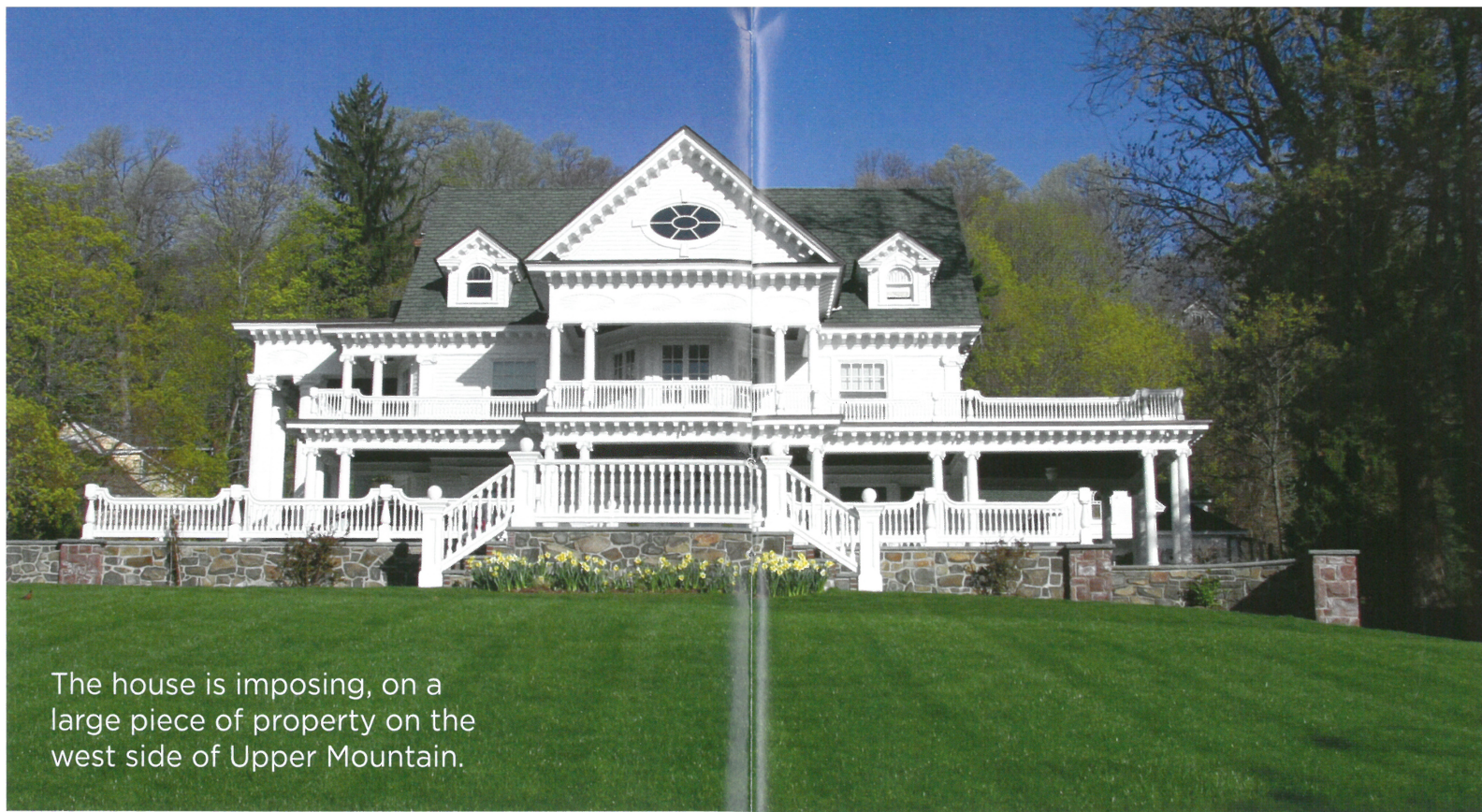


# “Bide-a-Wee” on Upper Mountain

CONTRIBUTED BY MIKE FARRELLY,  
MONTCLAIR TOWNSHIP HISTORIAN  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY ANDREW WANDER

**T**HIS LOVELY HOUSE on Upper Mountain Ave. was called “Bide-a-Wee” by its original owners. It was built about 1903 by George W. Bostwick and his wife Amelia May “Mary” (Titus) Bostwick. The 1902 Directory shows them living on the east side of Upper Mountain. This house is more imposing, on a larger piece of property, and on the west side of Upper Mountain. The house is not on the 1901 map but is on the 1906 map. George was the vice president of the Alberene Stone Company and one of the largest shareholders of the company. They made soapstone sinks and tubs, especially multiple basin sinks for laundry rooms. Soapstone was non-porous and held up very well to the chemicals and bleaches used in doing laundry. George was a volunteer fireman at the Cliffside Fire House (Upper Montclair). He took part in many of their activities and was often a spokesman for the fire department at town hall, especially when they were petitioning for new equipment. George and Mary were very active in the Christian Union Congregational



The house is imposing, on a large piece of property on the west side of Upper Mountain.

Church. The church on Cooper Ave. had just been built (1900). However, when George and Mary joined Union Congregational, the church was on Valley Road. After the new church was completed, the steeple was removed from the original building and the original building became part of the Commonwealth Club. It stood at 551 Valley Road until it burned down in the 1980s. There are storefronts there now. George passed away in 1907. Mary gave a deacon’s chair to the new church on Cooper Ave. in his memory. Mary then moved to Cooper Ave.

The March 19, 1910 issue of the Montclair Times said that a “Mrs. Agnes C. Meyer of Christopher Street” would occupy the house. She must not have stayed there very long if at all. In 1912 Mary Bostwick sold the house to Francis F. and Rose Olga White. Francis was a senior partner in the accounting firm of Plender & Griffiths. Plender & Griffiths merged with William Deloitte’s firm. In 1952 that conglomeration merged with Haskin & Sells. They, in turn, merged with Touche Ross in 1985 to become the accounting giant, Deloitte & Touche. Deloitte & Touche was bought out by Tomatsu, a large Japanese company, but it still goes by the name of Deloitte. Francis was born in England. He returned to England for health reasons, he stayed there a year but passed away in 1922 at his brother’s house in Buckfastleigh, Devon. Rose stayed in this house until about 1928. She traveled with her children during this period. The Montclair Times reported on her travels. It was customary for newspapers to disclose when people left home, where they traveled to, and how long they intended to stay away. The practice has long since been discontinued to protect people’s privacy. She must not have returned to Montclair often because she did not bother to correct the Price Lee Company, the company that printed the directories. They still listed Francis as the owner in 1924. In 1926 she appears in the directories as Rose Olga, widow of Francis F., still living in this house. She disappears from the directories around 1928.

Someone, most likely a developer, bought the house and renovated it in 1931, but it did not sell right away. There were some ads mentioning that it had just been renovated and was priced to sell, or rent, quickly but they don’t say who the owner

is. From January to July of 1932 The Frank H. Corson Real Estate Company placed a series of long flowery ads touting the benefits of living in this house and living in Montclair in the Montclair Times. These ads don’t mention who the owner

was either. Nobody seems to have lived in the house until 1934 when the Squier family moved in.

Frederick C. Squier Jr. was born to a wealthy family in Rahway. His father, Frederick C. Sr. was a major owner of the NJ Zinc. Co. Frederick Jr. went to Princeton and served in the army during WWI. He married Olga Leora Snyder. She appears as Olga in some accounts and as Leora in others. They lived with his parents for a while then moved to this house. Frederick Jr. must have been independently wealthy because he is often listed as having no occupation. His obituary says he was a financial consultant working out of his home. They were both members of the Cosmopolitan Club and the Overseas Neighbors Club. Olga graduated from Wellesley and was a member of the College Women’s Club. Their passion was for financially adopting at-risk children. During WWII they financially adopted two English children whose father had died and whose mother had been injured during the “Blitz.”

After the war, they financially adopted a young French girl and then a young Yugoslavian boy. They were ardent supporters of the Berkshire Farm Center and Services for Youth in Canaan, NY. They lived in this house until 1985. He passed away in October. She passed away in November. ■

If you’d like to see more images of Montclair homes, they are featured in the book, *Stately Homes of Montclair*, which can be found at Montclair Booksellers, several local libraries and the Stately Homes of Montclair Facebook page.

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