

Juliette ("Julie") Sheen - Murder

Saturday,
September 27, 1975



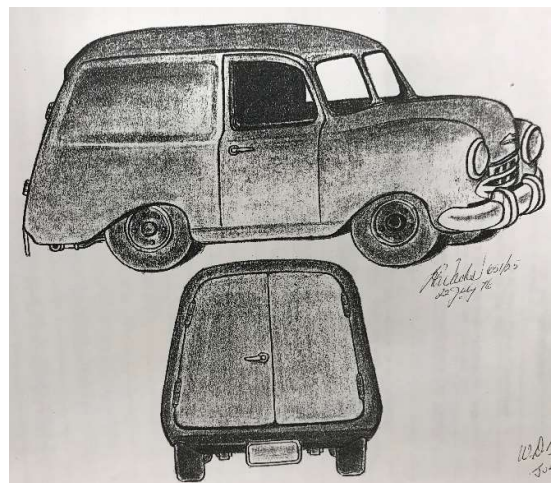
On Saturday, September 27, 1975, Julie Sheen, an 81-year old widow was found stabbed to death in the living room of her home at 162 Inkster Blvd.

Mrs. Sheen was last seen alive on Thursday night (September 25) by friends who had visited her home for cake and coffee. She had also spoken with her daughter at 11:00 p.m. that night. At about 10:45 a.m. the following morning (September 26) an operator at the Citizens Inquiry Board received a phone call from an unknown woman with a heavy accent stating that she was about to be killed, robbed of all her money and buried in her back yard. The phone was subsequently disconnected.

It was unknown who this caller was, however when Mrs. Sheen's body was found, the number for the Citizens Inquiry Board was found written on a piece of paper beside her phone. Furthermore, Mrs. Sheen was a former immigrant from France and had a strong French accent. As such it is believed that Mrs. Sheen was the caller and that she was killed shortly after 10:45 a.m. on Friday, September 26, 1975.

Because Mrs. Sheen had immigrated to Canada after the great depression, she did not trust banks. She kept most of her money hidden about her home wrapped in pieces of aluminum foil. When Mrs. Sheen was found, her purses had been emptied, closets and cupboards searched, mattresses over turned, and pieces of aluminum foil were found scattered throughout the house. The money that she had hidden was missing, confirming that robbery was the motive for this crime - again consistent with the phone call received by the Citizens Inquiry Board.

At about 11:15 a.m. on Friday morning, about the time the call was received by the Citizens Inquiry Board, one of Mrs. Sheen's neighbours reported seeing an old green panel van drive away from the front of her house. The neighbour felt that the license plates on the van were not from Manitoba, but thought they may have been issued by Washington State. While this van has not been connected with any certainty to the murder, the reason it was there and its owners have never been identified.



Mrs. Sheen lived alone. She was extremely conscious about home security and kept all her doors locked. Due to failing eyesight she would not open the door to anyone unless she had confirmed their identity. Mrs. Sheen would even refuse entry to a delivery driver, insisting that any packages be left on the step. As there appeared to be no sign of forced entry, it is possible that Mrs. Sheen let the suspect(s) into her house believing she knew who they were.

Generally, it was believed that no one outside of the family knew to what extent Mrs. Sheen had hidden money about her home. In total, the last time the money was counted in the presence her daughter and granddaughter; there was roughly \$15,000. Many of the bills were the old King George series \$20 bills.

The last time the money was counted the granddaughter left her husband and moved to Florida. It is unknown whether or not the ex-husband was aware of the money. However, on September 16, 1975, shortly before the murder, he bought a one-way ticket to Florida with a bad cheque to visit his ex-wife. He arrived in Florida on September 17, dropped off their son and left. It is unknown if he returned to Winnipeg but he has never been seen or heard from since.

Two days before the murder Mrs. Sheen called her daughter and indicated that she had just received a surprise visit from her late husband's brother's ex-wife ("Mary") and her new young boyfriend from Oakland, California. She indicated they were hungry and looking for something to eat before traveling to on to Edmonton. Apparently, Mrs. Sheen was not happy with their company as they drank too much and sent them on their way.

Police investigation has never identified "Mary" or her boyfriend, as the real "Mary Sheen" of Oakland had died several years earlier. However, neighbours also reported seeing a blue Lincoln Continental with California license plates parked across the street from Mrs. Sheen's house on September 23, 1975. Two new picture postcards from Oakland, California, were also found beside Mrs. Sheen's phone.

Police identification officers were able to develop one unknown fingerprint from one piece of discarded tinfoil that had wrapped the missing money. The fingerprint did not match Mrs. Sheen. The fingerprint has been circulated to many of the police departments in North America that use similar digital fingerprint systems to the Winnipeg police, including those in Florida, Washington and California states, as well as the FBI.

It is unlikely that an old green panel van with out of province license plates (possibly Washington), would be confused with a blue Lincoln Continental with California license plates. However, it is possible there is still a connection between the two and the murder of Mrs. Sheen.

It would appear that only someone known to Mrs. Sheen, or whom Mrs. Sheen believed she knew, could have gained entry to her home. Furthermore, this person would have known that she kept large amounts of money hidden in her home. As such the killer knew Mrs. Sheen or knew enough about Mrs. Sheen to convince her that she knew them and let them into her home. The killers may not have intended on killing Mrs. Sheen, but panicked when they caught her on the phone to the Citizens Inquiry Board.

