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70/04/06 Marilyn's Aunt Shocked by News

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Dr. Sam Stayed Close to Us, Says Brother

"Dr. Sam stayed close to us throughout. I guess he always looked at us as older brothers and someone he could trust."

That's what Dr. Richard N. Sheppard, eldest of the three Sheppard brothers, said today only hours after learning of the death of his much publicized brother, Dr. Sam Sheppard.

Dr. Richard said he learned of the death through a telephone call at 7 a.m. from Sam's mother-in-law, Mrs. George Strickland, in Columbus.

Sheppard said he was trying to contact the other brother, Dr. Stephen A., who is touring psychiatric hospitals in England. Sheppard's son, Samuel (Chip) Sheppard Jr., was vacationing in England.

Dr. Richard said the family kept in close touch with each other, either by phone or letters. The last correspondence from Dr. Sam was an Easter telegram last week when the Richard Sheppards returned from a vacation, he said.

Dr. Richard last spoke with his brother around New Year's Day. "Chip was visiting his father in Columbus, and they called to wish us a Happy New Year."

Sheppard Ex-Prosecutor Expresses His Sympathy

Sympathy for Dr. Sam Sheppard's family was expressed today by Common Pleas Court Judge Thomas J. Parrino, one of the leading prosecutors in the first Sheppard murder trial.

"Unfortunately the Sheppard case was surrounded by much tragedy," Judge Parrino said. "One thing that always impressed me was the complete dedication of his family towards him."

"Upon his death, I extend my deepest sympathy to his family."

Capt. David E. Kerr, head of the Cleveland police Homicide Unit during the Sheppard case, commented:

"This marks the end of an era. This was one of the most interesting cases I have experienced in several decades of homicide work. For many people there was and now always will be doubts. To many others, Sheppard was guilty."

"From my personal connection with the case, I'm still satisfied we had the right man in spite of his later acquittal."

Coroner Samuel Gerber, a key state witness against Dr. Sheppard, said, "I'm sorry to hear of the passing of Dr. Sheppard. From what I've heard it apparently was a sudden death. I'm sure that he had every opportunity to make for himself a successful position in the community if he had continued to live."

Dr. Sheppard's Death Revives Interest in Famed Murder Case

The surprising death of Dr. Samuel H. Sheppard today caused Greater Cleveland landowners to think back and try to assess just what there was about the Sheppard case that drew such widespread attention.

Before, during and long after Dr. Sheppard's first trial and conviction for slaying his wife, Marilyn, people could be heard in all sorts of gathering places arguing over whether he was guilty or not.

The Sheppard case had all the ingredients to make it one of this century's outstanding murder trial conversation pieces.

He was a young, successful suburbanite—a professional man, an osteopath. He lived with his wife and son in one of Cleveland's more attractive suburbs, the bedroom community of Bay Village.

Adding to the luster of the story, Sheppard was linked with other women rightly or wrongly. There were attempts to link Marilyn Sheppard with other men.

One of her good friends, a frequenter of their home, was Bay Village Mayor Spencer Houk, the village butcher by trade.

Then, too, Sheppard was a member of a prominent Bay family. His father and his two brothers, Richard and Steve, were osteopaths, too, all operating out of Bay View Hospital.

Something of an athlete, something of a swinger, these were the images of Dr. Sam Sheppard.

And when his wife was found beaten to death, with her husband apparently the only one other in the house when it happened, his family—notably his brothers—hastened to his aid, shielding him from persistent questioning in the early days of the investigation.

There was the precedent-setting inquest held by Coroner S. E. Gerber in a Bay school house, and finally the indictment of Sheppard—all eagerly-read events that set the stage for the marathon first trial that put Dr. Sheppard in the penitentiary.

That trial attracted such famous newspaper figures as Bob Condie and the late Dorothy Kilgallen. Even the New York Times sent a man—Irwin Freeman—to cover the courtroom drama. A former Scotland Yarder by the name of Fabian showed up to add his expertise to the news coverage.

After it was over—and after the guilty verdict was in—Dr. Sheppard continued to attract wide attention from behind bars as he tried futilely to retain a hypnotist to extract from his subconscious the identity of the true killer, as he offered himself as a guinea pig for medical experimentation, as he fought and fought for a new trial.

And a new wave of interest was aroused as he conducted a pen-pal romance with a German girl, Ariane Tebbenjohanns, that resulted in their whirlwind marriage when he was abruptly freed.

The Engineer of Sheppard's release from prison and of his second-trial acquittal was a rising young lawyer who also won widespread publicity because of his success.

This was F. Lee Bailey of Boston—who in recent days has been embroiled with the U.S. Government as behind-the-scenes director of the air traffic controllers' "sick-out" that has been crippling the nation's air travel.

Marilyn's Aunt Shocked by News

The aunt of Marilyn Sheppard today expressed shock and sorrow over the death of Dr. Sam Sheppard.

But Mrs. Helen Weigle said she still believes he killed her niece.

"I feel very badly," said Mrs. Weigle. "I remember Sam as a member of the family and the nice person he was. But he changed."

"I AM SO SHOCKED," she continued. "I said just a few days ago how strange that we didn't hear anything of Sam. You know he seemed to keep himself in the papers."

She recalled that she had last seen him during his second trial for the murder of his niece.

"He was always friendly to me," she said. "She said during the trial he had introduced her to his second wife, Arianne, and asked court aides to see that Mrs. Weigle got a good seat."

While he was in prison Sheppard wrote to the Weigle family asking that they believe in him and telling them he couldn't have murdered Marilyn.

But throughout the trials the Weigles remained steadfast in their belief that Sam..."