

# The Riel Family Newsletter

Catch the News

March, 2007 RFNL193



## Eloise Green Riel

Eloise Green Riel was born Oct. 28, 1919, in the Shiloh community of Sumter County, the fifth daughter of Meta Keels Green and William Wherry Green.

She began her education at Shiloh Elementary School and graduated from Turbeville High School. From an early age, she learned her strong work ethic by working on the farm and in her father's store.

She attended Columbia College and graduated from Columbia Commercial College with a degree in mathematics, an uncommon field of study for a woman at that time. Riel also studied civil engineering at Central Carolina Technical College and just last year completed another advanced course in

accounting there.

Riel was married to the late James "Jim" Riel for 59 years. They had two children, Susan Riel Silverman of Rock Hill and Debbie Riel Nix of Sumter, three grandsons and three great-granddaughters.

Her employment includes the state Highway Department, ECB Con-

struction Co., Inc. and Plowden Construction Co., Inc., where she has worked for the past 40 years in various positions, including secretary, accountant, office manager and estimator.

Riel is listed in Who's Who as the first female estimator of general construction in South Carolina.

As a life-long



member of Shiloh United Methodist Church, Riel serves as membership secretary, sending weekly bulletins to college students and shut-ins. For years, she has sent Shiloh's college students a weekly card containing church news and a crisp – even if she has to starch and iron it – \$1 bill for use in snack or laundry machines.

With her late husband, Riel anonymously provided full college scholarships to at least half a dozen people who could not have afforded an education otherwise, asking only that each also help another person when they became financially able.

In 2006, Riel and daughter Debbie provided or collected more than 500 long distance telephone calling cards for troops in Iraq so that they could call their families on Christmas day. In

her spare time, Riel bakes, spends time with her family and friends, reads, works on her memoirs and travels. Often her neighbors, friends, her doctors and others are gifted with her made-from-scratch baked goods.

Still known for her strong work ethic, Riel continues her full-time employment at Plowden Construction, where she is corporation treasurer.

Her boss, A.D. Plowden, said of Riel, "She's the first one here in the morning. She's multidimensional. I think if we ever told her she had to retire, that we weren't going to pay her any more, she'd ask, 'Can I still come in and work without pay?' Her stability and consistency are remarkable. You always know what Eloise will do in a given situation. Whatever the right way is, she's going that way."

Dear Edith and Frank,

It's not that I don't think of you that I do not write, because I do think of you so often. I try to plan my time with more that I can possibly do, and unfortunately, I do not include letter-writing into my schedule. It's not one of my favorite pastimes.

Susan and Jason are still at Winthrop University, Jason as a history professor and Susan as research librarian. Both have tenure, and are happy with their work. Last year they added on to their house, and now have an extra large room for studying, with book shelves covering all walls. They both are published authors, and do much research for their own work. Alex is in 9th grade, and enjoying being in High School. Recently their York County graded all the 9th classes, and out of 699 students, Alex was 4th. We were hoping that he would make the top ten! Alex is still interested in martial arts, (has a black belt). Transformers are his first love, I think, and he is becoming a very good tennis player.

Although she has had other offers, Debbie is still at Thomas Sumter. She and Dave are very active in church work, the Ammaus Work, and prison ministry, among other things. Debbie is still on the National Leukemia Board, and at present is chairing their annual SC Fund drive. Debbie and Dave both dote on their three granddaughters, and will be heading for Ft. Bragg at the drop of a hat. Dave's construction company is going strong. He works in SC and NC. He started specializing in erecting steel hand rails, and with all the building of schools, hospitals, motels and the like, he stays busy.

Andy has been in Iraq since August. He was home in January for R & R, and it was so good to see him. He is a Chaplain, and knows first hand how much good the USA is doing in Iraq. He has just learned that his company's tour of duty might be extended for another three months (it was supposed to be only one year), and no one was surprised. We hope that it will be only the three months. It would be a shame to miss another Christmas with his girls. Stacy decided to stay on at Fort Bragg during Andy's absence. Before he left, Andy rigged up a computer with camera and telephone, and they are able to talk and see each other almost daily. In this way he can keep up with Maribeth, Rollins and Carolina. They grow so fast!

Scott is enjoying his work with the MUSC in Charleston. He is planning a unique vacation this July. With a group of people, he signed up for a trip down the Amazon. They will take medical supplies and made stops where they will replenish the established hospitals, and have plans to set up clinics. He is really looking forward to the trip, and we are anxious to hear all about it.

Last October, I celebrated my 90th birthday. I'm in excellent health for my age, working 40-hour weeks, and enjoying life in general. I am sending you a copy of the front page of The Item, our local paper.

Yes, I am writing this letter on the computer. You did not send me your e-mail address or I would send this by e-mail. My address is: eloiseriel@aol.com. I think it is an excellent idea and an easy way to reach many people. I can print your Newsletter and send to Marie, Susan and Debbie, as usual. Thanks for always remembering us with the Newsletter,

Love  
Eloise.

The article at the top of this page was printed in the February 25 issue of The Item, the Sumter local newspaper paper, under the following heading.

## Sumter Volunteers celebrates contributions of 3 outstanding citizens

Sumter Volunteers will add three names to its Women's Honor Roll of Sumter County on Thursday in celebration of National Women's History Month. Frances Dix Hill, Eloise Greene Riel, and the late Cecile Rosenberg Moise will be recognized for their outstanding contributions to Sumter County. Roses will be planted on the west fence of the Sumter County in honor of the three women, in a ceremony beginning at 3 p.m. A reception will follow at the Swan Lake Visitors Center, and the public is invited to attend.

We congratulate Eloise on receiving another award honoring her long and productive career. We were not aware that Andy has been in Iraq, and we pray for his safe and speedy return home. We hope that when he returns he will share with us his experiences in Iraq. Also, Scott's trip down the Amazon sounds like a real adventure, one we would enjoy hearing about when he returns.



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## Condo Bathroom remodeling finished (almost) – Ed and Bob do great job

**Robert does electrical installations, Chris and Kevin help out with heavy lifting, tile work etc.**

Last October the big remodeling project took off, and in the February RFNL we reported on the completion of the first task, the 2<sup>nd</sup> bathroom tub. Work was started at once on the master bathroom task. We experienced a number of problems which we pass on to you for future reference. We ordered, from Expo, both tubs at the same time, but instructed them to hold the second one pending our instructions. In spite of that, the second one arrived early. However, when Grandma saw it she didn't like it, so we were able to return it without a fee, and correct the choice. We also ordered from Expo nearly \$3800.00 worth of cabinetry, with a 30 day delivery date. We checked several times, and were told that it was on schedule. On the day before the due date we checked again and were told that they had forgotten to place the order. We promptly cancelled, and the next day we ordered the same items from Dixieline, costing \$1700.00. They promised 3 to 4 weeks delivery, but the order arrived in one week. After 3 weeks they called to tell us it had arrived. The lesson is: don't be satisfied with a statement that the item due date is as promised. Ask for a tracking number, which the supplier issues to the shipper (FEDEX, UPS, etc) when the order is ready to ship. Once you have this number you can track progress directly with the carrier, on the internet.

Some does and don'ts: Plumbing suppliers have a number of finishes they can apply to their products. Chrome is often the cheapest and most available. Other finishes are unique for each supplier. Just because he has several different finishes doesn't mean that every item he sells is available in all finishes. Also, if you want something he does not make (bathroom lamps, for example) you may have a hard time finding a close match.

For difficult plumbing jobs hire a plumber. If you are doing plumbing in a multi dwelling unit, put a sign on the shut off valve to be sure no one turns it on without your knowledge.

Floor and wall tiles are available in many, many sizes, shapes, and colors. Once you choose a style record the item number so you can buy more of the same, if needed. Be prepared to

cope with lots of trash. Torn up drywall and wall and floor tiles require a trip to the dump. Every shipped item is packaged in lots of cardboard boxes, which can go in the recycle trash can, but they require lots of capacity.

The internet is extremely helpful in exploring the thousands of items in each of the many categories of interest. Product identity and price comparisons can be made prior to a decision.

We took many pictures during the work, and a few are shown, as follows.



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## News from Nice – Ophelia Merica

Om

Nice Feb. 2007

Dear Edith & Frank

Thank you for your sincere condolences!

The loss of mother or father is a loss that leaves a void in our life, which can never be filled again. I enjoyed very much the Riel Family News letters.

Thank you, so much –

I admired your beautiful family which is so close to each other.

It is rather rarely in these days –

Compare to your family mine is very small –

Since the Khosravi revolution we are dispersed in different countries.

As you know: Nicole is in Philadelphia teaching french and is also interpreter: english-french and english-greek.

Her father teaches french to the foreigners in Brussels.

She is married to a Belgian they have two sons at university: one in Brussels and one in your village.

Herman and Clara have a daughter of 11, very bright and a son of 8 years old, very good in mathematics – Herman is a lawyer –

My phone number is: 283734

I have no computer and I am not on internet. I am not modern, I am old-fashioned!

I hope this finds you well and enjoying your family

Much love  
your sister Ophelia

Ophelia is Grandma's sister-in-law, the wife of Byron, who died many years ago. Byron and Ophelia were living in Teheran in 1979, when the revolution disposed of the Shah. They became virtual prisoners in their home, and feared for their very lives. Ophelia was able to leave Iran, and later Byron got out. However, they lost all their possessions, including the Merica business and their home. Ophelia has been living in Nice for many years, and Grandpa and Grandma visited her when



we traveled in Europe.

Grandma and Ophelia were very close friends when they were

young, during WW II. When Grandma left for America in 1946 Ophelia remained in Teheran, and Byron returned to Teheran from service in the Greek navy. Over the years we have been in occasional contact, and some family pictures were exchanged. We have included a couple with this article, one of Grandma and Ophelia, taken in Teheran in

1945. The other one, taken in about 1960, shows Ophelia with two of her children, Nicole and Herman.



## News from South Korea – Curtis

Just dropping you guys an e-mail since you are already long since asleep. I have been very busy lately. Recently here in Korea was the lunar New Year (called Sol-lal by the Koreans). A long standing tradition is for United States Military Intelligence to make contact with all of their Liaison Contacts right before Sol-lal and present them with gifts and such. So I have been very busy running up and down the peninsula giving our contacts gifts and having big meetings and such. Immediately after that we just had a Surveillance training exercise for my company. I was one of the instructors. It was my job to teach mobile (i.e. in vehicles) surveillance of a single target. It was a lot of fun. I think everyone learned a little bit about what goes into the process of conducting a surveillance. I am trying to go to some more classes back in the states in May. I am looking at Cyber Counterintelligence and Advanced Foreign Counterintelligence Surveillance. I think it would be a blast to get to train in the D.C. area on surveillance. Apart from that we are getting ready for RSO&I (Reception, Staging, Onward movement, and Integration) It is a peninsula wide military



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exercise done jointly between the US and Korea every year. Our battalion comes down from Seoul and shares the same building as we do. It is a huge hassle with all of the brass looking over our shoulders because they spend most of their time trying to avoid the exercise by hanging out in our office. Officers are so useless. Rumors abound throughout the Company that different detachments may be closing and people moving around. I really don't know but I also don't really care. If they close my detachment it means I will move to a different one but little will actually change overall. I am going to the promotion board in April. I was supposed to go sooner but they lost my paperwork. (I would like to say I am surprised but the massive scope of the stupidity of the US military makes that almost impossible) So I will be going, likely at the beginning of April. That would mean I may get promoted for my birthday, which could be fun.

Let's see, here in Korea there is a uproar over a fire in an immigration detention facility. 20-something illegal Chinese immigrants died because the detention facility was not sufficiently manned to enact their evacuation plan. So all of the immigration departments are getting audited and stuff. That makes it difficult to have meetings with our contacts in the immigration office...so it goes. I am going to Daejeon later this month for a big formal dinner, then I will spend the night in a hotel and play golf the next day with some military contacts that we have. I am horrible at golf so I will focus more on collecting information than on trying to play, which is in its own way a much more interesting game.

I had to clean my room today because there is a "surprise" inspection later this week. For Military Intelligence we are terrible at keeping secrets. OK, well, that is all the news you can use from this tiny and cold part of the world. As spring approaches I am thinking of you guys and how nice it would be to be back home right now instead of in the Army. I love you all. Take care. Curtis

## Brett's new movie premieres in San Francisco

We just received from Francie the news that Brett's newly produced movie, "**Loaded**" will have its premier showing in San Francisco. If you would like to go and see it, she sent the following information.

Hello to all

Anyone looking for a reason to get away to San Francisco for a day, need look no further. it is the perfect opportunity to visit the city by the bay and catch the premiere of Brett's first movie, Loaded. It is written by, directed by and stars Brett and several other young and very capable actors. The premiere will be at a theatre to be named later, but just so you know, it will be a late viewing time of around 10 pm. Anyone who is able to join us, here is my flight itinerary, early enough to get a good round of shopping in with plenty of time for a nap before the movie

.francie

Air Itinerary

Depart: San Diego 7:50 a.m. Wed Apr 18 SW FLT 2694

Arrive: Oakland 9:15 AM

Return: Oakland 7:30 a.m. Thu Apr 19 SW FLT 939

Arrive in San Diego 8:55 AM

Pricing, (one adult)

SAN-OAK (Internet Special) \$59.40

OAK-SAN (Internet Special) \$59.40

[http://www.myspace.com/loaded\\_film](http://www.myspace.com/loaded_film)

You can learn a lot more at the above site. We have selected one item for your information, as follows.

Brett Sorem (Victor/Director/Writer) came up with the idea while conversing with fellow alumni Jeff Steinkamp (Kenny). Sorem noted that he wrote the script for each of the actors according to their strengths and style. "It was quite easy for me because I had the actors before I had a script, so casting was not a problem and the dialogue just came from who they were and what i thought they could portray best." Sorem also quoted he wrote the script in the boundaries of what he believed was possible. "Well yeah of course, I wanted an intense car chase, and a sex scene with Natalie Portman, but you don't get everything you want."

Brett Sorem is 24 years old with a film degree from San Francisco State University. He has made several short films which include, -A Period of Disaster- -The Steve's Quest for Enlightenment... and Babes- and -Last Try- He was the Cinematographer for Scott Cannon's new film, The Picnic, which also premieres the same night as Loaded.

Sorem also graduated with a performance Minor from SFSU. He was a part of brown bag Theater Company, where he met Jason Jalbuena and Jeff Steinkamp. He starred in A Lonesome West next to Jeff and they have been best friends ever since. He starred in a short film, 2 Men in Suits, made by quandary films which will also premiere the same night as Loaded.

His future plans are to continue writing and making films, He plans to attend the New York Film Academy in September 2007.

## RFNL DISTRIBUTION BY E-MAIL PLANNED

In order to improve RFNL distribution efficiency we are in the process of setting up procedures so we can distribute future RFNLS over the internet. This approach will save printing and mailing time and expenses, and in addition will provide greater assurance that everyone on the mailing list will receive their copy on time. Duplication is not a problem, since one need not open an issue if it already has been seen. Three different procedures are being evaluated, as follows.

1. Direct e mail by attachment of the RFNL file code. (RFNL 1932 means the 193<sup>rd</sup> issue, and the 2 is the page number. For simplicity in formatting, each page has a different file code)
2. All direct family members can sign up for the Yahoo system Richard has created. If you choose this option you

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you will receive an e-mail message each month that the current issue is ready for distribution.

3. Margaret is working with Michael and Jason on another procedure, which has not yet been fully defined.

Of course, we will continue to mail out hard copies to those who do not want to use an internet method. Thus far we have received limited comments, all favorable, from the February distribution. Our objective is to be sure that each issue is received by each family member in a timely manner. If and when it appears that one procedure is the clear favorite we may phase out the others, but we are not in a hurry to make that choice. Our main interest is to be sure that you have your issue on time. Duplicates can always be deleted.

## Grandpa and Grandma opt for new car and a sale of the other one

This is not exactly new news, since we purchased a Hyundai



Elantra several months ago. We were experiencing problems with the old Subaru Legacy, which was 14 years old. We passed it on to Richard, who really needed transportation, since his old BMW became

inoperable. When we transferred the Subaru to Richard we recommended a repair shop, and they determined that the problems we had been experiencing were much exaggerated, and the car was in good running condition. The new car is nice, however, and gives us a small vehicle for around town use. The main criterion was a trunk big enough to hold our golf clubs and carts without folding down a rear seat, and the Elantra fills the bill.



Since we are no longer going on long vacation trips, the Hyundai 350 (freeway car) is no longer really needed, and we have decided to sell it. If anyone knows someone who might be interested let us know. It is a very nice car, with lots of extras, all working great. It has only 17,600 miles on it, so it's almost like new.

## History of waste disposal in San Diego

It was in November, 2005 that we printed the first installment of Curtis' article on the above subject. In February 2007 we printed a second installment and we now have room to add some more.

Upon arriving in 1867, Horton examined the current center of San Diego located in what is now Old Town, and declared that it was worthless. He insisted that the only place to build a city was down by the harbor, where the other developers had tried and failed. In a public land auction Horton bought 800 acres of downtown real estate for only 33 cents per acre. He then went back up to San Francisco and began pitching San Diego to anyone who

had money and would listen. Horton used various schemes to lure people into San Diego, he offered land for free to people willing to build a home right away, he paid employees in land, and he paid for advertising for San Diego across the nation.

A steady stream of immigrants into San Diego began and carried on through the 1870's and the early 1880's but that stream soon became a deluge. In the mid 1880's there was a land rush in Southern California brought on by a price war between the Santa Fe Railroad Company and the Southern Pacific Railroad Company, that dramatically lowered the cost of travel out to California. The land rush turned the small town into a small city virtually overnight; San Diego experienced a population spike of as many as five thousand people per month. Yet at the start of the boom the City had a population of only five thousand. The land boom bottomed out in 1888 and the majority of land speculators left, leaving San Diego with a population of 16,000; triple what it had been prior to the rush. This sudden increase placed new demands on an infrastructure ill equipped to handle them.

The City recognized that the inadequacy of the existing dumps could become a public health nuisance that could hurt immigration and tourism. One attempt to address the dumping space problem involved a City health officer pumping crude oil into the soil of a dumpsite and lighting the area on fire in an effort to get rid of some of the waste. The Secretary of the City Health Department, Dr. T.L. Magee recommended that the waste of the City be loaded onto a scow and hauled out to sea where it could be dumped safely. He believed that the salt water acted as a natural disinfectant and that the ocean life could easily assimilate the food scraps and animal carcasses that composed the majority of the waste stream. The Mayor and Council liked the idea, and so Captain J.D. Barton was hired in the City's first attempt at privatized waste removal.

### Of Garbage Scows

Captain Barton operated from a wharf at the foot of Market Street. Citizens hauled their refuse to the wharf where it sat until it was loaded onto the City garbage scow. Captain Barton then towed the scow out to sea and dumped the load. In a three month period the scow dumped over 2,000 tons of household refuse in addition to 125 dead horses, 165 dogs, 15 cats, 12 cows, and three goats. Problems arose when the refuse dumped by Captain Barton began to wash ashore. In an effort to turn a greater profit the Captain had been dumping his waste off of Ballast Point rather than towing it all the way out to sea.

The State Harbor Commission wanted to see the bay used as a major port of trade and feared that tons of refuse might shallow the bay making it difficult for ships to enter. To stop the City scow from endangering the future of the harbor, the Harbor Commission banned the dumping of refuse into the bay. The Harbor Commissioners were also unhappy with the wharf at the foot of Market Street, which had no means of containing the refuse waiting to be hauled out to sea. So the Commission further recommended that the refuse be located at the foot of 9<sup>th</sup> Street pier.

In an effort to appease the Commission while still providing for waste disposal, the City of San Diego began the construction of a much larger new scow, the *Utilissimo*, to be built and captained by Joseph Supple. The City planned to have *Utilissimo* operate from the same wharf at the foot of Market Street. However, the Harbor Commission required that the City of San Diego make improvements to the wharf and build a garbage container before they could operate a garbage scow off of it. The contractor for the City completed the necessary improvements but cut corners to do so.

(To be continued in a future issue)

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**Office of the Commissioner  
2431 Victoria Meadows Drive  
Alpine, California 91901**

## RIEL BOWL

## Press Release

Contact: The Commissioner

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
6 P.M. EDT, March 6, 2007

### **SAN DIEGO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT APPOINTS COMMISSIONER AS ACTING PRINCIPAL FOR DE PORTOLA MIDDLE SCHOOL**

SAN DIEGO, CA, MARCH 6, 2007: Carl A. Cohn, Superintendent of Schools for the San Diego Unified School District announced today that the well respected commissioner of the RIEL BOWL has been appointed as acting principle of its De Portola middle school here in San Diego effective at the start of school on March 8, 2007.

“He will evaluate and assist the former principle, Elizabeth Gillingham, with his vast experience in management and education” said Cohn, “We are extremely lucky to have his help. Ms. Gillingham will greatly benefit from his tutelage.” The commissioner’s appointment is open ended until he feels Ms Gillingham is ready to take the reins again. However, it is expected to only take a day or two before this happens.  
A full report will be issued in further statements

**-End-**

some reader comments:

It might help if the new principal could spell correctly....smile  
Elizabeth Gillingham  
Principal  
De Portola Middle School  
(note – above spelling corrected by RFNL editor)

Good Lord... has anyone done a fingerprint check? He looks kind of suspicious to me!!!  
Bob Gillingham  
Lower School Principal  
Francis Parker School

No, it is not April the first, with Robert creating one of his big jokes on anyone gullible enough to fall for his trickery. However, there is some truth in all of the above. It happens that the San Diego City school system sponsored a Principal-for -a-Day program. Each school principal hosted a prominent business, legal, or scientific person who had the opportunity to see what problems arise in the day-to-day operation of a school. We understand Robert enjoyed working with his sister for one day, thus gaining better insight into the education process. However, Listy’s job is still safe.