

Transsey

San Jose Mercury Thursday, June 30, 1977

FIRST FOR PRISON SYSTEM

Transsexual Marries Vacaville Inmate

VACAVILLE (UPI) — Katherine Bies, 50, a transsexual wearing an ivory lace wedding gown, and Robert Lonnie Barnes, 29, a convict serving a murder term, were married Wednesday at Vacaville prison.

It was the first marriage between a transsexual and an inmate at a California prison.

Fellow inmates accompanied Barnes to the altar of the prison chapel where the ceremony was

performed by Chaplain Archie Allen.

The bride, a San Francisco cocktail waitress, was 35 minutes late for the wedding and said excitedly:

"Would you believe the florist forgot the bouquet? And my hair is a mess."

Born Kenneth Bies in Des Moines, Iowa, the bride underwent surgery at Stanford University Medical Center in 1973 to become a female.

She said her husband pushed for the wedding Wednesday although he gets a parole hearing in October.

"He's afraid I might run away," the new Mrs. Barnes said.

The bride was given away by Richard Nelson, her former employer at a hairstyling salon in San Francisco.

Mrs. Barnes said she had been a gay stripper and female impersonator, as well as a Hollywood hairdresser whose clientele included top stars.

Prison Superintendent T.L. Clanon approved the marriage after checking with the California Department of Corrections and Stanford, which assured him Bies had become a she.

The bride said she formerly lectured in prisons on human sexuality and met her husband-to-be in 1975.

She said inmates and transsexuals have much in common because "they are here because they went against society and in a way so did I."

Of the age gap in her marriage, she said, "I think men of my age are boring. I certainly don't want to slave in the kitchen while my husband sits and watches TV."