



Ranger Guided Tour of Coltsville

Coltsville's First Park Ranger - Bert Barnett



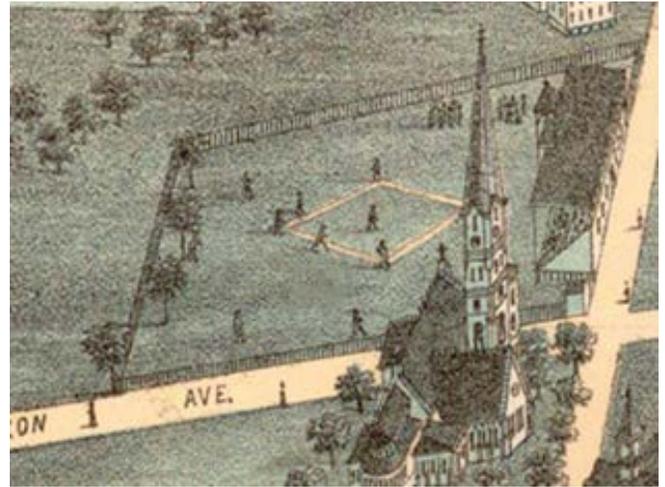
While Bert Barnett was in high school, his father gave him an 1851 Colt Navy Pistol, which started Bert's interest in all things Colt. As a National Park Service Ranger, Bert spent most of his 30 years at the Gettysburg National Military Park. When offered the opportunity to work on a four-month temporary assignment at Coltsville National Historic Park, he jumped at the chance to share his knowledge about Samuel and Elizabeth Colt and the industrial community they created. Until the end of September, Bert will work on several projects that focus on reaching out to the greater Hartford community. Probably the most exciting is leading the first Park Ranger guided walks at Coltsville.

Bert has already conducted this tour for over 250 visitors. Bert offers the tours on Saturdays and Sundays at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. through September 25th, and for groups on special request. The tour, which starts at the Colt Monument (enter Colt Park at the Wethersfield Avenue entrance, next to Armsmear), is free and lasts about 90 minutes. It is cancelled if inclement weather. Bert may be the first, but he will not be the last Park Ranger. The "Ranger," with the characteristic ranger hat, will become a regular presence in Hartford and signal that the town is now home to a national park.

Update on the Park's Establishment

The December, 2014 legislation authorizing Coltsville National Historical Park laid out a series of "conditions for establishment" that must be accomplished before we can officially create the park. We only have three items remaining.

- (1) Signed General Agreement with City of Hartford - On July 19, the City of Hartford had an open meeting with local property owners regarding the General Agreement between the National Park Service (NPS) and the City of Hartford. This provided a forum for questions and concerns. There were no substantial issues raised. Hartford will now circulate the draft agreement through their bureaucracy, resolve any last issues, and then sign the agreement.
- (2) Signed General Agreement with Colt Gateway LLC - Colt Gateway LLC is reviewing the latest draft agreement, which lays out the process by which the future visitor center will be transferred to National Park Service ownership. It is currently being reviewed by their legal team. This non-binding agreement will provide the basis for completing the last item below.
- (3) Transfer Visitor Center space to the National Park Service - On July 5, there was a meeting attended by the National Park Service, Colt Gateway LLC and the City of Hartford. The meeting reviewed processes and potential roadblock as we move forward with transferring ownership to the NPS. This may be complicated.



*Hartford Ball Club in front
of the Church of the Good Shepherd*

Colt and Professional Baseball

The front lawn of the Church of the Good Shepherd was the site of one of the first professional baseball stadiums. Built in 1874, the Hartford Ball Club Grounds became the home of the National Association's Hartford Dark Blues. One of the devoted followers of the Team was Mark Twain (See story below). Notable players on the Team included Tommy Barlow, who was credited with inventing the bunt, and Candy Cummings, who is credited with inventing the curve ball. The Blues struggled during the first year, finishing seventh out of eight teams, the second year they finished third. The team moved to Brooklyn the third year, ending the professional use of the field.

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TWO HUNDRED AND FIVE DOLLARS REWARD

At the great base ball match on Tuesday, while I was engaged in hurrahing, a small boy walked off with an English-made brown silk UMBRELLA belonging to me, and forgot to bring it back. I will pay \$5 for the return of that umbrella in good condition to my home on Farmington avenue. I do not want the boy (in an active state) but will pay two hundred dollars for his remains. SAMUEL L. CLEMENS

May 20, 1875 Hartford Courant



Spotlight – Rev Enrique Irizarry

Reverend Enrique Irizarry is the Priest-in-Charge (or for his Spanish congregation, Sacerdote a Cargo) of the Church of the Good Shepherd. He has wonderful leadership skills and an impressive background, which include two Master's Degrees and a Doctorate. He "loves to teach" and has held faculty positions at the Universidad Interamericana de Puerto Rico, Hartford Seminary, Columbia University, and the City University of New York.

In 2013 the Bishop for Connecticut, who knew Reverend Irizarry from when he coordinated Spanish Ministry in Connecticut, contacted him and requested that he lead the Church of the Good Shepherd. When he asked when he wanted him, the Bishop indicated, "yesterday". Reverend Irizarry jumped at the chance, as he and his wife had fond memories of Connecticut and he likes the historic authenticity of New England.

Reverend Irizarry's family centric view is perfect for the Church of the Good Shepherd, and the family and community focus that is exemplified in the church activities. Reverend Irizarry indicated "it is not a big church in numbers, but it is big in terms of care and service".

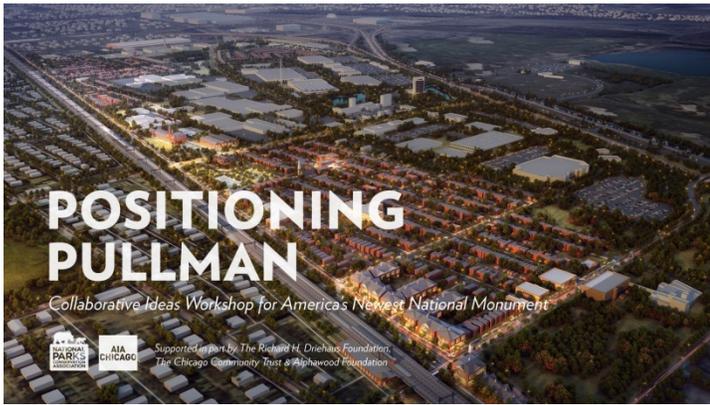
Church of the Good Shepherd

One of the hallmarks of Samuel and Elizabeth Colt was their desire to build a community for their workers. Elizabeth Colt in particular, had the Church of the Good Shepherd and the Parish House built in memory of her husband and children, but also as centers for the community to worship and to relax. The Parish House included a large social hall and even had a bowling alley in the basement. Elizabeth Colt would be pleased with the community focus that occurs daily at the Church of the Good Shepherd. In addition to regular church services the Church supports a variety of community events and activities from a community garden, to hot meals and food share, to a program for the children of incarcerated mothers.

Reverend Irizarry credits Elizabeth Colt and the trust that she created as the source of support that keeps everything going. He also indicates that the people in the community who have come together to support these programs are "really fantastic." He sees these activities as a "living legacy of Elizabeth Colt". The church has a number of activities to outreach to the community, and receives referrals from throughout the community, even from the local fire department. Reverend Irizarry is quick to add that "nothing is done without the assistance of outstanding volunteers."



Church of the Good Shepherd Community Garden



Positioning Pullman Report Cover

all discovered new and unique ways to connect park, local community and the National Park Service visitor. They all have lessons to teach us as we build Coltsville.

One park that is similar to Coltsville is the newly established Pullman National Monument in Chicago, Illinois. Like Coltsville, Pullman was an industrial village built around a factory complex – in this case one that built railroad cars. The site was declared a national monument in February, 2015.

Barack Obama was a community organizer in the area, and nearby will be the site of the Obama Presidential Library. This confluence of events has focused attention on the site. Recently, the National Parks Conservation Association and the American Institute of Architects Chicago organized an early planning symposium to come up with ideas for Pullman’s development. This very interesting report can be found at:

<http://www.positioningpullman.org/>

Coltsville Heritage Partnership

Coltsville’s new friends group, Coltsville Heritage Partnership, continues to move forward in developing a partnership framework for the Park. They have organized a board, brainstormed ideas for projects, and are working to build their membership base. If you would like to become involved, Carol Coburn can be reached at 860-289-2658 or c.m.coburn@hotmail.com

Partnership Parks

Coltsville is one of many new partnership parks in the National Park Service. The older national park model saw everything owned and controlled by the federal government. In a partnership park, many groups work together to preserve the parks resources and tell the stories that make that place special. In this new paradigm, the community and the National Park Service work together to build a framework for the park and to ensure success. Coltsville will require a community.

A good way to learn about partnership parks is to visit and explore them. Some partnership park examples, all within a day’s drive, include Lowell, New Bedford Whaling, Paterson Great Falls, Blackstone River National Historical Parks, and Springfield Armory National Historic Site. None are exactly the same, nor do any provide precise models for Coltsville. However, those places have

Contact Us



James Woolsey
Superintendent, Coltsville National Historical Park
140 Huyshope Avenue #331
Hartford, CT 06106
James_Woolsey@nps.gov
413-271-3980