7-4-1954

July 4, 1954, Initial Homicide Offense Report, Bay Village Police Department

Sergeant Jay Hubach
Bay Village Police Department

Patrolman Fred Drenkhan
Bay Village Police Department

How does access to this work benefit you? Let us know!
Follow this and additional works at: http://engagedscholarship.csuohio.edu/police_reports_1954

Recommended Citation
http://engagedscholarship.csuohio.edu/police_reports_1954/10

This Police Report is brought to you for free and open access by the Police Documents at EngagedScholarship@CSU. It has been accepted for inclusion in 1954 Police Reports by an authorized administrator of EngagedScholarship@CSU. For more information, please contact library.es@csuohio.edu.
COMPLAINT REPORT
BAY POLICE DEPT.

Location: 28924 Lake Rd.
Nature of Complaint: Homicide

Complainant's Name: J. Spencer Houk
Address: 29014 Lake Rd.

Received by: Drenkhan
In Person: Time: 5:57 A.M
Telephone: Date: July 4, 1954

Officers Assigned: Drenkhan & Cavanaugh

Details of Complaint: See Offense Report

Disposition:

Approved (Chief or Commanding Officer) Signature of Investigating Officer
OFFENSE REPORT
BAY POLICE DEPT.

Complainant: J. Spencer Houk  Serial No.: 54-194
Address: 29014 Lake Rd., Bay Village, Ohio  Phone: Tr. 1 0628

Offense: Homicide  Reported by: J. Spencer Houk
Place of Occurrence: 28924 Lake Rd., Bay Village, Ohio

Report Received by: Drenkhan  at: 5:57 A.M.  Date: July 4, 1954

Persons Attacked: Marilyn Reese Sheppard, 31 yrs. (4-14-23), 28924 Lake Rd., Bay Village

Property Attacked:

How Attacked:

Means of Attack:

Object of Attack:

Trade Mark:

Vehicle Used:

Persons Arrested:

Details of Offense (State Fully All Other Circumstances of this Offense and its Investigation):

In answer to a call from J. Spencer Houk arrived at the home of Dr. Samuel H. Sheppard, 28924 Lake Rd., and was met at the door by Houk. As I entered the Lake Rd. side door into a hall I saw a doctor's medical bag on its end with the contents spilled on to the floor. This bag stood in front of a door on the right of the entrance hall which leads into a study. Dr. Samuel Sheppard sat in this room in a large red leather chair in a half sitting half laying position. was told to go upstairs to Marilyn's room and see what could be done. Mrs. Esther Houk the wife of J. Spencer Houk was also present when I arrived and she directed me into the kitchen which is just opposite the study across the hall to a stairway which goes up three steps to a landing, then down three steps in to the

offense is cleared:

Signed: Investigating Officer

Date:

Signed: Chief or Commanding Officer

Date:
living room, with the steps leading upstairs from the center landing. On the first step I noticed a small pool of water. At the top of the stairs directly ahead was the bedroom of Mr. Sam & Marilyn Sheppard. Lying in the twin bed closest to the door was Marilyn Sheppard. She layed half-way down the bed with her feet under the cross bar of a four poster bed, her body was covered with bed clothing up to her lower naval, exposing her midrift, a checkered blouse which she wore was pulled up exposing half of her breast. She had been beaten about the head, above the eyes with an object which left deep gashes about an inch long about three or four being visible on her forehead. The room was covered with blood spots, the entrance door was spotted indicating that the door was open when the assault took place. The shades where drawn, at the foot of the victims bed to the right was a chair on which layed on the seat a pair of white shorts and a bra. On the back were two sweaters, a belt, and a pair of blue shorts. On the floor beside the chair was a pair of panties, a pair of white moc-casin slippers, and a pair of oxford blue tennis shoes. The room contained a night stand with a telephone on it between the two beds, and a dresser on the west wall. Nothing in the room appeared to be disturbed. The blood appeared clotted on the wounds and the victim appeared dead. Returned downstairs and summoned a Doctor, the Chief of Police and Sgt. Hubach, by Police radio, at which time I was informed by Houk that Dr. Richard Sheppard had been called and is on his way. Returned to the house, the dining area, which was at the end

This offense is declared:

Unfounded  ☐  Signed__________________________  Date__________________________  Investigating Officer

Arrested by arrest  ☐  Signed__________________________  Date__________________________  Chief or Commanding Officer

Exceptionally cleared  ☐  Signed__________________________  Date__________________________

Inactive (not cleared)  ☐

This form is used by officer assigned to a case to report progress after three and seven days and weekly thereafter, also to report significant developments.
of the entrance hall appeared in order except for a desk, which is on the north wall to the west of a large door leading out on to a porch on the lake side or north side of the house. The desk appeared ransacked, three lower drawers being pulled out but not removed or disturbed to a great extent. The top of this desk which opens out to form a writing surface was open and appeared to be ransacked, enveloped, tax stamps and such where laying on the floor directly in front of the desk. The door leading to the porch was open. In the study where Dr. Sam Sheppard sat in the red chair is a large office type desk, from which all the drawers were removed, except one. The drawers were on the floor and appeared to have been ransacked although the contents remained in the drawers. On the floor behind the desk there was a strong box, some tools and a watch, which contained blood, this watch was later identified as belonging to Mrs. Marilyn Sheppard. Questioned Dr. Sam Sheppard as to what had occurred, he stated that he remembered hearing Marilyn scream, of going upstairs, of fighting down the stairs, of waking up in the water, of coming upstairs. He made these remarks in that order, none of them being tied together. He then turned his head and held his neck with both hands and said no more. He wore trousers but no shirt, his face appeared to have been struck on the right side. At this time Dr. Richard Sheppard, Dr. Sam Sheppards older brother arrived and was taken upstairs where he examined Marilyn and pronounced her dead at about 5:12 A.M. He returned downstairs and examined Dr. Sam Sheppard.
Additional Details of Offense, Progress of Investigation, etc.

The screened in porch on the north side of the house enters on to a lawn, approximately 30 to 40 feet from the door of the porch there is a stairway leading to the beach, there were wet footprints or marks on the concrete portion on the stairs. There was no indication of anything or shrubbery being disturbed on either side of the stairway. A beach house which is at the bottom of the stairs approximately 10 ft. above the beach, surrounded by a platform, with another flight of stairs leading directly to the sand did not appear to have been disturbed. At approximately 6:20 A.M. there was about 4 to 5 ft. of beach at the foot of the stairs, with a small swell rolling on the beach from the northeast. The sky was clear and a mild breeze was not noticeable. The beach showed signs of a struggle. On the far west pier, a "T" shape stone pier, at the east of the Sheppard home, belonging to Metropolitan Park there were two fishermen. These men were checked out and found to be Jim Crosley and his son, from Normandy Rd., Bay Village, O. and a friend who was visiting the one Arthur Baird. They stated that they arrived there at about 6:00 A.M. and had seen two juveniles playing on the pier. These boys left shortly and we were unable to ascertain who they were. With the consent of Chief Eaton, the Cleveland Police Dept. was asked to assist and the Coroners office was notified. Dr. Steven Sheppard, Dr. Sams brother arrived and took Dr. Sam Sheppard and the one Arthur Baird to the hospital in his own car. Dr. Richard Sheppard took "Chief" Samuel Jr., Dr. Sam Sheppards boy who was sleeping in the room upstairs next east of his parents room on the same side of the house.

This offense is declared: Cont. Unfounded ☐ Signed __________________________ Date
Arrested by arrest ☐ Investigating Officer
Exceptionally cleared ☐ Signed __________________________ Date
Inactive (not cleared) ☐ Chief or Commanding Officer

This form is used by officer assigned to a case to report progress after three and seven days and weekly thereafter, also to report significant developments.
Supplementary Offense Report
Bay Police Dept.

Offense: Homicide
Serial No.: 54-144
Complainant: J. Spencer Houk
Address: 29014 Lake Rd.

Additional Details of Offense, Progress of Investigation, etc.

The house or hall, the rooms being divided by a closet, after waking the boy to his home at 23346 Lake Rd., Bay Village, O. Mike Grabowski, from Cleveland Police Dept. Bertillon and I examined house for sign of entry, none could be found. Pictures were obtained on the house and rooms. Det. Robert Schottke and Patrick Bureau arrived and assisted in the investigation. Dr. Gerber and Ray Keefe arrived and examined the body of Marilyn Sheppard, time of death was set at about 4:00 A.M. Dr. Gerber ordered body removed and taken to County morgue, taken by Pease ambulance, 29144 Dover Rd., Westlake, O. Examination of sheet under body disclosed teeth chips which were found to belong to the deceased.

Investigation disclosed that Nancy and Don J. Ahern, 29146 Lake Rd., Bay Village visited the Sheppards during the evening of July 3, Saturday and had left at approximately 12:00 A.M., July 4, that Nancy Ahern had lock the door leading to the Lake during the evening. Dr. Sam Sheppard was asleep on a day bed in the living room, the bed setting along the stair way wall which leads upstairs and that Marilyn Sheppard saw them out the front door. Statement were obtained from the Aherns. The first persons to be called were Mayor J. Spencer Houk and his wife Esther, of 29014 Lake Rd. They stated that they received the call at approx. 5:40 A.M. July 4, from Dr. Sam Sheppard asking them to come over right away. Statements were taken from the Sheppards. Statements were taken from Charles Bryson, 29038 Lake Rd., neighbor to east and from Karl R., Helen F., Karl Jr., & Gretchen

This offense is declared: Cont.

Unfounded

Signed: Investigating Officer

Arrested by arrest

Signed: Chief or Commanding Officer

Exceptionally cleared

Date:

Inactive (not cleared)

Date:

This form is used by officer assigned to a case to report progress after three and seven days and weekly thereafter, also to report significant developments.
SUPPLEMENTARY OFFENSE REPORT
BAY POLICE DEPT.

Offense: Homicide
Serial No. 54-194
Complainant: 
Address: 

Additional Details of Offense, Progress of Investigation, etc.

Schuele, 2894 Lake Rd., neighbors to west. Although Karl & Gretchen Shuele came home at approximately 2:00 A.M., July 4, none could add any information relative to the case. Statements were obtained. Statements were taken from Dr. Richard Sheppard, 23346 Lake Rd., Bay Village, O, Dr. Richard A. Sheppard, 23048 Lake Rd., Bay Village, Ohio, Dr. Sam Sheppard's father, and Dr. Steven A. Sheppard, 19027 Englewood Dr., Rocky River, O.

Interviewed one Robert L. Rees, 3594 Walter Rd., North Olmsted, O. and wife who allegedly threatened Dr. Sam Sheppard after his son died on the operating table as the result of an auto accident, July 3, 1954. Statement obtained and subject released.

Received information from Paul Whitmer, 6904 Fuller, Cleveland, Ohio, Joe Tronti 4028 E. 53 St., Clev. C. and John Tronti, 8904 Fuller, Clev. O. that they were fishing on pier nearest to Sheppard home in Huntington Park, July 4, and that about 1:00 A.M. three white juveniles came onto the pier and asked about picnic ground Jerry Schwumacher, 18 yrs., 1618 W 47st Clev. C. came into station and reported that he and his companions Bill Hearn, 48th and Clinton, Clev. C. & George Tenaglia, 5211 Tillman, Clev. O. were on pier July 4, about 1:00 A.M. and spoke to three fishermen mentioned above. Statement taken from Schumacher and released.

Tenaglia questioned and related same story.

This offense is declared:

- Unfounded
- Closed by arrest
- Exceptionally cleared
- Inactive (not cleared)

Signed: Investigating Officer
Date: ______________________________

Signed: Chief or Commanding Officer
Date: ______________________________

This form is used by officer assigned to a case to report progress after three and seven days and weekly thereafter, also to report significant developments.
Supplementary Offense Report

Bay Police Dept.

Offense: Homicide
Serial No.: 54-194

Complainant: ____________________________
Address: ________________________________

Additional Details of Offense, Progress of Investigation, etc.

July 4th, 1954 contacted Sgt. Boland of the Kent, Ohio P.D. to check upon Dr. Hoverston's story as to arrival etc., at Dr. Stevenson's residence of 189 North Chestnut St., Kent, Ohio.

See Hoverston's statement.

This offense is declared:

☐ Unfounded
☐ Exceptionally cleared
☐ Inactive (not cleared)
☐ Ed by arrest

Signed: JHHubach, Sgt.  Date: 7-4-54

Investigating Officer

Signed: ____________________________

Date: ____________________________

Chief or Commanding Officer

This form is used by officer assigned to a case to report progress after three and seven days and weekly thereafter, also to report significant developments.
SUPPLEMENTARY OFFENSE REPORT  
BAY POLICE DEPT.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Offense</th>
<th>Homicide</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Serial No.</td>
<td>54-194</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Complainant

Address

Additional Details of Offense, Progress of Investigation, etc.

Wednesday, July 7, 1954, met with Dr. Charles W. Elkins MD, 1820 Hanna Blvd. Cleveland along with Mr. Mahon, Mr. Puréno, of the Prosecutors Office, Deputy Sheriffs Carl Rossbach & Da e Yettra, Coroner Dr. Gerber & Ray Keefe of the Coroners Office. At the Sheppard home. Dr. Elkins stated that there was injury to the spinal column of Dr. Sam or indications to indicate it as he could not use left hand or arm freely and there was definite lack of reflexes on that side of his body. That Dr. Sam Sheppard appeared coherent at all times. At Bayview Hospital Rossbach, Yettra and myself were refused a interview with Dr. Sam Sheppard by his brother Dr. Steven Sheppard.

Thursday, July 7, 1954, while searching Dr. Sam Sheppard's home on Lake Rd. a number of pieces of what appeared to be human body parts were found, along with a complete human head, in the garage in a small storage space under the stairs leading upstairs by Ray Keefe of the Coroners Office and I. These were later found to be laboratory specimens that were given to Dr. R.A. Sheppard, Dr. Sam's father, by the late Dr. Ralph Vorhees, eyes, ears, and nose doctor, who died in 1942, his widow gave them to Dr. R.A. Sheppard who in turn gave them to Dr. Sam Sheppard.

At 1:00 P.M. along with Deputy Sheriff Rossbach and Yettra we interviewed Dr. Sam Sheppard at Bayview Hospital. See attached sheet.

This offense is declared:

- Unfounded
- Clear by arrest
- Exceptionally cleared
- Inactive (not cleared)

Signed ________________________ Date ________________________

Investigating Officer

Signed ________________________ Date ________________________

Chief or Commanding Officer

This form is used by officers assigned to a case to report progress after three and seven days and weekly thereafter, also to report significant developments.
Dr. Sam Sheppard stated that sometime in the middle of the night he was awakened by his wife Marilyn calling Sam, Sam. That he got up, thinking that it was another convulsion from which she had been suffering from since she had become pregnant. He went up stairs and at the head of the stairs he could see a form, the upper part of which was white, standing at the foot of the bed in the room in which Marilyn and he occupy. Marilyn was making little gurgling noises. As he entered the room he felt that he must have been struck. The next thing he knew was that he was looking at his badge, which he carries in his wallet, that it was reflecting light from some place. He picked it up and stood up. He then looked at Marilyn and examined her be taking her pulse at the throat. He was stunned and dazed but realized she was dead. He then went to Chris room(Sam Jr.) and locked in at Chip. He didn't touch him but was aware that he was alright. He heard a noise downstairs and went down entering into the living room. As he went towards the dining area he saw a dark form outlined by the door leading to the porch on the lake side of the house. He chased this form out of the house and down the steps to the beach. As this form, which was in dark clothing, and was taller than he with bushy hair seemed to slow down on the beach and wait for him he came upon it with intentions of "really letting him have it". The next thing he knew he was wallowing in the surf with his face towards the beach. He got up and went upstairs to the house and on upstairs to Marilyn's room where he looked at her and covered her a little with a sheet because it came to him that she was always modest and it wasn't right for her to be like she was. He then went downstairs and tried to think of who to call, Mayor Houk was the only number he could think of so he called him. He could not recall where he was when the Houks arrived. He could not stated if it was light or dark when this took place but outside there was light from someplace, enough that he could distinguish objects. He was told that he was a suspect and that he would have to explain many things. He could not explain about his "T" Shirt or why his watch was found on the bank the way it was. He was asked to submit to a lie detector test which he refused because of his knowledge of it, and now it operated, that he would have a reaction because of his nearness to the tragedy.

This interview lasted 32 hours.
Friday, July 9, 1954 Along with Deputy Sheriff Rossbach & Yettra and Dr. Gerber, Coroner, Attorney’s Petersidge and Corrigan and Dr. Sam Sheppard a visit was made to the Sheppard home at 28924 Lake Rd. Dr. Sam Sheppard’s story remained the same. Dr. Sam Sheppard examined his medical bag, the contents were found to be intact except for a small case containing 3 or 4 Ampules, 1 grain of morphin and a black plastic case containing 2, 2Two gram hypo needles which could not be located.

Continued investigation along with Sgt. Hubach, See combined report.
Additional Details of Offense, Progress of Investigation, etc.

July 14, 1954 - Richard and Betty Knitter of 785 Kenilworth, Sheffield Lake, Ohio came in to report that on the early morning of July 4th they were returning to their home from Loews State theatre in Cleveland they saw man in vicinity of cemetery.

They state that upon leaving the movie at 2:30 A.M. they walked to their car and drove out to Bearden's Drive In where they stopped for a sandwich. They estimate the time to be between 3:30 & 4:00 A.M. when they went past the cemetery and they noticed a man on the North side of Lake Road walking East toward Cleveland. This man was white, between 32-42 years of age, wearing dark blue trousers, light colored short sleeved shirt. Wide nose, bushy crew cut hair light auburn in color, bushy eyebrows, long sideburns.

At this time Lakewood Police Dept. contacted in regards to someone drawing sketch of this description.

Pat. Larry Adler came out and made such sketch. This is on file.

This offense is declared:

Unfounded [ ]

Signed JEHubach, Sgt FDrenkhan, Pat. Date 7/14/54

Investigating Officer

Red by arrest [ ]

Signed [ ]

Chief or Commanding Officer

Exceptionally cleared [ ]

Inactive (not cleared) [ ]

This form is used by officer assigned to a case to report progress after three and seven days and weekly thereafter, also to report significant developments.
GEN. DESCRIPTION

ED. HEIGHT - 170 LBS. LARGE EYES & NOSE
SMAL MOUTH & EARS - CLEAN SHAVEN - LONG
IDE BURNS - HAIR CUT CLOSE AROUND BASE
OF HEAD - OUT-GROWN CREW CUT - BUSHY
YE BROWS. DRESSED IN DARK PANTS &
HOT SHORT SLEEVED SPORT SHIRT. WALKED
ORMH - ABOUT MIDDLE AGED POSSIBLY
32 TO 42 YRS. OLD

AS DESCRIBED TO ME BY MR.
& MRS. KNITTER OF 785 KENILWORTH
SHEFFIELD LAKE.

Ptl. Richard B. Holman # 22
3rd Ward Police

THIS PARTY WAS SEEN IN THE VICINITY OF
# 5 SHEPPARD'S HOME ON JULY 4TH. AT
ABOUT 2:30 - 3:00 AM. SUBJECT WAS
ON THE NORTH SIDE OF LAKE ROAD WALKING
EAST.
I was called at my home at about 6:10 A.M. July 4th, 1954 by Fire Chief Walter Koch and told to go down to the Sheppard residence that there was some kind of trouble down there. Took possibly ten minutes to arrive at the scene. Upon arrival I was met by Richard Sommers and Ronald Callahan, firemen operating ambulance, and Dick said to me;

"get hold of yourself - it's Marilyn - she's been murdered". Went immediately to Lake Road entrance to house and upon entering hallway was met by Mrs. Esther Houk who directed me through the kitchen toward the stairway which leads upstairs. Before entering the kitchen I noticed a bag, medical, which was upended and contents dumped out upon the floor. From the kitchen there are three steps up to landing and then there are three steps down into the living room. This landing there are stairs which go up and directly north from front of house and lead to upstairs hallway off of which all bedrooms and bathrooms are accessible. The bedroom directly at the top of the stairs and on the North side of the house was the Doctor's and his wife's bedroom. Upon entering the room noticed blood splattered all over door which was standing open. There were twin, four poster, beds in this room the one closest to the door of entrance, being the one upon which the body of Marilyn was laying face up, her head being about three feet from the head of the bed and her legs, bent at the knees, were protruding over the end of the mattress but under the cross-piece.

This offense is declared:

- Unfounded
- Cleared by arrest
- Optionally cleared
- Inactive (not cleared)

Signed [Signature]

Date 7-21-54

Investigating Officer

Chief or Commanding Officer

Date

This form is used by officer assigned to a case to report progress after three and seven days and weekly thereafter, also to report significant developments.
The body was in the position so that her legs were toward the North and her head toward the South. The head was very bloody and showed indications of many severe lacerations about the forehead mostly over left eye. There was clotted blood coming from the mouth. There were no apparent signs of life. The body was clothed by a shirt or blouse of vari colored checks which was pulled up over the chest. The arms were at her side, the left one being bent at the elbow over her stomach. A sheet was over part of the left hand and her lower extremities.

A hasty perusal of the room at this point disclosed no disorder or signs of a struggle. The shades of the windows to the North were pulled. The window on the North side but to the extreme West was partly open. There was a screen on this window. Upon a rocking chair in the corner of the room nearest the death bed there were several articles of clothing. On the seat were a pair of white shorts and a bra. Upon the back of the chair was another pair of blue shorts and a tan or beige shirt with rolled up sleeves. Under the shirt were two sweaters one of which was baby blue in color. There was a pair of moccasin type loafers, light in color, next to rocking chair.

At this point started a search of the entire premises. Went down stairs to the living room. Here I noticed secretary desk on North side of wall and to the West of doorway leading to the lake. The desk had the appearance of being ransacked. Three lower drawers were left ajar and top of desk was in disarray. There were papers, tax stamps, etc., on the floor. Went out North door, which was halfway open, onto large screened in porch and out screen door, which was open all the way, into back yard and down the stairway to the beach house at which point I was joined by Dick and Ronald. At foot of stairs at beach there was a strip of sand about two or three feet from the concrete retaining wall which was not awash from the rough water. At this point there were not any visible signs of footprints or a struggle. There were some fisherman on the pier at Huntington Park and Dick and Ronnie walked over to talk to them regarding anyone they may have seen upon the beach. Returned upstairs to yard where I talked to Fred Brenkhan and we discussed the situation while we walked into the porch. It was at this time that I first noticed the water spots. After getting a first hand run down of case thought it would be better to question fishermen myself. Started down to beach again at which time I ran into Chief John Eaton and Mayor Hunk who were just.
Additional Details of Offense, Progress of Investigation, etc.

returning from beach. They said that they had already talked to fishermen. At this point I went out to police cruiser and radioed the station to put out a broadcast to all surrounding cities and villages to pick up and hold all transients or suspicious persons on the highway.

After making this request the Mayor walked up and we talked about this case and in discussion of what happened the night before he said that he thought the Ahearns were over that night. The Mayor and I drove over to the Ahearns to talk to them. Shortly after arriving there was called to check out some transients brought in by Avon Lake, P.D.

Was busy for some time checking out numerous transients brought in by other departments. Upon returning to the scene one more was told that Cleveland Homicide and Bertillion had been over the scene and gotten pictures. At this time the chief detailed me to the hospital. Was relieved of this duty about 4:10 P.M. Returned to station to see what had developed and then went back to the house. It was at this point that I first entered the doctors study. While making a telephone call I noticed that a woman's wrist watch was laying on the top of the desk. This watch had the appearance of blood on it. I mentioned this to the Chief and as I showed it to him I noticed that the watch was at 11:30. I am sure the watch was running at this time and Fred Drenkhan can verify this.

This offense is declared:

- Unfounded
- Used by arrest
- Exceptionally cleared
- Inactive (not cleared)

Signed ___________________________ Date 7-21-36

Investigating Officer

Signed ___________________________ Date

Chief or Commanding Officer

This form is used by officer assigned to a case to report progress after three and seven days and weekly thereafter, also to report significant developments.