

A Time to Remember
Celebrating Those Who've Served
April 22, 2008

Memorial Day is much more than picnics and the start of summer. It's the day Americans take time to reflect on its heroes; the men and women who have given so much in service of this country, and Hackettstown is no exception. While there have never been any battles fought here, Hackettstown's citizens have contributed greatly to protecting the freedom we all enjoy.

During the Revolutionary War, Jeremiah Pool was an Army wagon driver who unselfishly came to the aid of the Continental Army during the winter of 1778-1779, when 22 major snow storms, six foot snow drifts and freezing temperatures all but isolated Washington and his troops encamped in Jockey Hollow. Without food and supplies, the fate of the Army, and perhaps the Revolution itself, hung in the balance.

Pool, and others like him, took the wheels off their wagons, replaced them with sleigh runners and using oxen instead of horses, navigated the snow-covered roads to deliver food and clothing to the starving soldiers. They knew the terrain, the route and the criticality of getting food and supplies to the stranded soldiers. Pool, who died in 1818, is buried in Hackettstown's Olde Presbyterian Burial Ground, along with 28 other commemorated Revolutionary War veterans.

"The contributions made by Jeremiah Pool and others like him were as important to the war effort as the commitment of the men who took up arms," says Charlie Prestopine, Revolutionary War re-enactor and member of the Olde Burial Ground Committee, a local volunteer organization dedicated to the preservation of the burial ground and its importance to Hackettstown. "These men were bona-fide heroes."

The same can be true of the men and boys who marched off to fight in the Civil War. New Jersey sent 49 regiments, including the 11th, the 15th and 27th, comprised of men from Warren County and the Hackettstown



area. Captain Daniel Bailey led the 27th New Jersey to the Battle of Fredericksburg. The men of the 27th were said to be the most traveled regiment from New Jersey, marching more miles than any other regiment from the state. In September 1863, after being mustered out, about half of the men from the 27th re-enlisted as members of the 33rd New Jersey Volunteers.

Captain Bailey's great-great grandson, John Covert pays tribute to his ancestor's memory as a Civil War re-enactor. "Every regiment suffered losses," says Covert, "and so did most families. These men lived and died with honor, sometimes in the cruelest of conditions. Ancestors or not, we need to be proud of them and remember their contributions to our country."

To commemorate the contributions of Hackettstown and its citizens, the Historical Society Museum is featuring a display of Revolutionary, Civil and World War artifacts, uniforms, information and images, now through the end of May. The Museum is located at 106 Church Street, next to the Library. Hours of operation are Monday, Tuesday and Thursday, 10:30am- 1:00pm; Wednesday, Friday and Sunday, 2:00pm - 4:00pm. For additional information, please contact the Museum at 908.852.8797