

**PRESS RELEASE**

**For Immediate Release  
For More Information Contact  
October 19, 2015**

**Joseph A. Giorgio (973) 428-2466**

**The first in a series of articles to celebrate the First Tri-Centennial of  
NW New Jersey**

Hanover Township is celebrating the first Tricentennials of Northwest New Jersey, of its “Olde Iron Works” and “Fordville,” the Builder’s Homestead. Its Landmark Commission is doing so by music and education, but more permanently, by working to make the historic corridor through the Township linking Newark and Morristown recognized, a “Journey through History” in honor of its over-40 historic sites.

The first of these sites in the town is the Whippany Burying Yard. A missing word shows its age; “Cemetery,” was not yet common in the English language. In May 2015, the Commission set a monument to the many there known only to God, and created a walking visit of the many men and women who now rest after they made history.

The “Journey” will have a similar tour, with plans to enrich it by building a replica of the original 300-year-old Iron Forge by the Whippany River, near where it originally stood.

Whippenny is both the first settlement and Township in North Central New Jersey. It predates the State of New Jersey and the Counties of Morris, Warren, and Sussex. Historic tourism is big business. Already people are paying to tour the Burying Yard, even in the face of the just-passed Hurricane Joaquin. As the Commission’s Chair, the author Mike Czuchnicki wrote, “It rained, was cold, and the wind blew. What better place to be, than in a Burying Yard?”

Two dozen history buffs answered this question on Saturday, October 3 by visiting the settlers who are tired after working, writing laws, and fighting in the wars to birth our land. Their number includes Schoolmaster Richards, who bequeathed property along the bank of the Whippanong River. He sleeps in the first marked grave of our region; its headstone is our oldest settler relic.

The Yard is between river and road, swamp and hill. 15,000 years ago, a half-mile thick glacier visited. The Great Swamp is a remnant. Beyond the Yard’s fence, cars on Route 10 unthinkingly follow the old Indian Trail across the wetlands. The river drops

*Hanover Township*

*Landmark Commission*

65 feet in just a half mile, so waterpower made Whippany a mill town.

Industry began with a 1715's "Ye Olde Iron Forge." "Whippany" is ground zero of the region's giant iron industry. For two hundred years, our region was home to over one hundred blast furnaces and forges – with countless companies – making iron bars, nails, and numerous other products – from our mines' ore.

Our traditions of heroism began with the first settlers. The "Bravest man of the American Revolution," Major Morris, was born, and later died of his wounds here. Other gave the ultimate sacrifice, in the years to follow. WWII had five brothers serve, but only four return. Today's heroes continue to sacrifice.

The Commission's work is to honor the past, foster pride, and enhance the town's economy. The celebration of history matters. Our heritage is hard work, innovation, and sacrifice. Our many towns built and protected the world: Mines, Forges, Furnaces, and Mills; Canals, Railroads, and Communications; Arsenals, Laboratories, and Medicine. Bell Labs' inventors saw NYC from atop the rise. Television's first broadcast followed, making Whippany Television's home. Picatinny Arsenal still serves to protect our nation.

We are now celebrating the Forge's Tricentennial – Northwest NJ's first. Events include a Hanover Wind Symphony concert on October 28 and a Forum on November 21. Both are in Memorial Jr. School. Our next Tricentennial will be in three years, for the Burying Yard.

Tricentennials are just the tip of the iceberg of our proud history. They preserve our culture, grow pride, and make us wonder at what the next three hundred years will bring.

#####