

James Earl Ray, Courtroom Artist

KNOXVILLE, Tenn. (AP) — James Earl Ray, the convicted assassin of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., is "a lovable man, and not an anti-social maniac," says the woman who expects to become his bride within two weeks.

She also says she doesn't believe Ray is a murderer.

"When we first met, I guess I mainly felt sympathetic about his situation," Anna Sandhu, a 32-year-old television courtroom artist, told the Knoxville Journal. "But those feelings have changed now, to love and concern. I want people to know that. He's a lovable man, and not an anti-social maniac."

Ray's brother, Jerry, and his lawyer, Mark Lane, confirmed Tuesday that the wedding will

take place within the next two weeks inside Brushy Mountain State Penitentiary, where Ray is serving a 99-year sentence for the 1968 slaying of the civil rights leader.

"He called me today and he didn't have an exact date but that it would be within the next week or two weeks," Jerry Ray said Tuesday in a telephone interview from Atlanta. "They planned on doing it in secret until it got out."

Brushy Mountain Warden Stonney Lane, no relation to Mark Lane, said Ray had not requested permission for the marriage. The warden would not let reporters talk with Ray Tuesday.

"I'm a prison warden," he said. "I don't play Cupid for these people."

Prison Chaplain Paul Jones said he gave Ray

Plan to Wed

the forms for a marriage application but did not remember when. Jones said it is not unusual for prisoners to ask for the applications and never return them.

Mrs. Sandhu was quoted as saying she is marrying Ray because she loves him. She said she was divorced about five years ago after a three-year marriage. Ray, 50, has never been married.

Mrs. Sandhu said she met Ray during a television taping last fall. In recent months she has visited Ray twice a week, prison officials said. She said she believes Ray's story that he did not kill King.

"They're all just picking on him because he's weaker — trying to frame him into a crime he didn't commit," she said.



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ANNA SANDHU
'He's a Lovable Man'