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54/07/05 (1st) Doctor's Wife Murdered in Bay Village

Cleveland Press

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PRESS 7-5

DOCTOR'S WIFE MURDERED IN BAY VILLAGE

Drug Thieves Suspected in Bludgeoning

By RAY De CRANE, *Assistant City Editor*

Mrs. Marilyn Sheppard, pretty 30-year-old wife of Dr. Sam H. Sheppard, prominent young Bay Village doctor, was bludgeoned to death in the bedroom of her home early yesterday.

Aroused from sleep on a downstairs davenport, Dr. Sheppard ran up the steps to his wife's bedroom at her screams and was knocked unconscious by the murderer. A hard blow at the back of his neck felled him in the second-floor hallway.

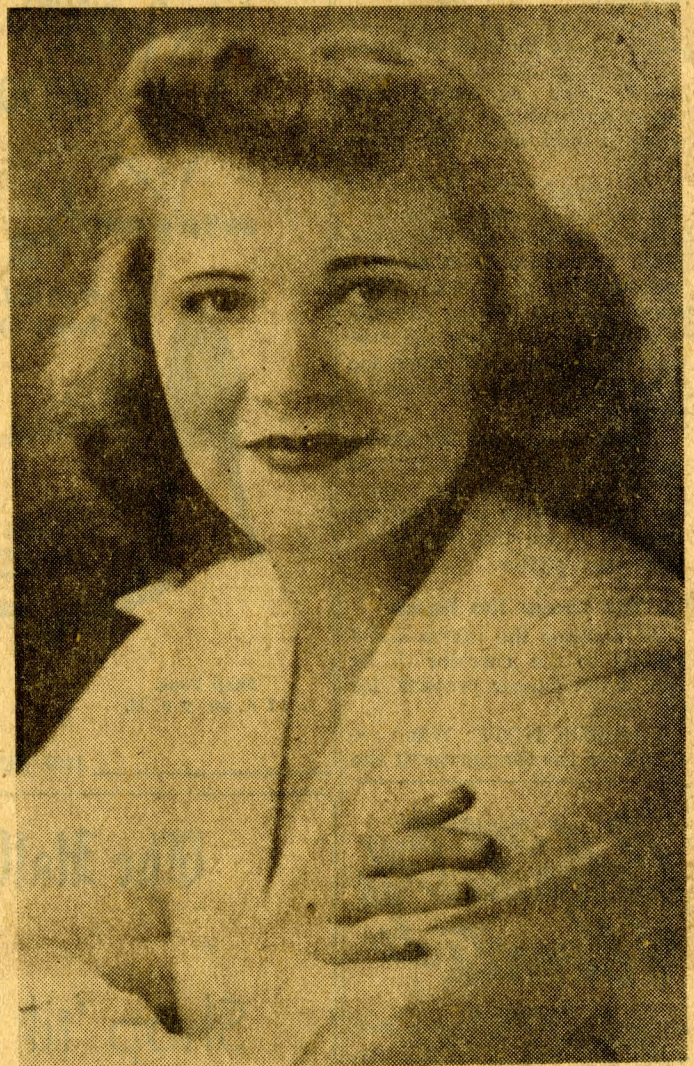
The vicious murder and beating occurred early yesterday morning in the Sheppard's lake view home at 28924 Lake Rd., a half-mile west of Huntington Metropolitan Beach.

Bay Village Mayor J. S. Houk and Police Chief John P. Eaton theorized a drug-crazed addict searching for narcotics was responsible for the tragedy.

Medical Bag Rifled

Contents of Dr. Sheppard's medical bag were strewn over a first-floor hallway.

In the doctor's den adjoining the living room desk



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MRS. SAM H. SHEPPARD, an expectant mother, was murder victim in her Bay Village home.

drawers were ransacked as was a living room desk.

First word of the tragedy was received in a telephone call to Mayor Houk by Dr. Sheppard at 6 a. m. yesterday. The two are close friends and the mayor's home at 29014 Lake Rd. is just three houses away from Sheppard's.

"My God come over, Spen; I think they've killed Marilyn," was the frantic message.

Mayor Houk awakened his wife and the two ran to the doctor's home.

There they found Dr. Sheppard dripping wet and dazed, his mouth bleeding and his right eye puffing shut.

Found in Pool of Blood

Mrs. Sheppard, who is four months pregnant, was found dead on her bed in a pool of blood.

Coroner S. R. Gerber said death was caused by repeated blows on the head and face—as many as 25—from "an instrument having a sharp edge."

She was beaten beyond recognition and her skull crushed by the blows that rained down on her.

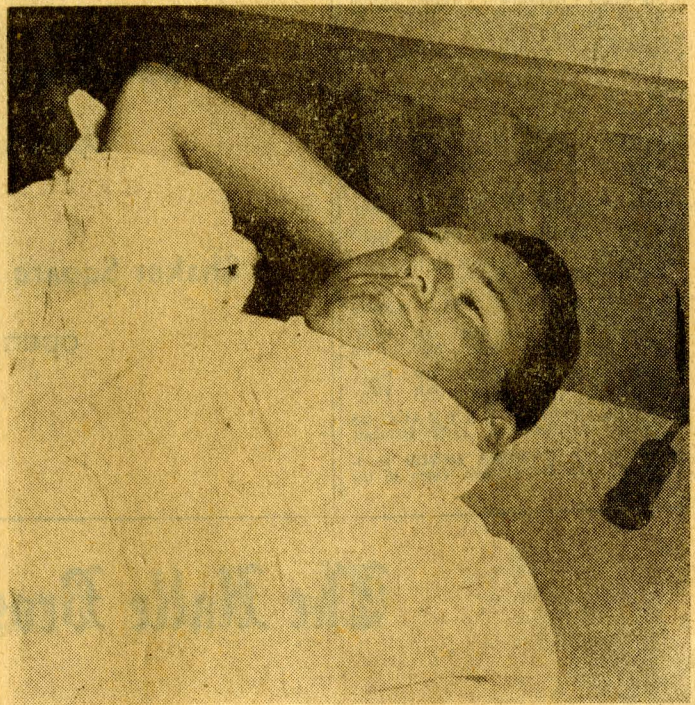
The 30-year-old doctor, a brain surgeon at Bay View Hospital, told the Houks he ran upstairs when he heard his wife screaming.

Her pleas for help continued while he raced upstairs, he said, and as he neared her room at the top of the stairs "I was clobbered from behind."

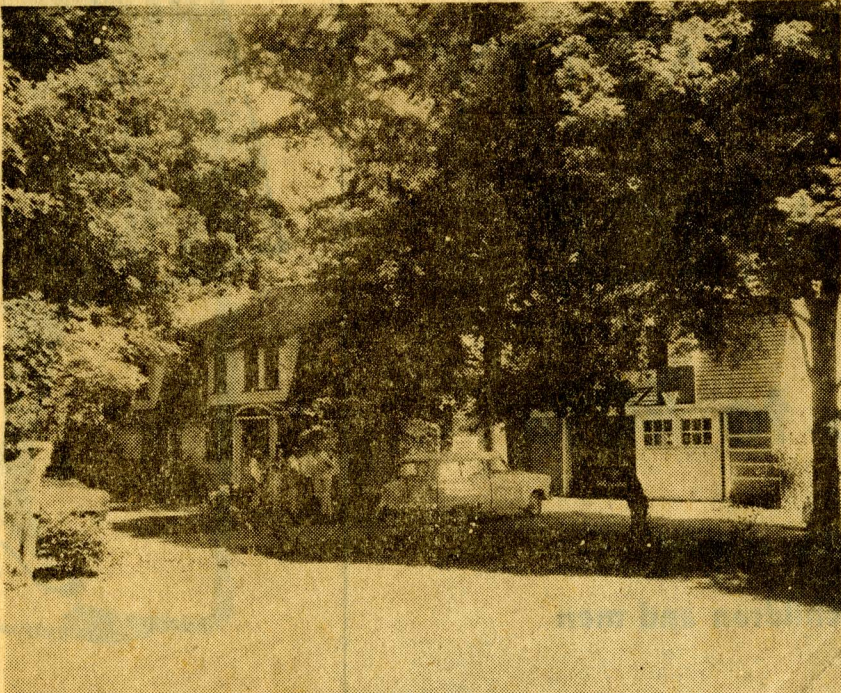
Dr. Sheppard said he blacked out after he was struck.

When he revived—and the length of unconsciousness

Turn to Page 8, Column 1



RUSHING TO AID his wife, Dr. Sheppard was knocked unconscious by the murderer, rallied, chased, was beaten unconscious again.



MURDER SCENE was this large lake-view home of Dr. Sheppard at 28924 Lake Rd., Bay Village.



MEDICAL BAG of Dr. Sheppard, its contents strewn about by the murderer in search for narcotics, is examined by Police Chief John Eaton.

Doctor's Wife Murdered in Bay Village Home, Drug Thieves Are Suspected

Continued From Page One.

has not been determined—he still heard the murderer or murderers in the house.

The doctor is not certain if there was one or two men.

He ran downstairs after the man, he said, and the chase continued through the Sheppard's screened-in porch overlooking the lake.

Running down the steps leading to the Sheppard's observation deck over the lake the doctor tackled the murderer in the sand, he told Mayor Houk.

In the struggle that followed Dr. Sheppard was knocked unconscious a second time. While fighting in the water along the skimpy shore he was struck in the right eye and smashed in the mouth. His teeth were loosened by the blow.

Revived by the Waves

Revived by the waves, Dr. Sheppard struggled up the steps to the house where he called the mayor.

He is in Bay View Hospital in a semi-coma.

The Sheppard's only child, Sam Jr., 7, slept undisturbed throughout the scuffling in a bedroom adjoining his parents. He was awakened and taken from the home by his uncle, Dr. Richard Sheppard, still unaware of the tragedy.

Last persons to see the Sheppards before the slaying were neighbors, Mr. and Mrs. Don J. Ahern, of 29146 Lake Rd.

About 6 Saturday night the Sheppards went to the Ahern home and remained until about 8.

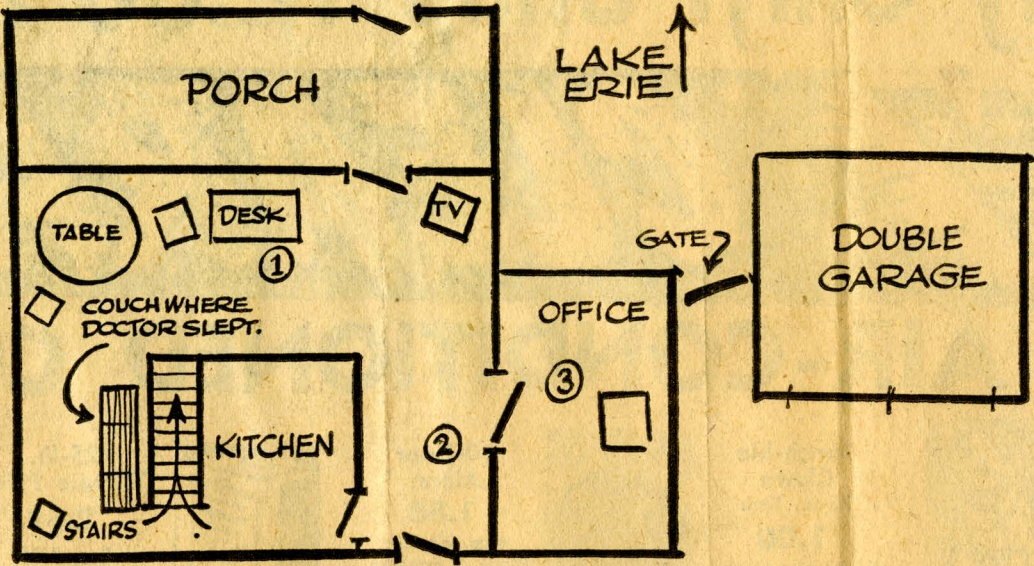
Then the Aherns took their children, Mike, 9, and Leslie, 7, and all returned to the Sheppard home.

Watched Late Movie

Following a lunch finished about 10 the Ahern children were returned home to bed and then the two couples started to watch a late television movie.

Dr. Sheppard became drowsy and about 11 p. m. reclined on the davenport tully dressed and immediately fell into a sound sleep.

He had had a busy day at



ARTIST'S SKETCH of Sheppard first floor shows the couch where doctor was sleeping at the foot of the stairs leading to upstairs bedroom. The numerals indicate (1) ransacked living room desk, (2) medical bag looted in hallway and (3) desk in doctor's den which was rummaged.

the hospital treating many accident cases, one of them involving a 17-months-old boy who was struck by a truck in North Olmsted.

In this case Dr. Sheppard made an incision in the child's chest and, by massaging his heart, fought a losing battle with death for two hours.

The doctor was still sleeping when the Aherns left for

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home about 12:15 a. m.

Bolted Back Door

"I closed and bolted the door leading off the living room to the back porch before I left," Mrs. Ahern said. "Then as we left I told Marilyn to slip up to bed immediately while she was still sleepy".

home for some time before the doctor was awakened by his wife's screams.

On the grass between the house and the steps leading to the beach police found a small green cloth bag containing the doctor's wristwatch, a fraternal ring and a key chain to which a small pocket knife was attached.

Watch Blood-Stained

These were all on Dr. Sheppard's person and must have been removed while he was unconscious in the water. The watch was blood-stained and water was inside the case. His wallet, containing only \$3 in cash, was undisturbed.

Ironically, the Sheppard home and beach front were to have been the scene yesterday of an outing for staff doctors and personnel from Bay View Hospital.

Dr. Sheppard is one of four doctors in his family. His father, Dr. Richard A. Sheppard, together with his two brothers, Dr. Richard N. Sheppard and Dr. Stephen A. Sheppard, helped found Bay View Hospital.

The murder victim and her husband were high school sweethearts, both having attended Cleveland Heights High School.

They were married while her fiance was still a student at the College of Osteopathic Physicians & Surgeons in Los Angeles. About four years ago they moved to Bay Village where both had been active in community life.

Dr. Sheppard was the official doctor for the Bay Village Police and Fire Departments. His wife, an excellent bowler and water skiing enthusiast, was president of the Bay View Hospital Auxiliary and a member of the Junior Women's Club of Bay Village.

Mrs. Sheppard's father is Thomas S. Reese, vice president of the Di-Noc Co. He lives at 4233 Silsby Rd., University Heights.

"I am sure she would have left Dr. Sam undisturbed on the downstairs davenport not knowing when she would have to awaken him during the night because of an emergency call."

Police theorized the burglars may have been in the