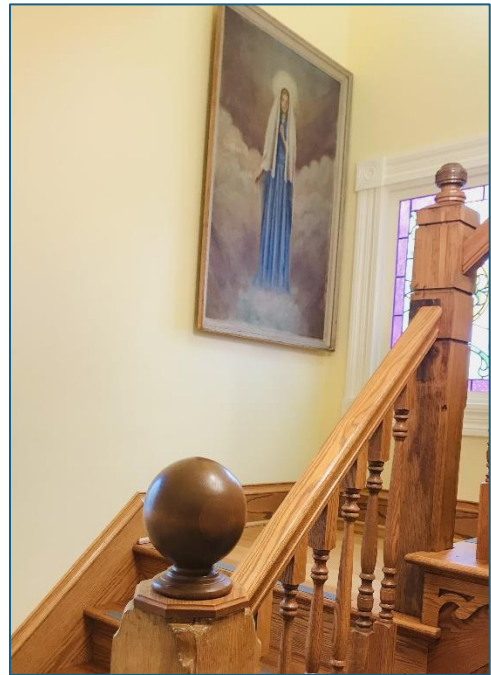


“OUR LADY” Oil Painting Graces Ritter Museum

A large image of the Virgin Mary has hung in the Cardinal Ritter Birthplace home since restoration was completed in 2010. The undated painting is signed by George Hancock (1926-2001), a resident of New Albany. His widow, Doris (Soergel) Hancock (1923-2015), was raised one block away from the home of young Cardinal Ritter and volunteered as secretary of the CRBFI during the early years beginning in 2004 through 2012.



According to Greg Sekula, director of the Southern Regional Office of Indiana Landmarks and then a board member of the Cardinal Ritter Birthplace Foundation, Inc., reported the following.

“I purchased the painting at a local garage sale on Spring Street one summer (don’t recall the year) and donated it to the Ritter house. The person who sold the painting said a family member acquired it from St. Mary’s and that it had originally hung in the convent. Doris [Hancock] confirmed to me that her husband painted it.”

Ironically, Doris explained she was not aware of the painting and had “never seen it before.” Her reaction leads us to believe her husband may have created the work of art prior to their marriage on September 11, 1948, perhaps specifically for the Franciscan Sisters who were teachers at the parish school. Today, the painting graces the stairway connecting the front parlor with the birth room on the second floor, both restored to the 1890 era at the Cardinal Ritter Birthplace.