



Merle E. Clutts

Staff Position: Senior Officer Specialist

Location: USP Marion

Last Watch: October 22, 1983

On the morning of October 22, 1983, Officer Merle E. Clutts was assigned to the Control Unit (H unit), when he was attacked (at about 10:30 a.m.) by inmate Thomas Silverstein. Although handcuffed as he was escorted from a shower back to his cell, Silverstein broke away from his escort and ran to the front of another inmate's cell. This confederate freed Silverstein from his restraints and gave him a knife. Silverstein attacked Officer Clutts, who was fatally wounded, then surrendered to other staff. Inmate Silverstein received a life sentence for murdering Officer Clutts.

Of interest, inmate Silverstein was incarcerated at USP Atlanta when the Cuban Riot broke out in November 1987. Although initially freed by Cuban participants, he was later put in restraints and led to the front of the institution, where he was turned over to authorities by his fellow inmates. Inmate Silverstein is currently incarcerated under maximum security.

The murder of Officer Robert L. Hoffmann later that same day in the same unit, was determined to be unrelated to Officer Clutts' murder.