

= Maurice Clemmons =

Maurice Clemmons (February 6 , 1972 ? December 1 , 2009) was an American who was responsible for the November 29 , 2009 , murder of four police officers in Parkland , Washington . After evading police for two days following the shooting , Clemmons was shot and killed by a police officer in Seattle .

Prior to his involvement in the shooting , Clemmons had at least five felony convictions in Arkansas and at least eight felony charges in Washington . His first incarceration began in 1989 , at age 17 . Facing sentences totaling 108 years in prison , the burglary sentences were reduced in 2000 by Governor of Arkansas Mike Huckabee to 47 years , which made him immediately eligible for parole . The Arkansas Parole Board unanimously moved to release him in 2000 . Clemmons was subsequently arrested on other charges and was jailed several times . In the months prior to the Parkland shooting , he was in jail on charges of assaulting a police officer and raping a child . One week prior to the Parkland shooting , he was released from jail after posting a \$ 150 @, @ 000 bail bond .

Clemmons ' murder of four police officers represented the largest number of law enforcement officers killed by one man in a single incident in U.S. history until July 7 , 2016 . The Dallas , Texas shootings resulted in the deaths of five police officers .

= = Early life and crimes = =

Maurice Clemmons 's father made frames for automobile seats at a Chrysler factory , and his mother , Dorothy Mae Clemmons , worked in a nursing home . He had five siblings . Clemmons lived in Marianna , Arkansas in his early youth , and moved to Little Rock as a teen . He was arrested when he was a junior at Hall High School for carrying a .25 @-@ caliber pistol on school property . He claimed to be carrying the gun because he was " beaten by dopers " , and said he had " something for them " if they attacked him again . Clemmons did not return to school , and finished his education at eleventh grade . In 1989 , a 17 @-@ year @-@ old Clemmons and two other accomplices robbed a woman at midnight in the parking lot of a Little Rock hotel bar . Clemmons pretended to have a gun in his pocket and threatened to shoot her if she did not give him her purse . When she responded , " Well , why don 't you just shoot ? " , he punched her in the head and ran off with the purse , which contained \$ 16 and a credit card .

Clemmons was accused multiple times of displaying violent behavior during court appearances . In one incident , he dismantled a metal door stop and hid it in his sock to use as a weapon . It was discovered and confiscated by a court bailiff . In another incident , he took a lock from his holding cell and threw it at a bailiff , but missed and accidentally hit his mother instead . Clemmons was once accused of reaching for a guard 's pistol while being transported to court . During one trial , he was shackled in leg irons and seated next to a uniformed officer because the presiding judge ordered extra security , claiming Clemmons had threatened him . At age 16 , Clemmons ' charges were committed from juvenile court to adult court due to the extremely violent nature of his crimes and demeanor .

By 1990 , Clemmons was sentenced to 108 years in prison for eight felony charges from his teenage years in Arkansas . The total prison term stemmed from multiple sentences , some of which were concurrent to others and some were consecutive . The largest sentencing came in 1990 , when he was given a 60 @-@ year prison term for breaking into an Arkansas state trooper 's home and stealing about \$ 6 @, @ 700 @-@ worth of items , including a gun .

During his sentencing on the charges , a circuit judge told Clemmons that he had broken his mother 's heart , to which he responded , " I have broken my own heart . " Clemmons was sentenced in 1989 to 35 years in prison for robbing the woman in front of the Little Rock hotel bar . Among his other sentences were six years for weapon possession based on his high school arrest ; and eight years for burglary , theft and probation in Pulaski County on September 9 , 1989 . He was ineligible for parole until 2015 or later . He was originally held at the Tucker Correctional Facility in Tucker , Arkansas , but was eventually transferred to the Cummins Unit near Grady .

= = Clemency = =

In 1999 , after having served 10 years of his sentence , Clemmons filed a clemency appeal with Arkansas Governor Mike Huckabee .

In his petition to Huckabee , Clemmons wrote he came from " a very good Christian family " and was " raised much better than my actions speak " . Clemmons claimed he had just moved from Seattle , Washington , to Arkansas as a teenager , and because he had no friends he gave in to peer pressure and " fell in with the wrong crowd " to be accepted by his young peers , which led him to commit his crimes . Although he apologized for his actions , Clemmons also complained that he received overly harsh sentences . He also claimed to have changed and expressed regret that his mother had recently died without seeing him turn his life around . Clemmons ' clemency application was supported by Pulaski County Circuit Court Judge Marion Humphrey , who argued the cumulative sentence was excessive and cited Clemmons ' young age at the time he committed the crimes .

The decision was made over the objections of some victims and prosecutors involved in Clemmons ' previous cases but was supported by the bipartisan parole board and the trial court judge in Clemmons ' case . Mark Fraiser , an attorney who prosecuted early cases against Clemmons in Pulaski County , argued Clemmons was extremely likely to commit further acts of violence in the future , and said for a teen to receive such a lengthy prison sentence without committing a murder , " you 've got to be a bad little dude " . On May 3 , 2000 , Huckabee commuted Clemmons ' 108 @-@ year sentence to 47 years , 5 months and 19 days , which made him eligible for parole that day . As a factor in his decision , Huckabee cited the unusually long sentence for Clemmons ' age at the time the crimes were committed . The Arkansas Parole Board unanimously approved Clemmons ' release on July 13 , 2000 , and he was set free on August 1 , 2000 .

= = Later crimes = =

In March 2001 , Clemmons violated parole by committing aggravated robbery and theft again in Ouachita County . He was convicted on July 13 , 2001 and sentenced to 10 years in prison . He faced charges of parole violations , but due to problems with the case , he was not served with the charges until 2004 . His attorney argued the parole violation charges should be dropped because so much time had passed , and they were subsequently dismissed . Clemmons was granted parole on the robbery charges in 2004 . He told the parole board he was " not ready " the first time he was released , but that he " doesn 't want to die in prison " and will " try to do the right thing " . Clemmons moved to Washington in 2004 while still on parole , which was approved by Arkansas authorities . That year , he married a woman named Nicole Smith , although The Seattle Times later reported the relationship had " been tumultuous " . He was placed under the supervision of the Washington State Department of Corrections and classified as " high risk to reoffend " . His supervision was to continue until October 2015 . He lived in Tacoma , where he ran a landscaping and power @-@ washing business out of his house . Over the next five years , Clemmons bought six houses , including one in Arkansas and five in Washington .

Following his parole in 2004 , Clemmons had no arrests or problems with the law until May 2009 . The Seattle Times referred to four days in May 2009 as the time when " Maurice Clemmons ' behavior and mental state deteriorated " . On May 9 , a Pierce County sheriff 's deputy responded to Clemmons ' home after reports he was throwing rocks at houses , cars and people . When the deputy tried to enter the house , one of Clemmons ' cousins grabbed his wrist . After a struggle , Clemmons emerged from the house and punched the deputy in the face , and assaulted a second deputy who arrived to help . Clemmons was placed under arrest and taken to Pierce County Jail , where he continued to struggle and told jail workers , " I 'll kill all you bitches . " He was charged with two felony assault charges and two felony malicious mischief charges , and released from jail the next day after posting a \$ 40 @, @ 000 bail bond without seeing a judge .

On May 11 , around 1 a.m. , Clemmons appeared naked in his living room and ordered two female

relatives , ages 11 and 12 , to fondle him . The two reportedly complied out of fear , and the 11 @-@ year @-@ old fled the house afterward . Clemmons took the 12 @-@ year @-@ old into his bedroom along with Clemmons ' wife . Clemmons repeatedly referred to himself as Jesus , and said his wife was Eve . He released the 12 @-@ year @-@ old girl after his wife begged him to let her go . However , around 4 a.m. that same morning , he gathered his family back into the living room and demanded they strip naked together . He later left the house , claiming the world was coming to an end and that he was " going to fly to heaven " . A family member called 911 and police found Clemmons at a nearby second house he was building , but Clemmons fled on foot and escaped . He failed to appear the next day for an arraignment on his May 9 charges . Child Protective Services investigated and substantiated the sexual abuse complaint . Latanya Clemmons , Clemmons 's sister , told authorities he had undergone a change and was " not in his right mind " .

Clemmons was arrested on July 1 , 2009 , after he appeared in a Pierce County court trying to have his bench warrant thrown out . He was charged with second @-@ degree rape of a child , as well as being a fugitive from Arkansas . At the time of his arrest , Clemmons made religiously themed comments and referred to himself as " the beast " . He also told a police officer that President Barack Obama and LeBron James were his brothers , and Oprah Winfrey was his sister . Pierce County prosecutors asserted that Clemmons ' recent crimes amounted to a violation of Clemmons ' parole in Arkansas , and that he faced years in prison if he was returned to the state . However , the Arkansas Department of Community Correction notified Pierce County on July 22 that they did not intend to ask for his extradition and that he should be adjudicated on his Washington charges . Stephen Penner , a deputy prosecuting attorney in Pierce County , said of the Arkansas decision , " There 's a built @-@ in incentive to not following through . In a way , the more violent they are , the less you want them in your community . "

During a court @-@ ordered mental health evaluation , Clemmons told psychologists he had experienced hallucinations in May 2009 of " people drinking blood and people eating babies , and lawless on the streets , like people were cannibals " . He claimed the visions had since passed . He also claimed to have no faith in the American justice system and thought he was being " maliciously persecuted because I 'm black and they believe the police " . The evaluation , completed by two psychologists from the Western State Hospital on October 19 , concluded Clemmons was dangerous and presented an increased risk of future criminal acts . Pierce County Judge John McCarthy set bail for Clemmons ' assault charges at \$ 40 @,@ 000 , considerably below the \$ 100 @,@ 000 prosecutors sought based on Clemmons ' history of violence . Pierce County Judge Thomas Feltnagle set bail for the child @-@ rape charges at \$ 150 @,@ 000 , lower than the \$ 200 @,@ 000 sought by prosecutors , but higher than usual for the charges .

After a mental evaluation , a psychologist concluded Clemmons was competent to stand trial on the charges , which eliminated him as a candidate for involuntary commitment . An attorney for Clemmons notified the court he planned to pursue an insanity or diminished @-@ capacity defense . On November 23 , 2009 , Clemmons paid \$ 15 @,@ 000 for a \$ 190 @,@ 000 bail bond from Jail Sucks Bail Bonds , a Chehalis @-@ based company , to secure his release . Two other bail bond agencies had rejected Clemmons based on his history of failing to appear in court .

= = 2009 police officer shooting = =

Clemmons failed to check in with his community corrections officer within 24 hours of his release as required , but nothing was done in response . On November 26 , 2009 , less than one week after Clemmons posted his bail bond , during a Thanksgiving gathering at the home of Clemmons ' aunt , Clemmons told several people he was angry about his Pierce County legal problems and that he planned to use a gun to murder police officers and others , including school children . He showed a gun to the people in the room and told them he had two others in his car and home . Clemmons said he planned to activate an alarm by removing a court @-@ ordered ankle monitor , then he would shoot the police officers who responded to his house . In describing the planned murder , Clemmons said , " Knock , knock , knock , boom ! "

Darcus Allen , a convicted murderer who previously served in a Arkansas prison with Clemmons ,

was allegedly present for the conversation . Also on Thanksgiving , Clemmons cut off a GPS monitor Jail Sucks Bail Bonds had secured onto his ankle . On November 28 , Clemmons showed two handguns to friends Eddie and Douglas Davis and told them he planned to shoot police officers with them ; the exchange was witnessed by Clemmons ' half @-@ brother Rickey Hinton , with whom he shared a house . During the exchange , Clemmons danced around with the guns in his hands , claiming to be Lucifer . He told the men he had twice tried to go to a Tacoma police station , where he planned to walk in and start shooting . The first time the station was closed , and the second time he got a flat tire on the way there , Clemmons claimed . He talked about stopping at a crowded intersection or a school and shooting people there .

On the morning of November 29 , Clemmons drove a white pickup truck to Allen 's home , then Allen drove him past the Forza Coffee Co. coffee shop in Parkland , Washington , a suburb of Tacoma . After they saw marked police patrol cars in the parking lot , Allen drove back past the coffee shop and parked nearby . Some reports from witnesses said Clemmons parked his truck in a car wash north of the coffee shop and pretended to clean the vehicle , but never turned the hose on . Around 8 a.m , Clemmons walked into the Forza Coffee Co. coffee shop , where four police officers were working on laptops before their shift . Clemmons opened fire on the officers , shooting them to death .

Investigators said the murders were a targeted , execution @-@ style attack and not associated with a robbery ; Clemmons did not aim at any other customers or the two baristas working at the time . The four slain officers were Mark Renninger , 39 (killed with a shot to the head) ; Ronald Owens , 37 (shot in the neck) ; Tina Griswold , 40 (shot in the head) ; and Greg Richards , 42 (shot in the head) .

As Clemmons fled , Officer Richards struggled with him in the restaurant 's doorway , then shot Clemmons in the back before the officer succumbed to a bullet wound to his head . The shooter stole Richards ' Glock pistols before escaping . Clemmons returned to the truck and Allen drove him away . Allen later told detectives he stopped at an intersection and abandoned Clemmons and the truck , claiming he " wants of no part of this " . Authorities however , later disputed this claim and said there was no evidence Allen abandoned the vehicle . Clemmons was identified later that day as a " person of interest " in the murders , but soon after was identified as a wanted suspect . Police identified no motive for the murders , and Detective Ed Troyer , Pierce County Sheriff 's Office spokesman , said , " We 're going to be surprised if there is a motive worth mentioning . " Police initially believed the suspect might have died from his injuries shortly after the shooting .

Clemmons went back to his house and told Hinton he had been shot by police , and Hinton allegedly gave Eddie and Douglas Davis a car to " get Clemmons out of here " . As they drove , Clemmons told the brothers he " had taken care of his business " . The Davis brothers took Clemmons to other friends , who bandaged his wounds . Later that day , police received a tip that Clemmons was seeking shelter from friends in Seattle . Police pulled over a white car they believed to have been transporting him , and the female driver admitted Clemmons was a friend and she had brought him to Seattle after he told her " he had killed a police officer or officers " .

Coffee shop employees who witnessed the shooting identified Clemmons as the shooter from a series of photos . Authorities sought him in what was considered one of the biggest manhunts the Seattle @-@ Tacoma area had ever seen , and Clemmons was considered the most wanted man in the Pacific Northwest . Authorities also surrounded the homes of Clemmons ' friends and family in order to prevent him from finding shelter , and to determine who was helping him . A Clemmons relative learned that Clemmons was coming to her home in the Leschi neighborhood in Seattle , informed the police and fled . Police locked down the house for 11 hours in the early morning of November 30 , believing Clemmons to be holed up inside . After several attempts to coax or force him out of the house , including use of a robot and flashbang grenades , police entered and discovered Clemmons was not inside . Later that day , police searched multiple locations in the Seattle and Tacoma areas , including a park where they found a handgun carried by Clemmons and his pickup truck , which had blood stains inside .

= = Death = =

On December 1 , 2009 , Clemmons was shot and killed by Seattle police officer Benjamin L. Kelly . Around 2 : 45 a.m. , Kelly was on patrol and stopped to investigate a broken @-@ down car on the side of the road , which was idling with its hood up . Kelly recognized the vehicle as having been reported stolen . While sitting in his patrol car and writing a report , Kelly noticed Clemmons approaching him and recognized him as the suspect in the Lakewood shooting . Kelly ordered him to stop and show his hands , but he instead began to flee around the disabled vehicle . Police claim that Clemmons reached into his waist area for a gun . Kelly fired several rounds at Clemmons and hit him at least twice , killing him . Clemmons was carrying a handgun that had belonged to Lakewood Officer Greg Richards . Kelly was placed on routine administrative leave following the shooting . Police later said Clemmons would have eventually died from the gunshot wound he sustained at the Lakewood shooting .

Since his death , multiple people have been arrested for helping Clemmons during and after the Lakewood shooting . Authorities claim the accomplices misled police about his whereabouts , gave him cell phones and money , applied first aid to his gunshot wounds and tried to help him leave the state . Among those arrested were Clemmons ' sister , who bandaged his wounds and provided him transportation . Authorities arrested five other people for assisting Clemmons : Letricia Nelson , Quiana Williams , Douglas Davis , Eddie Davis , and Ricky Hinton . Darcus Allen was arrested and charged with aggravated first @-@ degree murder for his alleged role as Clemmons ' getaway driver . Allen claims he did not know Clemmons ' plans when he drove him to the coffee shop , but authorities argued he had known for days that Clemmons planned to murder police officers .

A cell phone photograph taken of Clemmons ' shirtless dead body quickly spread among city residents and government employees , prompting questions over who took it and how it became circulated . If the photo was leaked by an employee of the city or emergency responder , the action may possibly violate their employment contract . Funeral arrangements were kept private by the family due to the circumstances of his crime .