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News Release

*For Immediate Release*

### **Wild Bill Hickok Story Brought Back to Life**

The nation's first one-on-one quick draw duel took place on Springfield's town square between J.B. "Wild Bill" Hickok and Davis K. Tutt, on July 21, 1865.

The City is bringing the story back to life thanks to the use of technology. Markers are placed in the concrete in locations on Park Central Square that indicate where eyewitnesses were likely interviewed by the coroner after the deadly fight. Smart phones can access QR codes on the markers that will load audiovisual files recounting the story from each witness' perspective. Seven different perspectives, along with Coroner J.T. Brown's findings and the jury verdict, are included in the tour.

To supplement the QR code tour, Wild Bill has a new digital presence at [twitter.com/wildbillsgf](https://twitter.com/wildbillsgf) and [facebook.com/wildbillsgf](https://facebook.com/wildbillsgf). For those without a smart phone, or QR code reader, the tour is available at [www.springfieldmo.gov/wildbill](http://www.springfieldmo.gov/wildbill).

City of Springfield Public Works assistant director Jonathan Gano became interested in the legend of Wild Bill Hickok in Springfield while remodeling Park Central Square last year. Gano uncovered the coroner's inquest in the Greene County archives and thought it would make a good audio story.

"He is probably the most famous person to ever live in Springfield," Gano said. "The shootout became famous around the world and probably shaped what later became depicted in movies over and again as the Wild West duel."

What began as an argument over gambling debts, turned deadly when Tutt seized a prize watch of Wild Bill's as collateral. Warned against wearing the watch in public to humiliate Wild Bill, Tutt appeared on the square on July 21, prominently wearing the watch. The two men then unsuccessfully negotiated the debt and the watch's return.

Hickok returned to the square at 6 p.m. to again find Tutt displaying his watch. Wild Bill gave Tutt his final warning. "Don't you come around here with that watch." Tutt answered by placing his hand on his pistol.

Standing about 75 yards apart and facing each other sideways in dueling positions, Tutt drew his gun first. Wild Bill steadied his aim across his opposite forearm. Both paused, then fired near simultaneously.

Tutt missed. Wild Will's shot passed through Tutt's chest. Reeling from the wound, Tutt staggered back to the nearest building before collapsing.

Wild Bill was acquitted of manslaughter by a jury after a three-day trial. Nothing better described the times than the fact that dangling a watch held as security for a poker debt was widely regarded as a justifiable provocation for resorting to firearms.

#### About the QR Code Tour

Greg Burris, Phil Broyles, Jim O'Dell, Mike Peters, Vince Crunk, Ric Buchanan, Tina Stobb and Bob Willenbrink provided the voices behind the retelling. City Department of Public Information produced the tour, including visuals of what the eyewitnesses might look like (no illustrations are known to exist). Look closely: the illustrations resemble their vocal counterparts.

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