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56/06/01 The Dr. Sam Murder Case. Pictures Review Bay Village Wife's Slaying

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Cleveland Press, "56/06/01 The Dr. Sam Murder Case. Pictures Review Bay Village Wife's Slaying" (1956).
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Pictures Review Bay Village Wife's Slaying

A State Supreme Court ruling today ended another chapter in the drama that began July 4, 1954, in a pleasant colonial home at 28924 Lake Rd., Bay Village.

There were three people in the home as the hands of the kitchen clock ticked away the beginning of the new day.

One was a sleeping boy, seven-year-old Sam (Chip) Sheppard.

When he awoke, his mother, Mrs. Marilyn Sheppard (below), was dead—slain in her upstairs bedroom by 35 savage blows of a missing murder weapon.

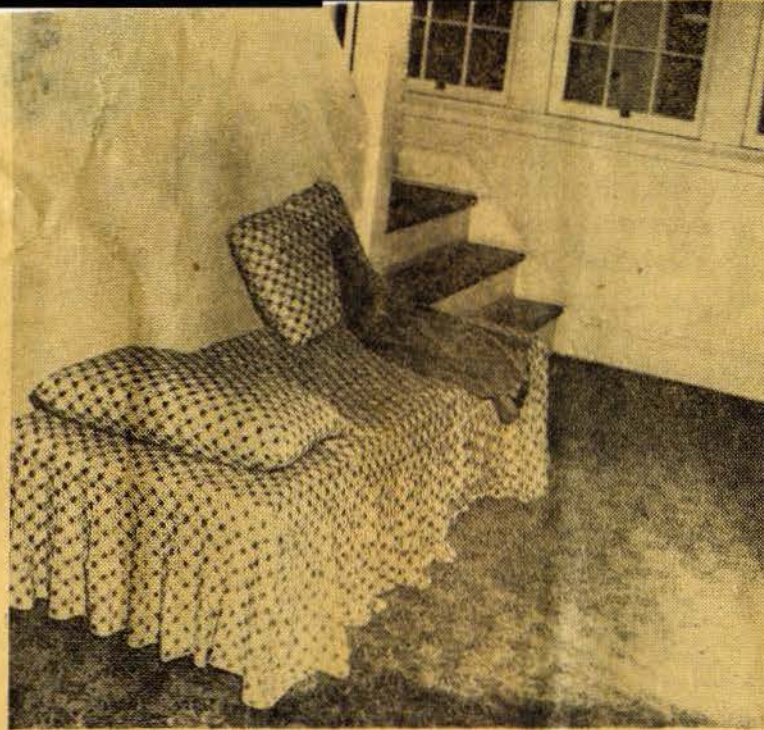
His father, Dr. Samuel H. Sheppard, brilliant young osteopathic neuro-surgeon, was suspected of being the killer.

Here are some of the people who figured prominently in the real life drama of the "Dr. Sam Murder Case," and some of the things offered in evidence.





Bay Village Mayor J. Spencer Houk (left) got 5:50 a. m. phone call from Dr. Sam . . . "come quick." Houk summoned police and Coroner Samuel R. Gerber.



Dr. Sam's story was that he was dozing on downstairs couch, when he heard his wife cry for help. He said he sprinted upstairs, was knocked unconscious by "the killer." But investigators found his jacket neatly folded on the couch.



Dr. Sam's study was disarranged — as if a burglar had messed it up. But investigators concluded a "real burglar" wouldn't have been so neat. Also, there was no physical evidence found to support claim anyone was in the house except the family trio.



Hours before the murder, Mrs. Nancy Ahern and her husband, Don J. Ahern, had been guests in the Sheppard home. Mrs. Ahern testified Mrs. Sheppard had confided "talk of divorce" and "a girl in California" to her.



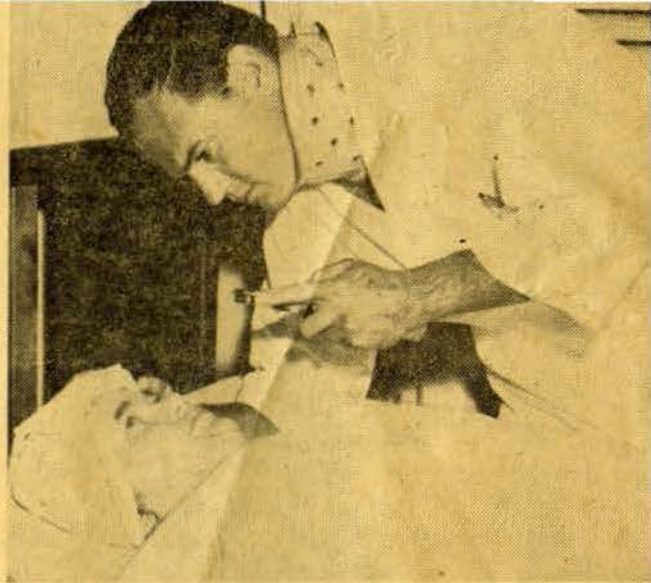
Koko, the family dog, didn't bark while his mistress was being murdered. Would the dog have growled a warning if a maniacal stranger had broken into the home? Young Chip wasn't awakened either.



"Frogmen" and divers combed the Sheppard beach and searched far into Lake Erie for the death weapon and a missing T-shirt Dr. Sam wore when he dozed off on the eve of the tragedy. Neither was ever found.



On the death pillow was what Dr. Gerber called the possible "imprint of a surgical instrument." The killer had carried off and disposed of the death weapon. exact nature of the weapon remains a mystery.



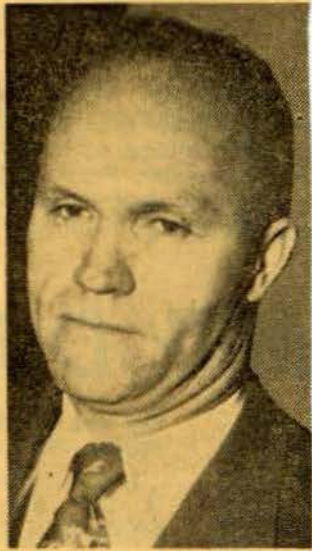
On the murder morning, Dr. Sam was whisked away from the investigation scene to his family-operated Bay View Hospital. He claimed his injuries at the hands of a "bushy-haired man" required him to wear a neck brace. A few days after his wife's murder, he was examining patients and performing operations of the hospital. Dr. Sam called Marilyn "the only woman I ever loved or will love."



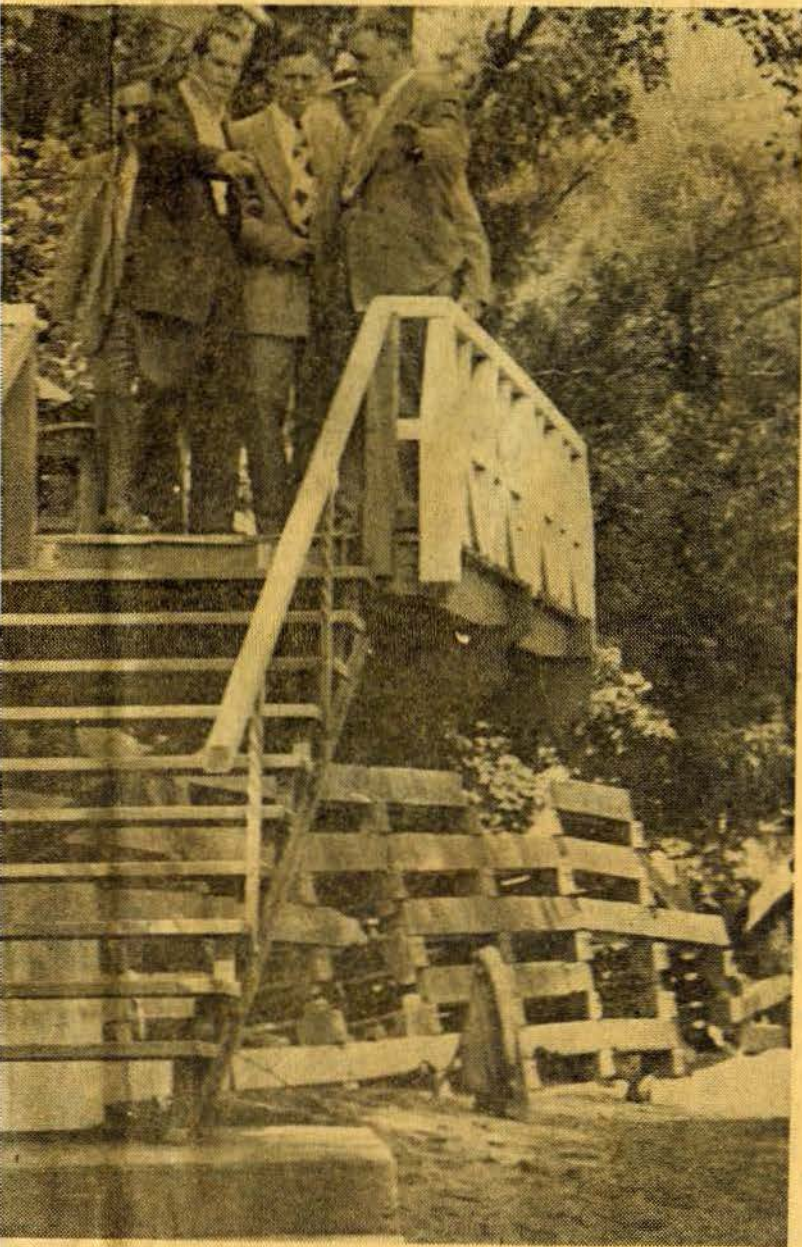
Dr. Sam testified at inquest that he and Marilyn were happily married, and denied having quarreled with her about "other women" in his life.



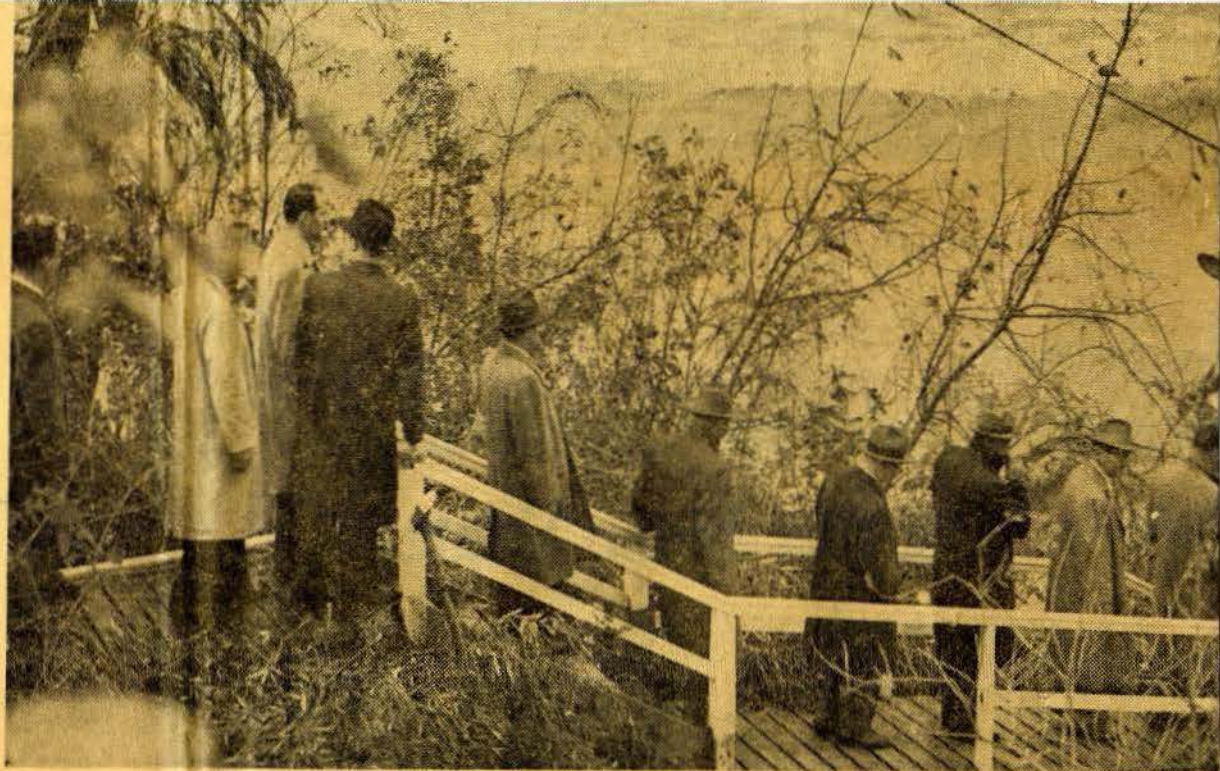
Susan Hayes, former Bay View Hospital technician, reluctantly flew back from California to admit a romance with Dr. Sam. She testified before the Grand Jury that indicted him.



Dr. Lester Hoversten, onetime close friend of the accused, also testified for the prosecution. He told how Dr. Sam had planned a divorce, but was talked out of it by his family.



The injured osteopath took detectives to the beach where he once water-skied with his murdered wife. He pointed out the spot where he said he struggled with "the killer" he had chased, and was knocked out a second time.



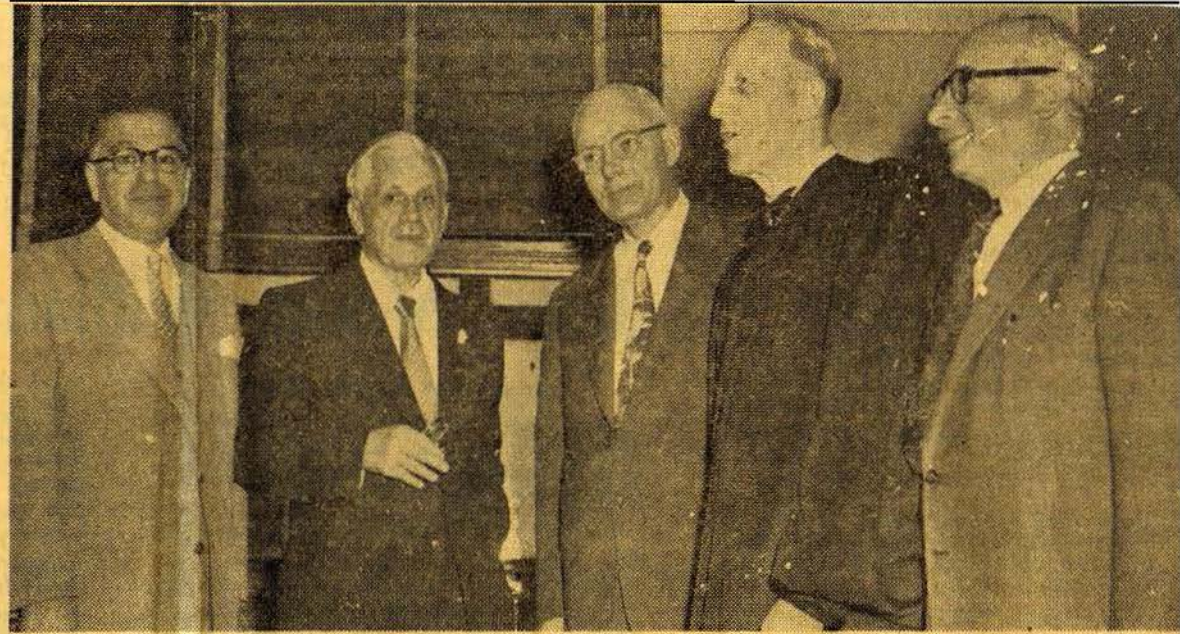
Later, Dr. Sam watched with strained emotions as the jury that would decide his fate inspected the walk down which he said he chased a shadowy figure.



On Dec. 21, 1954, the seven-man, five-woman jury returned to the Criminal Courts Bldg. After five days' deliberation, they ruled Dr. Sam guilty of second degree murder—with mandatory life imprisonment the penalty.



Dr. Sam's family gave him loyal support. His brothers, Dr. Richard N. Sheppard and Stephen Sheppard, shown with their wives attending the trial, constantly reiterated their faith in Sam's innocence. Dr. Steve named several "possible suspects" to the authorities. The "suspects" were all cleared. After Dr. Sam's conviction, his father died and his mother took her own life.



Jury's guilty ruling followed 10-week trial in which rival legal teams staged vigorous courtroom duel. From left are Fred Garmone and William J. Corrigan, leaders of the defense team; Assistant Prosecutor John J. McMahon; Common Pleas Judge Edward Blythin, who presided, and Assistant Prosecutor Saul S. Danaceau.