

happy second anniversary and to tell him she wasn't returning to the church.

"There was no disharmony between us, but you're either in the church or out," she said. "It wasn't possible for him to go to church and me to stay away like in other churches. I knew that as a principled person he would realize what was going on and would get out."

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In the small hours of Oct. 5, 1978, there was a knock at Sammy and Nadyne Houston's door. It was one of Sam's golf partners, Ben Rhoten, a railroad worker.

"Sam, I got something to tell you," he began.

Robert Houston Jr., 33, was found mangled along the tracks at Sixth and 16th streets. His light was left on the brake wheel of a flatcar, his glove on the coupler.

After her husband was buried, Joyce Shaw made one of the most difficult decisions of her life. She wrote her in-laws letters telling them what People's Temple was all about — about the control exercised over members, about the false admissions and blank pieces of paper members were required to sign — and about the pressure to avoid all non-members, including relatives.

Then the elder Houstons could better understand why they seldom

were visited, why they were discouraged from taking their granddaughters on shopping outings, why they were required to give presents to all the commune children if they wanted to treat their granddaughters, why their former daughter-in-law and grandchildren did not sit with them at the funeral.

"When I heard about Bobby Jr. getting boxed, I was sick," Nadyne said. "I could not believe it the one person who was so kind and gentle."

After their son's death, the Houstons saw much more of their granddaughters — Patty, 14, and Judy, 13 — but the girls and their mother often were accompanied by a temple chaperone.

And then, in August, the Houstons were told their granddaughters were going on a temple vacation to New York. Less than a month later, the girls were sending letters from the temple's agricultural mission in Guyana.

While his wife is concerned about the physical hazards of jungle life and their granddaughters' emotional and educational well-being, Sammy said, "They are there without their mother. I'm worried there are people there who don't want to be there and shouldn't be there for physical or other reasons. I have hopes my granddaughters will get out of there, and I believe they want to get out."

Temple investigations bogged down

While the Rev. Jim Jones remains in Guyana with no immediate plans to return, several investigations into People's Temple activities continue without tangible results.

"Jim Jones wants to return very badly," said temple attorney Charles Garry. "He's happy there, but he's the kind of person who wants to be involved. He can't come back here for reasons I can't disclose at this time."

Garry indicated the reasons did not involve the ongoing investigations of several government agencies into accusations that the temple beat its members, bilked some out of property and misused public funds in the operation of care homes. The temple has denied all the allegations.

Jones, a faith healer with political clout and a following said to number in the thousands, resigned as head of the San Francisco Housing Authority last summer. He submitted his resignation letter from the temple's agriculture mission in Guyana, where he had been since New West magazine printed sweeping accusations by former members.

Garry said he visited the mission recently and found about 850 persons living there. He described it as a nearly self-sufficient "paradise."

The San Francisco district at-

torney's office has spent about three months investigating the allegations of dozens of ex-members.

But investigators say they have insufficient evidence to prosecute and have been hampered somewhat by the exodus of many temple members to Guyana.

A report on the investigation is being prepared, but it is not known whether the district attorney will make it public. Some information on the temple has been relayed to other jurisdictions looking into temple activities, investigators say.

The Mendocino County sheriff's office has been investigating allegations by former temple member Marvin Swinney, who said he never signed a legal document that transferred his property to the temple. Sheriff Tom Jondahl said his office and state technical experts detected no evidence of forgery, but he said the investigation is not closed.

Tim Rottman