

The youngest son of Charles and Mary Quinn was Harry Michael. He attended St. Dominick's elementary school. When the family moved to Waveland Avenue he enrolled at Lakeview High School. During the summers he worked as an apprentice for an architect who recognized his natural talent. He offered him a position with his company. After discussing the opportunity with his family, he decided to accept. This decision required that he quit High School at the end of his Sophomore year. His talent was quickly recognized by others. At the age of seventeen he designed St. Bonaventure Church (at Diversey & Ashland)

For a time he was interested in politics and at 20 ran for State Representative. He lost the election when they discovered his age. He then decided to continue in the prosperous building business. When World War I started, he proposed to Frances Ann Flynn. They were married on October 30, 1917 in St. Andrew's Catholic Church.

During the War, Harry worked as a civilian for the Army designing and building barracks in different parts of the south western United States. Their first child was born while he was traveling. Frances and "little Barth" lived with Grandma Flynn on Jansen Avenue until after the war.

As the family grew they moved frequently - 1615 Lunt Avenue, 6153 N. Clarmont Avenue, 6619 Glenwood Avenue, 6945 N. Ashland Avenue, 1627 Columbia Avenue, 458 Fullerton Parkway, and finally to 226 Lincoln Park West. Summers between 1920 - 1927 were spent at their home on Gages Lake on the outskirts of Chicago. Their children attended Eugene Field School, St. Ignatius, St. Jerome, Lincoln School, St. Clement, Sullivan Jr. High School, The Immaculata, DePaul Academy, Mundelein College, Marquette University, Northwestern University, Notre Dame University, Chicago Academy of Fine Arts, Loyola University, Clarke College and DePaul University.

Through the years he came to realize the value of an education. Through his experience he often said, "people and circumstances can take away your money, but if you have a good education no one will ever be able to take it away." Consequently, he provided the best educational opportunities for each one of his children. It was his legacy to them.

Six times he was down, seven times he got up. He designed his dream home which was to be built on the southwest corner of Lunt and Ashland Avenue. When the Stock Market Crash came in 1929 he lost everything. The partially built home on Ashland Avenue was torn down in 1939 and the bricks sold. He moved his family to a small apartment above a store on Ashland Avenue. The owner let him live there rent free. He saw his little family through the Great Depression and shielded them with such loving care that they never realized how poor they were. In later years he repaid generously the owner of the apartment for his kindness.

In 1939 he recovered enough to begin buying up property on the South Side of Chicago. Though he became known as the "Master Home Builder", he never again tried to build his own home. Instead he helped each one of his children build their own dream home as they married. He finished his career the way he had started. He designed and built St. Richard's Catholic Church. Many of his homes were constructed in the South side parishes.

In retirement he and his dearest Frances traveled extensively throughout the United States and Mexico. His goal was to visit every state in America. Only after this would he consider travel overseas. He died of a heart attack on December 17, 1953. Originally he was buried in St. Joseph's Cemetery. In 1958 his remains were transferred to a crypt in Queen of heaven Mausoleum in Hillside, Illinois.

In his funeral sermon the priest described him as "an Isrealite in whom there was no guile." Indeed he was!

Office of Bishop Kane & Vicariate II
Archdiocese of Chicago

Dear Norma & Judy,

Thank you for your reply. I live in Dallas, TX and unfortunately will not be able to attend the Jubilee Mass on the 17th. My Aunt Maureen and Uncle Jim have said that they would like to attend but it all depends on how Jim is feeling that day. I am sure that Maureen can let you know as it get closer.

I did a little more research which I thought you might also find interesting:

In the 1890's, Joseph Molitor formed a partnership with Charles W. Kallal and they designed the St. Vitus Catholic Church in the Pilsen neighborhood of Chicago. Molitor was a Bohemian-born architect. Kalla was a first generation Bohemian-american. The church was built in 1897.

About 1907, Kallal accepted the job of City Architect which was a very important position. In addition to overseeing the design and construction of all City buildings, fire stations, swimming pools and other facilities, he had one prestige project:

Per the 1913 Chicago City Manual, Kallal was charged by Commissioner of Public Works Lawrence E. McGann, with a prestige project: restoring the Chicago Water Tower, which had, in the previous 42 years, gone to seed. Mayor Harrison lived nearby, and had long wanted to see the tower and its accompanying pump house brought up to snuff. The City Manual reports that Kallal and his workers repaired the structure's ground facings and replaced much of the broken glass. The Manual also provides amazing descriptions of how much work Kallal and his men had cut out for them. The Chicago Fire's most famous survivor did not resemble the shiny castellated phallus standing at Chicago and Michigan Avenues today:

"The lighter stones and stone ornaments of the tower were torn off and hurled a distance by the superheated wild air; the heavier white stones were blackened and stained; the foundations were involved and so weakened that the tower leaned, giving to Chicago for a time the second marvel of the kind in this world of marvels."

So, in 1907, Charles W. Kallal went on to become the City Architect, and who did Joseph Molitor replace him with? He replaced him with the young prodigy who was the architect of your church, Henry (Harry) Michael Quinn.

Like Paul Harvey used to say, "And that's the rest of the story."

Phil LaBerge

Dear Saint Bonaventure Church Centennial Committee,

I was fascinated to discover that you are celebrating the centennial of the church this year and that you will be having a jubilee mass on Sunday, July 17th at which Cardinal Francis Eugene George and Reverend Francis J. Kane will be presiding.

Your links:

<http://saintbonaventurecentennial.yolasite.com/history-of-saint-bonaventure.php>

<http://saintbonaventurecentennial.yolasite.com/calendar.php>

<http://saintbonaventurecentennial.yolasite.com/centennial-newsletter.php>

I was just sent the attached Quinn Family History by one of my cousins which I am sure you will find quite interesting. I am related to the Quinns through my maternal aunt, Maureen Sammon Quinn. Please note page 6 and the description of Henry (Harry) Michael Quinn in which it states:

"The youngest son of Charles and Mary Quinn was Harry Michael. He attended St. Dominick's elementary school. When the family moved to Waveland Avenue he enrolled at Lakeview High School. During the summers he worked as an apprentice for an architect who recognized his natural talent. He offered him a position with his company. After discussing the opportunity with his family, he decided to accept. This decision required that he quit High School at the end of his Sophomore year. His talent was quickly recognized by others. At the age of seventeen he designed St. Bonaventure Church (at Diversey & Ashland)"

It goes on to state later in his life:

"In 1939 he recovered enough to begin buying up property on the South Side of Chicago. Though he became known as the "Master Home Builder" he never again tried to build his own home. Instead he helped each one of his children build their own dream home as they married. He finished his career the way he had started. He designed and built St. Richard's Catholic Church. Many of his homes were constructed in the South side parishes."

After doing some research, I found that the architect who must have "recognized his talents" was the famous church architect, Joseph Molitor.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joseph_Molitor

While the design of Saint Bonaventure was credited to Molitor, I believe it was actually Harry Quinn who designed and built it. Harry was born on October 27, 1891. 17 years later would have been about the beginning of 1909. The parish was established October 11, 1911, the building was designed, and the cornerstone was laid on August 18th, 1912.

Harry Quinn was the uncle of Jim Quinn who is now 84 years old and lives in Wilmette with my Aunt Maureen Sammon Quinn. See attached photo.

It is a great story!!!!

Regards,

Phil LaBerge
Coppell, Texas