

DISCOVERY

Northern California ALMA
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Bev & Neil Kelly/Coordinators/Editors

Dec. '79/Jan. '80 -- #2

- **HELP!!** Originally, "DISCOVERY" was scheduled to be published on a monthly basis, but we now find that it will have to be published at least on a bi-monthly schedule instead. The collecting, sorting, writing, editing, typing, copying, folding, zip code sorting for bulk mail (etc.) is just too much for two people to do with all the other coordinational duties and responsibilities which command top-notch priority. Besides help in many other areas, we would like to know if there is someone out there who would like to be Assistant Editor?? Please contact the Kellys for particulars. This extremely important contribution can be very rewarding, fulfilling and satisfying. Maybe you can become the next Horace Greeley!

- **SPECIAL THANKS:** We send a word of special thanks to Mr. George Kobayashi (San Jose Public Library) for kindly informing us of the opportunity to acquire some Polk City Directories. The Superior Court Law Library in Santa Clara County was disposing of the directories to anyone who would pick them up. George, hearing of the directories, immediately contacted us and we were able to get the directories free of charge.

The directories are for various years and cities located in Santa Clara County. As soon as we get them sorted out and indexed, we'll let you know what we have. Anyone knowing of other such treasures -- please let the Chapter office know. Again.....thank you, George!

- **DEAR JOHN:** Dear John Schoenenberger, we want to thank you for stepping in at the last minute (after Karen Morcum had to undergo major surgery) and accepting the enormous responsibility of printing the first issue of "DISCOVERY". We all are very appreciative of the time you gave up you could have spent with your family (wife, Kathy and new little daughter, Rebecca) when you stayed late into the night getting the job done! As the husband of an adoptee and a staunch supporter of ALMA, you deserve a "gold star"....thanks again!
- **NOT TO BE REMISS:** We would be remiss if we didn't thank Marianne Portman (new Search Assistant) for the ROLODEX' and the ROLODEX cards; Francis Carr (Sacramento Group) for her generous contribution for the printing of the ALMA 6-panel brochures; and...Sherril (Roberts) Smith for all the great office supplies that she donated. (Sherril...did you call your brothers and sisters?)

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- **DOWN ARIZONA WAY:** The Arizona "ADOPTION INFORMATION EXCHANGE" Bill was introduced into the last legislative session and would have established a registry, by agreement, for adult adoptees and natural parents. It passed the Senate but got stuck in the Human Resources Committee in the House. Chairman of the Human Resources Committee (which killed the bill) is an adoptive mother.....NEED WE SAY MORE??

Eileen Gray of Arizona joined ALMA in March of this year and has FOUND her mother in Pennsylvania. Her mother had been searching for Eileen since Eileen's birth. Having heard of ALMA, her mother was in the process of contacting the New York office when Eileen found her. Now.....here is the really GREAT newsEileen is 62 years old and her mother is a healthy 80!!

- **TOO LATE:** In contrast to Eileen's reunion story -- Gloria Stewart's story tells us not to wait. Gloria heard of ALMA in 1975 but put off joining and didn't begin her search for two years thereafter. In 1977 she joined ALMA but did not search until 1979. It took Gloria only two months to find her mother who had died in 1964. Three days after locating her deceased mother....she located her father....7-1/2 hours after he had died of a heart attack.....TOO LATE. (Don't wait!!)
- **DISCOVERY 1980:** The conference plans are progressing nicely. There have been a few problems arise but they are being ironed out. Invitations, brochures, maps, facilities available, and pre-registration forms will be mailed out in January 1980. This will give everyone at least a two month planning period, since the conference is not until March 23rd, 1980.

Pre-registration forms will have to be returned (along with check or money order) by March 15th as pre-registration will not be accepted after that date. Pre-registration tickets will be \$10 for members; \$15 for non-members; with all tickets costing \$15 at the door.... so save money and register early. ALMA members' immediate family (spouses, adoptive parents, etc.) will be able to attend for the same price as the member....\$10 per person. Since the seating is limited, the tickets are being sold on a "first come, first served" ticket availability.

There will possibly be a need for hospitality provided for those out-of-town staff members/search assistants -- also we can use a commitment for your help in many little ways in the planning and final stages of presenting the conference. Please let us hear from you if you can give us some support. Thank you!!

- **SUNNYVALE SATELLITE MEETING -- NEW LOCATION/NEW NIGHT!!!** Satellite meetings will now be held in Mountain View, MERCURY SAVINGS, 350 Showers Drive...same location as the monthly Chapter meetings. Meetings will now be on the 2nd Friday/monthly at 7:30 PM. MARK YOUR CALENDAR!!

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- **MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL CLARIFICATION:** Once again it is necessary to clarify membership/registration renewals. The initial registration covers admission into the International Registry, and the entrance of the member's affiliation to ALMA on both the National and Local level. This initial fee is primarily to cover the cost of registry of the member....the membership dues are waived until the end of the year in which the member joins. The only exception to this is for the members who join during the last quarter of the year. So...if you joined before October 1979, your membership dues are due and payable December 31, 1979. Renewals are \$25.00 and will ensure your membership through 1980.
- **SPEAKING OUT:** (Oh, such fun!) In September, Bev Kelly spoke to the SERTOMA (Service to Mankind) group in Sunnyvale. An adoptive father in the group came to Bev after her talk and thanked her for giving him some insight into the needs of an adoptee who needs to know the truth of their origins. He also said that he had never realized that an adoptee's search was an affirmation of the adoptee's self and would not mean a rejection of the adoptive parents. He said he now could understand why an adoptee would want a reunion with their natural parents and...that if he were an adoptee, he would certainly be searching. The father took several brochures about ALMA....one to give to his adoptive daughter to go along with whatever information he knew pertaining to her natural parents....as well as his support if she chose to search!

Kathy Schoenenberger and Neil Kelly spoke at Los Gatos High School. This is the third time that ALMA has been invited to speak at this high school. The young people there are very interested in the adoptee's situation, even if they are not adoptee themselves, although two young women from the class are adoptees....and attend the first part of our meetings.

In November, the Kellys addressed the Contra Costa County Genealogical Society. The meeting was scheduled to end at 9:00 but the questions asked kept the Kellys there until almost 11 PM. There were quite a number of natural parents and adoptees at the meeting....as well as some adoptive parents. The audience was extremely receptive and eager for information.

On December 17th at 12:00, Neil Kelly will be appearing on KXRX radio in San Jose. This makes the second opportunity with that station.

- **SPOTLIGHT:** As a regular feature in "DISCOVERY" we will be spotlighting those very special people....our Search Assistants. Search Assistants are those special, wonderful people, who...after they have completed their own search....care enough to volunteer to stay on and devote time and energy to assist others in their searches. They remember what it was like when they needed help and support. In this issue the SPOTLIGHT IS TURNED ON.....

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- **MARTY RENAULT of Sacramento:** Marty (and two others, who will be SPOT-LIGHTED in coming issues) founded the Sacramento ALMA Satellite Group nearly two years ago and is the Liaison between the Northern California Chapter and Sacramento's Satellite Group. She is a "Super" search assistant and coordinator of the group's activities -- as well as an accomplished artist. She takes excellent care of her dear husband, Dennis, who is ever-patient and tolerant of all the time and concern Marty expends for the ALMA members in Sacramento.

Marty was born in Shreveport, Louisiana, at the Hephzibah Home. After a long, arduous search, Marty "FOUND" her mother, Winnie, in Texas. They have an ongoing, warm and loving relationship -- since last December. Last March at the ALMA Conference in Long Beach, Marty and her newly found Mom spoke for television...not a dry eye was left in the house when Winnie was finished speaking. Winnie is a loving and eloquent woman who has become very actively involved in ALMA and adoptee's/natural parent's rights---she also assists in coordinating the ALMA Chapter in Texas.

- **SUSAN DUTCHER of Fresno:** Susan, with the devoted assistance of Janis Yager, founded the Fresno Satellite Group almost one year ago. She is the Liaison from Fresno, Search Assistant, busy mother of three sons (also expecting another arrival before long) and loving wife of Jimmy Dutcher, who is also a Search Assistant.

Susan was born in Booth Memorial Hospital (ring a bell, anyone?) in Oakland. Her adoption took place in Alameda County through the Alameda County Adoption Services. Susan first began asking "questions" when she was 15. Later on in her life when her first son was born 2-1/2 months premature, she petitioned the court to open her records. Although she petitioned with a letter from her physician, her petition was denied. It was at that time she began her "real " search for her natural parents. After many years of unsuccessfully searching, she heard of ALMA. At her first ALMA meeting she heard a natural mother tell of her search and happy reunion with her daughter....Susan then knew that searches can be fruitful. She joined ALMA on November 28th and "FOUND" her mother on December 5th. Although her reunion was not what she had hoped for, she is very happy that she did search and find. Susan is now in search for her father.

- **BEV KELLY of Sunnyvale:** Bev joined ALMA more than 5 years ago after having completed her search. She had worked as a Search Assistant for 3 years, then after the unexpected resignation of the Chapter Coordinator of the Northern California ALMA, volunteered as part of the coordination committee (interim) that held the Chapter together for the first quarter of 1978. In March of '78 Bev accepted the responsibility, jointly with her husband Neil, as Coordinators of the new Northern California Chapter of ALMA. (More on Neil in another issue.) Bev is the mother of three adult "children" and proud grandmother of one -- age 3 mo. -- and works at Xerox as a full time Administrative Secretary. She has spent countless hours creating and updating the new ROLODEX system to ensure every one is accounted for and where. Among the many duties a coordinator encounters, Bev assisted in

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formulating the content and presentations of the Search Assistants Seminars for the Northern California Chapter.

Bev was born in Booth Memorial Hospital in Oakland, and she "FOUND" her natural parents in five days of searching in 1974. Later she found a half brother who had also been adopted -- living in Redding, California. Since then she has found hundreds of relatives living all over the United States. Recently she received a priceless photograph of her "evasive" grandfather (who was born in Belfast, Ireland), the infamous "John O." Dockerty.

- "DISCOVERIES": Here, each issue we will be covering a few of the many reunions that are happening nearly every day to members of the Northern California Chapter. These are stories of ALMA members whose own "DISCOVERIES" have given them the fulfillment of knowing the "truth" of their origins and the joy that is shared in a reunion. (Please send us your stories!)
- LOU HEIER: Lou is a natural mother who was "FOUND" in Modesto. She had relinquished her first born son 47 years ago. This number one son, Frank Moyer of Las Vegas, Nevada, is the "adoptive" brother of Bev Kelly. Frank, with Bev's help, "FOUND" his natural mother at the end of 1978 and had his "first" birthday party, February 10th, with his newly found family--which included two brothers and a sister and their families. Frank has also been reunited with his natural father (who never knew he had a son!) and two more sisters living in Pittsburg, CA. Lou is an active supporter of ALMA and a Search Assistant as well!
- BRENT LUSCH: Brent was born in 1957 in Palo Alto, CA. He joined ALMA in April/1979, and only a few months later he located his natural mother and decided to write her a letter instead of telephoning. His mother did not answer his letter -- but instead gave it to Brent's grandmother. His grandmother together with Brent's natural sister contacted him immediately for a joyous reunion! Several months later Brent's telephone rang and....(that's right) it was his mother wondering if they could get together for a reunion. FLASH.....Brent has "FOUND" his father as well!
- LINDA MAXWELL: Linda heard about ALMA from a friend and co-worker (also a natural mother - now in search for her daughter) and Linda attended her first ALMA meeting in September/1979. Her search took less than one month. She had her reunion with her mother in October/1979. Linda is now waiting for the next Search Assistants Training Seminar so she can become a Search Assistant and help others searching to "FIND"!
- MADOLYN PETERSON: In 1928 Madolyn had a baby girl. This baby girl went through two adoptions and several states. Madolyn searched for 10 months and... met her daughter searching for her! Searching for each other...but her daughter "FOUND" first!! Madolyn and her daughter attended one of the Sunnyvale meetings together....with stars in their eyes.

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- **CHERYL STONER:** Cheryl joined ALMA in February/1979 and "FOUND" on March 21st. Cheryl's reunion with her natural mother and brothers and sisters was one of the many happy reunions we hear about. The most beautiful part of Cheryl's reunion story was because of her adoptive parents. When Cheryl first approached her parents, they were hesitant to give her their support. Cheryl wrote them a most heartwarming letter (which, with her consent, we share at our meetings) and explained her feelings as an adoptee and why she needed to search. After reading the letter Cheryl's parents were extremely helpful to her -- giving complete support. When "both" mothers met, they had a marvelous time discussing "their" daughter!!
- **ANNA MARY EDWARDS:** Anna Mary is a natural mother who gave birth to a son in 1950 in Pennsylvania. She joined ALMA in August/1979 and started her search.....on October 21st, 1979, she wrote to us letting us know she had "FOUND". The following comes from her letter:

Dear Bev & Neil, "I've found John!!called me and gave me John's address September 21st 1979. Although John wasn't home, I talked to his wife for fifteen minutes, as she was just leaving their home. She was apprehensive (at first) because she wasn't sure I was John's mother.....we are exchanging letters now and hope for a reunion in September/1980.....maybe sooner. I (had) been searching for twenty-nine years, but intensified my search (after) joining ALMA..... "

- **LOREN EILER:** Born in Santa Barbara in 1945, Loren decided to begin his search after hearing of ALMA. He joined the latter part of March/1979 and had "FOUND" by May! He located his mother in the state of Wisconsin and flew back to spend some time with her. Loren was her only child and it was a warm reunion. After returning to California, he began his search for his natural father. In a matter of days, he found his father (deceased, unfortunately) in southern California but also found many younger brothers and sisters! Quite a family!
- **BERNADINE & NORBERT FERNHOLZ:** Bernadine and Norbert were the natural parents of twins born in 1949. The twins, a boy and a girl, were "FOUND" in December/1978. The Fernholz' have been supportive of ALMA and other adoptees and natural parents still in search by continuing their membership. Thank you!!
- **SUSAN HOEXTER:** Susan was searching for her father and mother with the aid of ALMA. She found her father's name, his age, that he was a professional boxer, and the time he supposedly had fought in San Francisco. Susan found a man she believed to be her father....all the facts - names, dates - matched. This man denied being her father and was rather flippant about the whole matter!....Yes, it was his name, his age, he was a professional boxer, he had been in San Francisco during the period in question....No, he didn't recognize her mother's name---said there had been too many women in his life. Susan came to a Sunday meeting very depressed after being rejected by the man she felt sure was her father. After a shot of "ALMA" she was ready to begin looking for her mother after working with a Search Assistant. About an hour after the meeting she was in her apartment when her telephone

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