taped the broadcast, and there was a brief shot of the entire cast, with Dustin very much in the forefront, and waving at the camera. It looked great, and we are looking forward to our show night, Saturday the 11th.

Travel news

Things are pretty quiet on the travel scene. The only traveling we are aware of is that Francie is back in Chicago, for another trade show. We expect her back home within a few days. She will be enjoying a new travel mode soon, since she is closing the deal on a brand new car!

Recently we had a call from Aunt Isa, who is visiting Michael Merica and family, in Vista. We look forward to seeing her sometime soon, before she returns the Athens

Runny nose department

We have good news from Carol and Jeff. Jeff's dad, who underwent open-heart surgery some time ago, is making excellent progress, and it appears that the operation was a complete success. On the down side, however, Francie has another kid in a cast. It seems that Bryce jammed his hand playing basketball. After a couple of days, X-rays revealed a fracture in the hand. He now is in a full arm cast, which

will come off pretty soon, to be replaced by a smaller version. Tough luck, Bryce! We also learned that Carol has been under the weather lately, but the latest is that she is feeling better now. She has to be up and around to see Dustin starring in the latest school play.

Mission Hills...How We Got Here From There

We have room for another chapter in local history. In the last chapter we learned how the city refused to accept free land offered by John Marston, in order to create Presidio Park. Finally, that all changed.

In 1927 the old San Diego reservoir was demolished which made the Presidio Hills subdivision overlooking the reservoir more desirable for homes. It also made the idea of a park at the Presidio more desirable.

Finally, on July 7, 1930, 23 years after Marston bought the first piece of Presidio Park land, the San Diego City Council voted 3-2 to accept the land and create the park.

Wealth and Affluence

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All through the 1920's and into the 30's, Mission Hills became known as an area of wealth and affluence. Land developer Oscar Cotton wrote in 1933 that all three Mission Hills subdivisions comprised less than 100 acres "but for the last 15 years real estate men have advertised 'Mission Hills' houses and lots for sale from Spruce Street to Mission Valley...and credits this section with a population of the entire city of San Diego when the first Mission Hills map was filed"

The War Years and Beyond

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Before December 7, 1941, the most recent war in the memory of Mission Hillians was the famous 6 cent a gallon gasoline price war. After December 7, 1941, all that changed.

Thousands of San Deigans left to fight the Japanese in the Pacific and the Germans and Italians in Europe and Africa while tens of thousands of other Americans flooded San Diego either in uniform (to train or in support and transport) or as civilians to work in the area's war plants.

Early on there were fears of attacks from the air and invasion by sea but they soon diminished. There was rationing and victory gardens; bond drives and rubber drives. The California bungalows, Mission Revival and Craftsman homes of Mission Hills threw open their doors to help house the torrent of newcomers. And through it all Mission Hills hoped and prayed their sons and daughters and husbands and wives would soon be safe at home.

(to be continued in a future issue)