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Marilyn's Murder Has Kept Town Talking for a Month

It's been a month today since Marilyn Sheppard was found slashed to death by a killer's raging blows. Has there ever been a month quite like it in Cleveland?

Talk of the town? How can you escape it? No one has really wanted to escape being drawn into conversation and conjecture and controversy about the Sheppard case which pales anything on the crime fiction stands.

At breakfast and over cocktails, it's "Dr. Sam" and "Susan Hayes" and "Lawyer Corrigan" and "why the delay?"

On buses, in shops, on street corners, it's "lie detector" and "third degree" and "habeas corpus."

Certainly never in the history of the near little proud of our Quiet homes Bay Village, scene of the baffling murder, has life been so upheaved by one happening.

Jammed Traffic

Traffic jams along deliberately narrow Lake Rd. in Bay are old hat during summer months because of traditional traffic to and from beaches and lake shore beauty spots.

But never before traffic jams like these of the last month during which thousands of morbidly curious West and East Siders have made Bay their Mecca.

At an agonizing 10 and 15 miles an hour they creep along, singing out the Sheppard family-controlled Bay View Hospital, exorcised in a hulking brick building, once a mansion, along the lake.

They peer at the homes of Dr. Sam and Marilyn's father, Richard Sr., conveniently on Lake Rd.; Bay's Mayor J. Spencer Houk, the man to whom several hours after Marilyn Sheppard was killed, Dr. Sam phoned and cried: "My God, Spen, they've killed Marilyn!"

Boy Overwhelmed

But the greatest traffic jam is out front of Dr. Sam's own Lake Rd. home, scene of the bloody slaying, scene of futile searches for weapons and intruders and motives.

Traffic was bad enough at first. Then police roped off the property and that made things worse. The place could be spotted more easily.

Bay's hand of police couldn't ho to do much more with the traffic than they could with solving the killing.

"We're not experienced in things like this," they justifiably complained.

And names that once meant nothing except in Bay's narrow confines now were being spotlighted, headlined, not only in Cleveland but from coast to coast.

Cost $50,000?

Mayor Houk, just a little more than a month ago only a butcher and part-time mayor, has become a big figure in the Sheppard case, a man whose modest political career may now be jeopardized.

Sgt. Jay Hubach and Patrolman Fred Drenkhan, of Bay's Traffic Bureau, in Cleveland but from coast to coast.

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