

The unanswered questions in 2½-year-old kidnapping

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SAN BERNARDINO — Nearly three years ago, two young sisters were abducted from their home after the brutal murder of their mother.

The murder has never been solved and the children have never been found.

For 2½ years police had few clues in the case.

Then 6 months ago, police decided to reopen the investigation into the March 30, 1977, killing of Beverly Wise, 26, of 1505 E. Alto Drive, and the kidnapping of her daughters, Brandi, then 5, and Tifani, then 2.

Since that time the children have reportedly been seen alive in various parts of the west — as recently as seven weeks ago in Grass Valley, Calif. — and five persons have been arrested on a variety of charges.

Two of those arrested have family ties to Wise and the missing children. But the victims' relationship to the remaining three is

unclear, at least to the public, if not to the police.

Those three arrests have only added to the mystery surrounding a case that police have said is one of the most baffling in the department's history.

Investigators aren't saying exactly how those three figure in the case. Or it may be they just don't know.

The three, two sisters and a relative of one of them, have all given conflicting stories to police during questioning. The sisters at first said they had seen the children and later changed their stories. One of the sisters has been released from custody.

The focus of the renewed investigation is Roy Summers, who was formerly married to Wise and is Brandi's father. In December he was charged with murder and kidnapping in the case. He is currently in an Oregon jail on unrelated charges.

His sister, Karen Carino of Springfield, Va., was charged one month earlier with accessory to

those charges. Investigators believe the children visited Carino in Pleasanton, Calif., a few months after the 1977 crime.

She was arrested in Virginia on a fugitive from justice charge pending her extradition to California and bailed out soon afterward. Officials here never sent the necessary papers to Virginia authorities, so the fugitive charge was dropped.

But since Feb. 8 police here and in Idaho have arrested three other persons whose possible connections to the case are clouded.

They have told police they don't have the children and don't know where they are.

But police believe the three have some knowledge of the children. They wonder if they are shielding somebody and, if so, why?

Why would anyone trouble themselves with small children, transporting and hiding them in California, Nevada and Idaho?

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