

# Emotional reunion for daughter and both moms

By M.B. Dillon Ward  
staff writer

For Barbara Nutt, a saleswoman at Rich Plan Food Service in Farmington, a lifetime of wondering recently came to a joyous end in a Cleveland motel room.

In probably the most emotional event ever to take place in a doorway of that Ohio motel, Nutt and her natural mother stood face to face, speechless upon seeing each other for the first time in 38 years.

When at last Mary Norris and her daughter embraced, a torrent of tears began to flow.

"I had been primed to be rejected. So many people who find their real parents have the phone slammed in their ear or a door slammed in their face," said Nutt, who lives in Novi with her husband, Dave, and four children.

It was such a shock, neither of us could talk. We just stared at each other and cried."

Throughout the tearful reunion, Joan Curley — Nutt's mother through adoption — sat alone in the motel room, feeling happy, sad and a little left out.

Since the day in 1944 when Curley took her newly adopted daughter from Norris' arms at Detroit's Florence Crittenton Hospital, she had built a mother-daughter bond that was weakening before her eyes.

"My husband had always told Barbara her natural mother was dead. He didn't want to lose her," said Curley of Emmett, Mich.

"Since he died in 1975 I got to thinking, Barbara's quite family-oriented, and I'm the only one left out of nine brothers and sisters. Plus Barbara's mother is young. I've got 19 years on her — I'm 70.

"Sure it was difficult in a way, but it

(the search for Norris) was my investigation — I thought it would be nice for her to know her real family."

**THE HUNT THAT** Curley and Nutt embarked on in April led to dead ends at Crittenton and with "Reunite" groups (organizations of adopted individuals who help others locate their families) in Troy and Ferndale.

In hopes of finding helpful records, the two travelled to Norris' hometowns of Ohio. They left the Columbus city-county building downhearted and empty-handed.

"We contacted a Cleveland Reunite group, and even they said they couldn't help us," said Nutt.

"But our problem apparently came up during one of their meetings, because Kathy Adams, one of their staffers, told us she heard about us and decided she'd see what she could do."

Adams hit upon Nutt's uncle, Hungarian-born Joseph Jubasz, while paging through a phone book last August. That find led her to Norris, whom Nutt was nervously calling shortly afterwards.

"I've since met my 82-year-old grandmother, Agnes Malow, who came to this country when she was pregnant with my mother," said Nutt, who has one adopted brother.

"Until she was 31, she travelled 25

miles one way on a bus to a restaurant where she worked baking pastries. She's really anxious to come here and meet her great-grandchildren.

"I also met my two brothers, Paul and Nick. And I'm saving my money so that I can go meet my sister, Suni, in Florida."

**NUTT, WHO WONDERED** now what possessed her to give their 16-year-old son the name Paul, made a few interesting discoveries while in Ohio to meet her family.

"My brother Paul and I both have heart murmurs and take the same medication; my mother and I both use the same line of cosmetics, and at one time or another my mother, sister and I all have been blondes." (The three are brunettes).

Norris is "still afraid I might wake up and find out this has all been a dream."

"When she (Barbara) found me, I thought I was in heaven, because I wanted her from the beginning. When she was born, my husband was away at war and, with just a small allotment coming in, I didn't have the means to take care of her.

"While I was still in the hospital, a nurse slipped me a note and wanted to

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RANDY BORST/staff photographer

The adopted mother of Barbara Nutt, Joan Curley, mother and was present for the reunion, feeling a bit forsaken for a moment.

A snapshot taken of the three taken in a Cleveland motel room shows Barbara Nutt's biological mother at left.



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