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54/07/30 Marilyn's Missing Golf Club Hunted As Clew To Murder

Cleveland News

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MSL

ACADEMIC ENDEAVORS

MARILYN'S MISSING GOLF CLUB

HUNTED AS CLEW TO MURDER

NEWS 7-30-54

Law Director Of Bay Weighs Arrest Writ

BULLETIN

Police Chief Frank W. Story, Deputy Inspector James E. McArthur and Capt. David E. Kerr were summoned to an immediate meeting with Mayor Anthony J. Celebrezze today for a report on the Bay Village murder investigation.

BY HOWARD BEAUFAIT

A murder warrant and a missing golf club were under consideration today in the Marilyn Sheppard murder investigation.

Deputy Inspector James E. McArthur said that an all-out effort was being made to locate a No. 9 iron known to have been in the Bay Village housewife's golf bag two days before she was beaten to death.

The club is now missing. Coroner Samuel R. Gerber and homicide detectives said that measurement and depth of the 27 face and head wounds which smashed Mrs. Sheppard's skull strongly indicate they could have been made by a thin bladed golf club.

As the search for the missing weapon was taken up with renewed vigor, Law Director Richard S. Weygandt of Bay Village locked himself up with all evidence gathered in the investigation so far to decide if it justifies issuance of a murder warrant and arrest of a suspect.

The grave responsibility of evaluating the circumstantial evidence and making an arrest decision was handed to the young suburban lawyer after County Prosecutor Frank T. Cullitan held it was insufficient to take before the County Grand Jury.

To add plausibility to the deep-faced old-fashioned niblick as the murder weapon, Coroner Gerber pointed out that it was the shortest club in Mrs. Sheppard's collection.

The coroner reasoned that the weapon was short-handled because the killer had a small space in which to wield it between the murder bed and the wall.

The missing club is used by golfers in trouble, to pitch or loft a ball out of traps and roughs.

Mrs. Sheppard played her last game of golf at Lakewood Country Club in Westlake July 2, two days before she was battered to death in the bedroom of her home at 28924 West Lake Rd.

With Mrs. Sheppard on the Lakewood golf course was Mrs. Nancy Ahern who told police the No. 9 iron was in the bag that day because she recalled Mrs. Sheppard's holding it up to eye level to see if the shaft was straight.

Cites Reluctance to Talk

In his search for the golf club and other clues to the killer, Inspector McArthur said he was convinced that a lot of friends and acquaintances of the Sheppards "are reluctant or unwilling to give us information."

The inspector said he was sure everyone would co-operate in running down the slayer if they realized the full brutality of the murder. He pointed out that 27 shattering and bone-deep blows were struck by the killer—when only one or two would have been sufficient to take the life of the victim.

Mayor J. Spencer Houk of Bay Village, close friend of Dr. Sheppard, would share the decision on issuance of a murder warrant with Law Director Weygandt.

Mayor Kept in Bed

The mayor, in a state of nervous exhaustion, was confined to bed today under a doctor's care.

Weygandt said that he "did not have enough information to satisfy me that an arrest should be made" last night, but added that he had not studied all the evidence.

Police Chief Frank W. Story and Prosecutor Cullitan said they planned to further question Miss Susan Hayes, who has admitted intimacies with Dr. Sam, and is now secluded under guard of policewoman on the seventh floor of Hotel Carter.