



Wynnewood on Stonebridge Road

CONTRIBUTED BY MIKE FARRELLY,
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AROUND 1902 Edmund Osborne, a printing magnate, and his wife, Jessie, bought Harrison land and Williams land in the South End. They put together an 80-acre tract which became known as Osborne's Woods. They created Stonebridge and Southerland Roads and built a large house on Stonebridge.

Wealthy families started buying lots on the tract. Most of them built grand houses. These buildings didn't have the commanding views that houses along the mountain top had, but they were magnificent none the less. These houses were slightly off the beaten path with only a few access roads. Osborne's Woods became a somewhat closed community with quietly noble homes; not brazenly imposing.

Perhaps the new owners were more comfortable with their success than the people who built houses to be seen along Upper Mountain and South Mountain Avenues. This month's home is on Stonebridge Road. It was designed in the style of an English manor and is known as "Wynnewood"

It was built about 1928 by Henry Gilbert Riter III and his wife, Margaret. Henry grew up in Philadelphia. He was a partner in the Philadelphia investment firm, P.W. Brooks & Co. In the 1920s he and Margaret lived in Cheltenham, a wealthy suburb just north of Philadelphia. It is possible that they chose the name "Wynnewood" for their Montclair home to remind themselves of another Philadelphia suburb, Wynnewood. They moved to Montclair. Henry started his own Wall Street investment firm. His firm, the Riter Company, invested in the Thomas A. Edison Co. headquartered in West Orange. He became a director in the Edison Company and president when Thomas Edison's son, Charles Edison, left to serve as Secretary of the Navy and then as governor of New Jersey. As president of the Edison Co., Henry became the president of the National Association of Manufacturers. He became a minor celebrity when he appeared before the joint House and Senate Economic Committee to predict a rosy economic picture in 1955 and again when he appeared before the same committee to oppose the merger of the AFL and the CIO labor unions.

In the 1970s Wynnewood passed into the hands of a business executive and politician named Frank Raleigh Lautenberg. He moved in with his first wife, Lois. Lois died in 1988. Frank later married Bonnie Engelhardt. Frank was the son of Polish and

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Dear Residents,



I F YOU'VE BEEN enjoying Andrew Wander's images from his book, *Stately Homes of Montclair*, on our Featured

Homes page, then you may be interested in Van Vleck House & Gardens' 20th Anniversary Roses to Rock Gardens Tour on June 7th and 8th. This annual fundraiser will give you access to some of the most unique private gardens in our area.

The tour, which is self-guided, starts at the Van Vleck Gardens where attendees pick up a guide to local homeowners' properties. And if history is your thing, all those who take the tour can also attend a special presentation at Van Vleck on Saturday, June 8th, for a presentation of the history and development of Van Vleck's historic gardens. Did you know that the six acre property was built as a private estate over 125 years ago? Or that three generations of the Van Vleck family lived at the estate before it changed hands in 1993 when it was gifted to The Montclair Foundation? There's so much more to know about this stunning estate.

Today, the Van Vleck gardens are open to the public 365 days a year for free, in part, due to fundraisers like the annual garden tour. So if you'd like to offer your support and get a peek into some of the area's loveliest displays of gardening flair, mark your calendar for this unique event.

All the Best,

CANDICE HOROWITZ *Content Coordinator*



Addendum for the "Wynnewood on Stonebridge Road" article

In the May 2019 issue, I mentioned that Lois Lautenberg had passed away. That is incorrect. She is alive and well and living in West Orange. I believe that it is a historian's job to be as accurate and as precise as possible. It is important to record facts accurately for future readers. I try very hard to make sure that everything I print is correct. I do not know the Lautenbergs personally. I found something on the internet that made me think that Lois was deceased. I did not at the time cross-check that information. I apologize for any concern that I may have caused.

Mike Farrelly
Montclair Township Historian



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Russian immigrants. He grew up in Paterson. He served in the Army Signal Corps during World War II. He took advantage of the GI Bill and studied economics at the Columbia University Business School. He joined the newly formed Automatic Payroll Company and became their top salesperson. He became a full partner in 1957. He was CEO in 1975 when the company changed its name to Automatic Data Processing (ADP), one of the major payroll and human resources handling firms in the world. He remained as CEO of ADP until 1982 when he ran for the United States Senate. He won the election in an upset by using his own money to outspend his popular opponent, Milicent Fenwick. He was asked to step into office early, before the usual swearing-in date, because Nicholas F. Brady left the post to work in the Reagan administration. He was elected to the office again in 1988 and in 1994. He decided not to run again. However, when his colleague, Robert Toricelli, ran into some re-election financing scandals, the Democratic Party of New Jersey asked him to run. He became senator again in 2003. He became New Jersey's longest serving senator when he won re-election in 2008. He died in office in 2013. Governor Christie appointed State Attorney General, Jeffery Chiesa, to hold the office until a special election could be held. Cory Booker won the special election and finished Lautenberg's term.

Lautenberg was considered the last of the "New Deal Liberals". He had a long record; too long to summarize here. If his senatorial career had to be summed up in a few words, he could be considered: an advocate of stronger environmental regulations, and stronger consumer protection laws. He supported Amtrak and public transportation. He campaigned vigorously against under-age drinking and drunk driving and served on several committees which investigated wrongdoing by Wall Street. ■

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