

The Windows of St. Michael's

A brief history about those who donated the stained glass windows of St. Michael's, or in whose memory they were given.

Window Symbol: Monstrance

The monstrance is a sacred vessel used for the exposition of the Most Blessed Sacrament. For centuries the Church has reserved times for quiet prayer and adoration before the Blessed Sacrament, in order that we may take the time to reflect on the depths of Our Lord's love for us in giving himself to us completely in the Holy Eucharist, a central mystery of our faith.

Given in Memory of: Frances (Roche) Driscoll

Frances "Fanny" Roche was born about 1825 in the parish of Valentia, County Kerry, Ireland, daughter of Francis "Frank" and Margaret Roche. Valentia was the homeland of many of the families of St. Michael parish. About 1840 Fanny Roche married Michael Driscoll in Valentia, and about three years later they emigrated to Massachusetts. After living for awhile in North Providence and Smithfield, Rhode Island, Michael and Fanny Driscoll settled in Pawcatuck, where Michael worked in the woolen mill.

They had at least ten children: Simon; Margaret; Anna who married William Murphy; Dora M.; Michael E. who married Catherine A.; John T.; Patrick Francis; Joseph A.; and Frances who married Walter Moran.

The Pendleton family owned a large tract of land from Liberty Street to the textile mill on the river. The small pathway through that tract was called Grove Street, later renamed Stillman Avenue. In 1886 the Pendletons started to sell building lots, mostly to local Irish. Michael and Fanny Driscoll joined his brothers, Eugene and Patrick Driscoll, in purchasing a number of those building lots. Michael and Fanny built the very first home on that street (17 Stillman Avenue) and raised their large family there.

An interesting aside is that until our church was closed, the author of this story always sat near Fanny Driscoll's window without realizing it was Fanny's house that his own family bought when he was a child. He'd grown up in Fanny Driscoll's home on 17 Stillman Avenue.

On April 24, 1889, Fanny Driscoll died and is buried with her husband and a number of her children in St. Michael's Old Cemetery.

Descendants

Descendants of the Driscoll-Roche family include the **Driscoll, Roche, Murphy, Moran, O'Leary, Weldon, Fenton, Holliday**, and **Harrington** families. Their descendants include the proprietors of O'Leary's Grocery on Liberty Street, the owner of a local granite quarry, manager of the Mohican Market in Westerly, owner of a dancing school, a boxmaker, and many local quarrymen and stonecutters.

— Larry O'Keefe

