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A transsexual 'first': 1304 she marries con in jail

VACAVILLE (AP) — The bride, in an ivory-colored gown, arrived in a powder blue limousine.

As photographers snapped, the slender blonde Katherine Anne Marlowe Bies, who was born Kenneth Bies in Des Moines, Ia., in 1926, went into the prison to become the first known transsexual ever to marry a California convict.

It happened Wednesday at the California Medical Facility in Vacaville.

Ms. Bies, 50, married Robert Lonnie Barnes, a 29-year-old convicted murderer.

They had met two years earlier when Ms. Bies was lecturing on transsexualism at San Quentin Prison.

Prison officials said the marriage was approved after a check of Stanford Medical Center records on Ms. Bies' 1973 sex change operation.

Prison spokesman Phil Guthrie said Barnes has a parole hearing in October.

Barnes, asked by reporters why he married Ms. Bies before parole, said: "Love and loneliness. I have met quite a few women before Kate. But who knows when loves strikes?"

Explained Ms. Bies: "Lonnie's been in prison for nine years. He knew long, lonely, dark nights. So did I."

She said that as a child, "I was branded frail and feminine from the start."

After years of restlessness,



HAPPY TWOSOME — Robert Barnes, 29, a prison inmate in California, poses with his bride, Kate Bies, 50, a transsexual. She is believed to be the first transsexual ever to marry a California prisoner. (AP Wirephoto)

she went to the Stanford Medical Center.

"Through evaluation, I discovered that I would be happier as a woman," she said,

adding that the operation cost \$10,000.

Ms. Bies said she can perform every female function except bear children.