

Suspect in Jenner beach slayings had troubled past

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THE PRESS DEMOCRAT | May 5, 2017, 8:53PM



Shaun Gallon in a photo from his Facebook page. (FACEBOOK)



Shaun Gallon has been named as a suspect in the 2004 killings of Lindsay Cutshall and Jason Allen. Gallon was arrested in March on suspicion of fatally shooting his younger brother, Shamus Gallon. (KENT PORTER / PD)



Shaun Michael Gallon (PD FILE, 2009)

Shaun Michael Gallon was a darkly troubled man who had numerous encounters with law enforcement and served time in prison before landing back in Sonoma County Jail, suspected of three murders, including a Midwestern couple and his own brother.

The 38-year-old Forestville man, who grew up along the Russian River, had been arrested repeatedly over the past two decades and convicted in cases involving assault, weapons charges and theft.

His social media posts depict an infatuation with weapons, war and sex. In capital letters he railed against the government and quoted religious texts.

He was known to walk around town with a homemade bow and arrow shooting squirrels and birds. A picture from February showed the burly man wearing a camouflage vest and hat, holding what he described as a homemade spear that was “sharp as sin.”

“He seemed to be suffering from mental health issues,” said Scotty Redman of Guerneville, who has known Gallon for two decades and observed a change in his personality over that time. “He had no humanity in his eyes.”

Others who knew him agreed he was troubled.

Cliff Bolton, Gallon’s former landlord at Deerpark Woods Trailer Resort, said he told Gallon to move out because he was scaring other residents with his archery. Gallon also skinned squirrels in front of his cabin and hammered flint into arrowheads he used to hunt them, Bolton said.

He moved in with his father, David Gallon, who hanged himself in May 2013, and his brother, Shamus Gallon, 36, who he is charged with killing in March.

“I’m sorry for Shaun,” Bolton said. “I really am. He’s one of these people who have a lot of problems and needs a lot of help.”

Neither Gallon’s mother nor other family members could be reached Friday.

According to his Facebook page, Gallon attended El Molino High School, possibly in the mid-1990s, and had at least one brother.

He was described by Redman as a “nice kid,” and a “river rat,” who didn’t do drugs and liked to skinny dip in the wee hours. The two men got to know each other over pints of beer at Stumptown Brewery, where Gallon would frequent. Over the years, Gallon became withdrawn and unstable, avoiding social situations, said Redman, one of several people who described him as a “strange dude.”

Gallon came on law enforcement’s radar in August 2004, six days after a young couple from the Midwest, Lindsay Cutshall, 22, and her fiancé, Jason Allen, 26, were found dead on a Jenner beach, each shot in the head.

Gallon was arrested by sheriff’s deputies on Aug. 24, 2004, on unrelated gun and stolen property charges. The case was dismissed after the judge found prosecutors had insufficient evidence for a trial.

Two months later, on Oct. 2, Gallon was arrested on drunken-driving charges. He was arrested again in December for breaking into a car in Armstrong Woods State Park. Gallon ended up serving about a month in jail.

Other brushes with the law followed in 2005, when he was convicted of a weapons charge, and in 2007, when he was found guilty of obstructing officers.

In 2009, Gallon was the subject of an area manhunt after he fired an arrow into the roof of an occupied car, hitting one man in the head, causing minor injuries.

Deputies brought in the SWAT team because they thought Gallon was barricaded in the attic of the house he shared with his father and brother. After a 29-hour standoff, deputies found Gallon wasn’t home. He had eluded them before they set up a perimeter and fled to a nearby forest, where he hid out for five weeks using his self-taught survival skills before turning himself in.

During his trial, Sonoma County Superior Court Judge Gary Medvigy noted the craft and artistry of Gallon’s weapons, calling them “works of art.”

Gallon was sentenced to three years in prison for assault with a deadly weapon and was paroled sometime in 2011, court records show.

Earlier this year, he was living in a River Road house with his mother, Susan Gallon, and brother, Shamus. On March 24, deputies said he shot his brother at close range multiple times with a .223-caliber rifle, killing him, while his mother was in the house.

A preliminary hearing was set for July 20.

Monte Rio Fire Chief Steve Baxman, who knew Gallon's father and had seen the younger man around town, said he wasn't surprised when he was named a suspect in the Jenner killings.

He described Gallon as a loner who didn't say much more than hello. It was likely Gallon cut his father from the noose he hanged himself with four years ago, Baxman said.

"We all had our suspicions of who killed the couple on the beach," Baxman said. "I'm not at all surprised Shaun was named. It all seemed to fall in place."

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