

**MARK & CELESTE RUSSO  
39 WOODCREST LANE  
GREEN BROOK, NJ 08812-2212**

**FORT HANCOCK & CENTURY  
C/O BUSINESS SERVICES  
GATEWAY NATIONAL RECREATION AREA  
210 NEW YORK AVE.  
STATEN ISLAND, NY 10305**

**Re: EXPRESSION OF INTEREST**

**MARK & CELESTE RUSSO**  
**39 WOODCREST LANE**  
**GREEN BROOK, NJ 08812-2212**  
**732.648.9894**  
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**EXPRESSION OF INTEREST**  
**RESTORING HISTORIC FORT HANCOCK**

**INTRODUCTION**

We are Mark and Celeste Russo of Green Brook, NJ. We are native New Jerseyans who grew up in this general area. Celeste (Newark) Mark (South Orange). We have lived in Green Brook for the past 35 years with the usual (and unusual) challenges and rewards raising a family entails. Obviously, lives change and plans sometimes change, so we were planning to make a move to other living quarters in southern New Jersey. This opportunity at Fort Hancock could prove mutually beneficial to The National Park Service, The People of New Jersey and to us.

**BUILDINGS OF INTEREST**

The buildings we are interested in restoring are Numbers 13, or 20, or 67 on your site map.

**USE OF BUILDINGS**

The buildings once restored to their original condition would be used as our primary residence. This would insure the structure would be preserved and maintained in accordance within the National Park Service guidelines and our belief that the original design of the external and most internal points are the best design possible.

## **WHY FORT HANCOCK?**

We have a unique history with Fort Hancock in our personal lives. We spent many summers together there when we first met, (Celeste's father was lifetime U.S. Army) and Fort Hancock was an active military base. We stayed in the billets and barracks, walked the grounds constantly, and enjoyed the beaches by the war bunkers. Celeste had friends in the officers' quarters and visited there many times. Since then we have re-lived our memories hundreds of times in our stopovers. So, this is much more than keeping history at the Fort. It is a passion we share and a joy we could behold as we live there after the restoration.

## **FINANCIAL RESOURCES**

We realize the financial resources involved may be immense. We assure and certify (with details provided in the full RFP) that we have the financial reserves and resources to complete the restoration and preservation project you assign. This represents a huge personal commitment. We will also search and apply for grants from many sources. We understand the Park Service has grants available through its' Preserve America Grant Program; also grants may be available through the New Jersey Historic Trust.

## **PLAN FOR RESTORATION**

Below is an informal outline of a restoration plan:

1. Hire qualified architects familiar with historic restoration.
2. Submit RFP for approval
3. After lease is agreed by all parties, begin mutually approved restoration.
4. Secure roof area, weather tight. Weather proof windows.
5. Mitigate lead paint and asbestos
6. Replace electrical wiring, updated to current codes.
7. Replace and update plumbing and heating systems.
8. Install new appliances, keeping historic areas, where possible.
9. Preserve and refinish floors and fireplaces.
10. Inspection by all parties.

Again this is just an informal outline. Mark Russo has some experience in the construction industry, having worked it in his younger days.

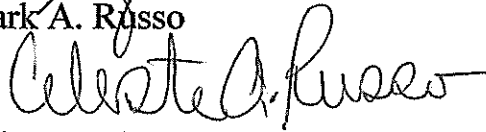
## SUMMARY

We realize there are many applications to the structures that are available for restoration. We think we are uniquely qualified to execute a quality restoration according the Park Service guidelines. Again, we mention our personal history with "The Hook" and its' surrounding areas. The passion and love we feel in our hearts to be a part of "bringing history to the present day." Keep in mind we also will be living there after all projects are complete. This will be our **primary residence**. We will be good stewards and will pass our heritage to following generations 60 years from now.

Thank you kindly,



Mark A. Russo



Celeste A. Russo

Green Brook, NJ

November 25<sup>th</sup>, 2013