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## 54/11/23 Cites fingerprint cleanup: expert describes erasing of clews

Cleveland Press

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# CITES FINGERPRINT CLEANUP

## Expert Describes Erasing of Clews

### BULLETIN

Detective Jerome Poelking testified late today that on July 23 he found Dr. Sam Sheppard's left thumbprint of the headboard of the bed in which his wife, Marilyn, was murdered.

Mrs. Jay L. Bender of 294 Ruth St., Bay Village, conferred with Assistant Prosecutor Thomas Parrino late today, preparatory to appearing as a "surprise witness" at Dr. Sam Sheppard's murder trial.

Mrs. Bender reported seeing lights on in the Sheppard home on Lake Rd. as she and her husband drove by between 2 and 2:30 a. m. on the morning of July 4.

How the killer of Marilyn Sheppard apparently wiped his fingerprints from her house of tragedy was told today to the jury trying her husband, Dr. Samuel H. Sheppard, for wife murder.

Detective Mike Grabowski, first of six scientific sleuths of the Cleveland Crime Laboratory to testify, said he had found "strange lines" on many objects in the murder home when he examined them in a futile search for fingerprints.

"They were the same as if somebody had taken sandpaper and scratched over the articles," he said.

This version of how the "tidy killer" covered up his trail hit hard at Dr. Sam's claim that he chased the intruder who killed his wife down to the beach, where he was knocked unconscious.

Grabowski said the object used to wipe away telltale fingerprints might have been a cloth, as well as sandpaper.

Testimony moved at the six-week-old trial's quickest pace today, with seven witnesses testifying.

Homicide Detective Patrick Gareau was excused without cross-examination after describing his discovery of Dr. Sam's bloodstained wrist watch, stopped at 4:15, in a green bag on the Sheppard property.

He was followed on the witness stand by Detective Jerome Poelking of the Crime Lab, who testified the



one palm print found in Dr. Sam's den belonged to his son, Sam (Chip) Jr.

Earlier, Marilyn's former part-time maid testified that Mrs. Sheppard customarily kept the front door of her home at 28924 Lake Rd. locked.

The one-day-a-week maid, Mrs. Elnora Helms of 12211 Brookfield Ave., also testified that:

**SAM AND MARILYN MOVED** into the bedroom in which Mrs. Sheppard was murdered shortly after their return from a California trip last March. This bedroom had twin beds.

**PREVIOUSLY, THEY HAD OCCUPIED** the east bedroom, which has a double bed.

**BAY VILLAGE MAYOR J. SPENCER HOUK** was a frequent visitor at the home, often stopping by for morning coffee.

**NOTHING WAS MISSING** from the murder bedroom—indicating that the death weapon must have been brought in from elsewhere.

**The prosecution stressed that bringing the murder weapon into the bedroom from another part of the house would constitute "premeditation"—one of the elements required for a first-degree murder conviction.**

It was during the March trip to the West Coast that Dr. Sam spent a week with Miss Hayes.

The prosecution began uncorking its "scientific evi-

# Fingerprint Man Tells of Cleanup in House

Continued From Page One

dence" after a morning "mop-up of loose ends" in which:

THE BLOODY PAJAMAS in which Marilyn was murdered were introduced into evidence by Earl Johnston, assistant custodian at the County Morgue.

THE WOMAN'S BAREFOOT FOOTPRINT on the Sheppard beach—frequently the target of defense cross-examination—was explained away by Bay Village Fireman Richard Sommer. He said the footprint wasn't there when he examined the beach shortly after Marilyn's murder was reported.

THE TATTERED T-SHIRT found in the water at a pier adjoining the Sheppard beach was introduced into evidence by Bay Village Patrolman Cy Lipaj, who also

Judge Edward Blythin this afternoon warned Defense Counsel W. J. Corrigan against making "highly improper" remarks at Dr. Sam Sheppard's murder trial.

Assistant Prosecutor Saul S. Danaceau had protested that Corrigan was giggling during the questioning of Homicide Detective Patrick Gareau. Gareau had described how he had photographs taken of footprints on the Sheppard beach on July 4.

Danaceau objected that Corrigan had said loudly: "Now they're taking pictures of their own footprints."

Corrigan, after whispered conferences with Dr. Sam, challenged Grabowski's failure to check the murder bed, night stand, lamp and telephone for fingerprints.

He brought out that Grabowski had made only a visual check of various objects before dusting for fingerprints.

Q.: You didn't take anything down to your laboratory for further examination or study?

A.: No, sir.

Q.: In your laboratory you have high-powered microscopes, used in identifying fingerprints?

A.: Yes, sir.

"That will be all," Corrigan said.

Grabowski had testified that he found some fingerprints on the knob of the door leading to the Sheppard beach which were "not identifiable."

## Trail of Blood

Grabowski will be followed by other Crime Lab experts who will describe the "trail of blood" they picked out in the murder home with the use of "black light" techniques.

The prosecution claims the blood specks show how the killer moved about the home after Marilyn's murder—instead of immediately fleeing to the beach, where Dr. Sam says he pursued the "bushy-haired" intruder.

is assistant coach of the Bay Village High School football team.

LIPAJ EXPLAINED THE MINOR MYSTERY of the broken night latch at the Sheppard home. It was broken after the murder, he said, by Bay Village Sgt. Jay Hubach.

The torn T-shirt, which showed no trace of blood under laboratory analysis, was dismissed by the prosecution as not being pertinent to the case.

But there were hints that the defense might claim it as Dr. Sam's missing T-shirt in later testimony.

Defense Counsel William J.