

= United States Capitol shooting incident (1998) =

The United States Capitol shooting incident of 1998 was an attack on July 24 , 1998 , which led to the death of two United States Capitol Police officers . Detective John Gibson and Officer Jacob Chestnut were killed when Russell Eugene Weston , Jr . , entered the Capitol and opened fire . Chestnut was killed instantly and Gibson died during surgery at George Washington University Hospital . Weston 's exact motives are unknown , but he has a mental disorder and maintains a strong distrust of the federal government . He remains in a mental institution due to paranoid schizophrenia and has yet to be tried in court .

= = The shooting = =

On the day of shooting , Officer Chestnut and another officer were assigned to operate the X @-@ ray machine and magnetometer at the Document Door entrance located on the East Front of the Capitol , which was open only to Members of Congress and their staff . Detective Gibson was assigned to the dignitary protection detail of Rep. Tom DeLay (R @-@ TX) and was in his suite of offices near this door . Weston , armed with a .38 caliber Smith & Wesson six @-@ shot revolver , entered the Document Door at 3 : 40 p.m. At the same time , Officer Chestnut was providing directions to a tourist and his son while his partner escorted another tourist towards the restroom . Weston reportedly walked around the metal detector just inside the entrance ; Chestnut requested he go back through the detector . Weston suddenly produced the gun and without warning , shot Chestnut in the back of the head at point @-@ blank range . According to witnesses , he turned down a short corridor and pushed through a door which leads to a group of offices used by senior Republican representatives including then Majority Whip Tom DeLay and Representative Dennis Hastert , future Speaker of the House and a close protégé of then Speaker Newt Gingrich .

Detective Gibson , who was in plainclothes , was shot after the suspect entered DeLay 's office . Despite being mortally wounded , Detective Gibson was able to return fire and wound the suspect , who was apprehended in that office . A female tourist was grazed by bullets on her shoulder and face . She was treated for her injuries and released . Also injured was USCP Officer Douglas McMillian . Future Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist , R @-@ Tennessee , a heart surgeon who had been presiding on the Senate floor just before the shooting , resuscitated the gunman and accompanied him to D.C. General Hospital .

= = After the shooting = =

Officers Chestnut and Gibson were the two people killed in the attack . Following the shooting , both officers received the tribute of lying in honor in the United States Capitol rotunda . They were the first police officers , and Chestnut was the first African American , to receive the honor .

In 1999 , Weston was found incompetent to stand trial due to mental illness as he was a man with schizophrenia who stopped taking his medication . A judge of the United States District Court for the District of Columbia ordered that he be treated with antipsychotic medication without his consent in 2001 , and the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit upheld the decision . In 2004 , the court determined that Weston still was not competent to be tried , despite ongoing treatment , and suspended but did not dismiss the criminal charges against him . Weston was known to the United States Secret Service prior to the incident as a person who had threatened the President of the United States .

The shooting led to the creation of the United States Capitol Police Memorial Fund , a nonprofit organization managed by the Capitol Police Board which provides funds for the families of Chestnut and Gibson . In November 2005 , the fund was expanded to include the family of Sgt. Christopher Eney , a USCP officer killed during a training accident in 1984 . The shooting was cited as one reason for the development of the Capitol Visitors Center . The legislation authorizing the construction of the facility was introduced by Washington , D.C. Delegate Eleanor Holmes Norton and was entitled the Jacob Joseph Chestnut @-@ John Michael Gibson United States Capitol

Visitor Center Act of 1998 . The door where Weston entered was renamed in honor of the two officers , from the Document Door to the Chestnut @-@ Gibson Memorial Door .

On March 6 , 2008 , Weston filed a motion requesting a hearing on his mental status . The hearing was held on May 6 with Weston appearing via teleconference from the Federal Medical Center , Butner with his public defender Jane Pierce and two witnesses he selected , a psychologist and vocational rehabilitation specialist . Federal judge Earl Britt denied Weston 's request to be released from the federal facility , arguing that he failed to present enough evidence that he no longer needed to be committed . During the hearing defense psychologist Holly Rogers stated that , " sometimes there are individuals who simply do not respond to medication " , implying that Weston was not ready for release . Had Weston been released from the facility , it would have made it possible for him to be taken to Washington , D.C. to stand trial for the murders of Gibson and Chestnut .

= = The officers = =

Detective John Michael Gibson (March 29 , 1956 ? July 24 , 1998) was a United States Capitol Police officer assigned to the dignitary protection detail of Congressman Tom DeLay . He is buried in Arlington National Cemetery after lying in honor with Chestnut in the Capitol rotunda . Detective Gibson had served with the agency for 18 years . He was a native of Massachusetts who married the niece of Representative Joe Moakley , Democrat of Massachusetts . He had three children , a 17 @-@ year @-@ old daughter and two boys , ages 15 and 14 . Growing up in New England , Det . Gibson was a lifelong Boston Red Sox fan , and on August 11 , 1998 , his beloved team had a moment of silence in his honor prior to a game with the Kansas City Royals .

Officer Jacob Joseph Chestnut (April 28 , 1940 ? July 24 , 1998) , was the first African American to lie in honor at the Capitol . Chestnut is buried in Arlington National Cemetery . His funeral included a speech by President Bill Clinton and a fly @-@ over by military jets in a missing man formation . A United States Post Office located in Fort Washington , Maryland has been renamed in their honor .

= = The suspect = =

Russell Eugene Weston , Jr . (born December 28 , 1956) , also known as Rusty , grew up in Valmeyer , Illinois . Weston attended Valmeyer High School , the only high school in a town of 900 people . Shortly after graduating high school in 1974 , Weston moved to Rimini , Montana , rarely returning to Valmeyer . The only attempt his high school classmates made at inviting him to a class reunion was returned with obscenities written across it . Many of Weston 's Montana neighbors had disliked him , and often ignored him . They considered him to be unusual , and sometimes eccentric . Weston had once thought that his neighbor was using his television satellite dish to spy on his actions and believed Navy SEALs were hiding in his cornfield .

He was diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia six years before the shooting and spent fifty @-@ three days in a mental hospital after threatening a Montana resident . He was released after testing as being of no danger to himself or anyone else . Eighteen months before the shooting , he moved back to Valmeyer from Montana . Once home , he was known to compulsively hack at trees which filled his back yard following the Mississippi River floods of 1993 . There was so much downed timber on his family 's homestead that they had to ask him to stop cutting at trees . Two days prior to the Capitol shooting , at his grandmother 's insistence to do something about nearby cats which were becoming a nuisance , Weston shot and killed 14 cats with a single @-@ barreled shotgun , leaving several in a bucket and burying the rest .

Following the Capitol shooting , Weston was transferred to a psychiatric center at Butner Federal Correctional Institution in Butner , North Carolina . In an interview with a court @-@ appointed psychiatrist he explained that he stormed the Capitol to prevent the United States from being annihilated by disease and legions of cannibals .

He has never been charged with any crime due to apparent mental inculpability . One contentious issue of Weston 's incarceration is that of forced medication . Weston has thus far refused to take any medications voluntarily . His lawyers helped enable this , in order to protect him from the death

penalty . In May 2001 , a federal judge authorized doctors to treat Weston involuntarily . A panel from a federal appeals court ruled in July 2001 that Weston could be forced to take the drugs which he was forced to do for 120 days . He remains in the Butner facility indefinitely .