

The Bells of St Mary's



St Mary on the hill, Pokeno 1900

**The story of the church of St Mary on the Hill,
Pokeno, New Zealand
celebrating 120 years of worship,
1900-2020**

Bruce B Owen

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Dedication

This edition of the story of the church of St Mary on the Hill is dedicated to the memory of the late Margaret Lyons, editor of the Centennial edition of the church's story. This update had Margaret's blessing, but sadly she did not see it in its final form, nor was she able to view the considerable documentation of the backgrounds of Harriet Johnston and Francis Pyne that was not available twenty years ago. St Mary's was her spiritual home and place that she served faithfully and well for several decades.

*May you rest in peace with your
beloved Bruce and Rob.*



Margaret Lyons 1940-2020

Cover image:

A drawing of St Mary on the Hill by Marion Ogilvie, which was used by Margaret Lyons in her edition of the St Mary's story, for the Centennial in 2000.



View of the Anglican church, St Mary on the Hill, Pokeno, Franklin District.
(Ref: 1/4-034441-G. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand. [/records/22702444](#)).

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Introduction

I have dedicated this update of the story of the church of St Mary on the Hill, Pokeno, to the late Margaret Lyons who died at the end of July 2020. Margaret, who with her beloved husband Bruce, was for many years a very loyal and supportive member of the church, serving in many capacities including that of Parish Treasurer and member of the St Mary's Guild. It was on Margaret's initiative, in 2000, the Centennial year of St Mary's consecration that she produced an update of the history of the church. Those who knew Margaret well, were conscious of her passion for the history of St Mary's and in particular her admiration for its benefactor, 'Miss Johnston'. Though Margaret drew on the previous history written by Dora Hessel for the 75th Anniversary in 1975, she also arranged for fellow parishioners to add their memories. Likewise, in this edition I have used the text of Dora and Margaret's edition in Parts D and E, though with some layout reorganising.

With 2020 being the 120th Anniversary of St Mary's I decided that, with my recent experience of writing up the story of St Peter's church, Bombay, *'The Little Church on the Hill'* for its 150th Anniversary, I could write the update of St Mary's church. I was aware that with access to the internet and ancestry records that were not available in 2000 that I would be able to find out more about the background of Harriet Johnston and Francis Pyne. And, indeed, I was able to.

Margaret Lyons was aware of my plan. I had her blessing!! She had a caution though. She wanted to be able to read it through before it was published!

As I began to explore the family stories of both Harriet Johnston and Francis Pyne I became aware that I was delving into the backgrounds of two amazing and significant families from Victorian England. Previously, we knew only a little of their background and who they were, but even less about how they were connected.

As I started to explore the Pyne family background I became aware that I was reading about a significant family. Who would have known that Francis Pyne's forebears were substantial land owners in County Cork, Ireland? Who would have known that the family had a connection with the ownership of Blarney Castle, albeit for a brief time? Who would have known that Francis' father, who as a clergyman, was a well respected and long serving Rector of a parish church in Surrey, just south of London? Who would have known that this same clergyman, Francis' father, for a short period just before he died inherited the family estate of Ballyvolane House in County Cork? Neither was it known that Francis' half sister, Dorathea and her husband, Denis O'Callaghan, her cousin but also a clergyman, settled in Canterbury, New Zealand, making a name for themselves in their own right. As well, several of Denis' siblings also settled in Canterbury.

Harriet Johnston's family's background has been more of a challenge to unearth. Census and other records have provided dates and places, but little else. We know that Harriet's mother was a member of the London Roebuck family and that Harriet's father was variously described as fund holder and magistrate. Harriet never married and neither is there any evidence of there being a direct family connection between the Pynes and the Johnstons. The best connection seemed to be that of geography and the circumstances of Francis' parents. However, it was the chance discovery of the write up of the history of a house in Devon that Harriet Johnston had moved to, that gave the clue to the relationship between Harriet and Francis, but also of Francis' sister, Isabella. I will leave the story ahead to reveal the connection.

Sadly, Margaret Lyons never had the opportunity to read through the draft of my story, nor to read the large folder of resource material that I collected. What I was able to do was have a phone chat with her a couple of weeks before she died, outlining the basics of what I had found, including that of explaining the relationship between Harriet and Francis.

It would be easy to write a simple outline of St Mary's story, but to do so would be disingenuous. The 2020 update of the story behind the church of St Mary on the Hill, '*The Bell's of St Mary's*', is a fascinating one with its own unique perspective. I therefore make no apology in starting the account with a comment about the story of the Pokeno Valley. It is important for any history to be placed in its context.

The story of Pokeno is no ordinary story, and with the settlement now becoming a town in its own right, it is a story that should be told and shared. This quiet fertile valley, not far from the mighty Waikato River, and within striking distance to the coast for local Māori inhabitants in earlier times, was torn apart by colonial power and greed for land. The Valley became the focus of a brutal conflict, a conflict which was to devastate Waikato Māori. It is a story that cannot be ignored and is a sad legacy that remains to this day.

Likewise, I have felt that it is important to tell the story of the Pyne and Johnston families in some detail. Their story is integral to the story of St Mary's. Previously it has been assumed Harriet Johnston was the key person. It is true that it was her wealth and generosity that provided a community hall and a church, but more importantly it was the Pyne family circumstances that led to them both emigrating to New Zealand. It is my hope that in reading through this story the place of Francis Pyne is better understood. It is the circumstances of he and his younger sister, Isabella, that is the key. Whilst Harriet may have been very generous with her wealth, Francis was very much a giver of his time to the community in so many ways, as this story will show.

The title *The Bells of St Mary's* was suggested by long time parishioner Alan Wilcox. The church bells are unique to St Mary's and have rung out over the valley from the very first day it opened, calling the faithful to worship. May those bells continue to ring long into the future.

'The Bells of St Mary's is the story of a thriving worshipping community steeped in its own history. The story of both that of the Valley and the church itself deserve to be better known. It is my hope that this account will help in that understanding.

Bruce Owen

October 2020

Acknowledgements:

A project like this does not come together in five minutes, neither is it a solo production. I would like to acknowledge the support of our Vestry, and to various members of the church community from whom I have sought advice. In particular, I acknowledge the support of Priest in Charge, the Rev'd Andrew Beyer, who has given his encouragement from the start, as well as proof reading copy with helpful comments and contributions. Part of the story, which is included, was compiled by Dora Hessel and Margaret Lyons, for the 75th and Centennial Anniversaries respectively, but much of the Pyne and Johnston Family backgrounds were sourced from genealogical and other on line research. This took hours to achieve and perhaps the first Covid Lockdown helped with that. Likewise, setting the scene at the beginning and the last twenty years, required some patient research. Some of the photos are not of the best quality, the decision was made to include, rather than exclude.

Lastly, I acknowledge the support of my wife Diana, who has helped with several proofreading exercises, but who also endured the hours I spent huddled over my keyboard. More importantly, *The Bells of St Mary's* is the story of a worshipping community without whose involvement over the past 120 years and beyond, this story would never have been told. Let us acknowledge that.

Contents

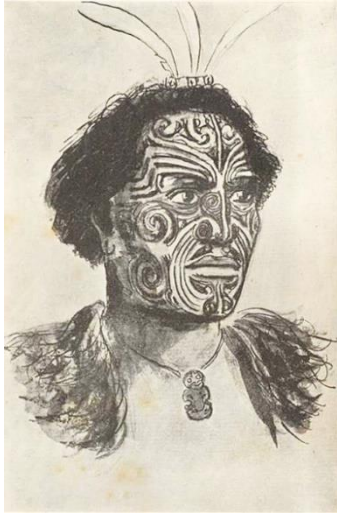
Introduction	3
Part A. Setting the Scene	
1. From a Land of Plenty.	6
2. To a Land at War.	8
Part B. The Story of Harriet Johnston and Francis Pyne Unfolds.	
3. What we already knew.	10
4. The Pynes of Ballyvolane.	11
5. William Masters Pyne, Father of Francis Pyne, Pokeno.	12
6. Significant Developments.	16
7. So now to Harriet Johnston.	18
Part C. New Zealand Bound	
8. Why New Zealand?	21
9. Harriet arrives in Pokeno.	23
10. Harriet Johnston's Death.	24
11. Francis Pyne, Pillar of the Community.	25
Part D. A Church is Built.	
12. From the Centennial Booklet.	28
Part E. Memories	
13. Parishioners Remember.	38
Part F. A New Century Begins	
14. Celebrating 100 Years.	55
15. The Twenty First Century Begins.	56
16. Clergy the First twenty Years.	69
17. And Finally....	71
Appendix A. Parish Administrivia.	72
Appendix B. A Rebel in the Family.	74
Appendix C. Thomas and Sarah Bates.	76



Part A. Setting the Scene

1. From a Land of Plenty

The fertile Pokeno Valley, together with much of the lower reaches of the Waikato River, was the centre of significant early Māori settlement. The rich forests, abundance of kai from the river and streams together with the nearby west coast provided the resources needed for settlement. The local iwi was Ngāti Tamaoho and the name 'Pokeno' is derived from Pokino, a Māori settlement located to the north of the present town centre, in the vicinity of what is now Fraser Road and Avon Road junction.

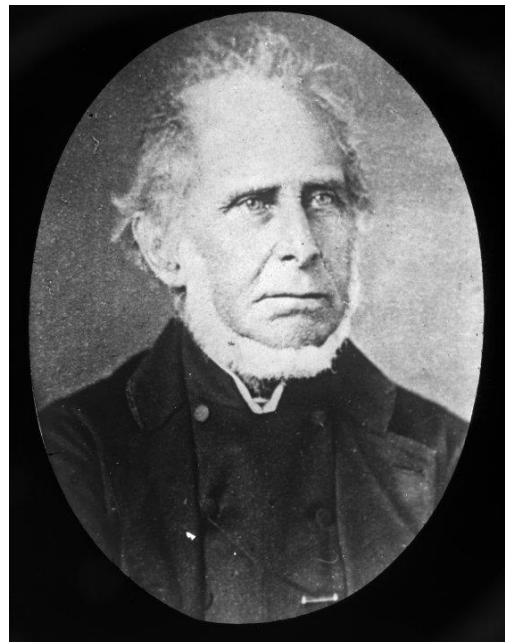


Hongi Hika.¹

Life was not always settled, with considerable unrest in the 1820's and 1830's caused by raiding war parties led by Ngapuhi chief, Hongi Hika. In 1822 Hongi Hika led a war party of some 3000 warriors, many armed with muskets. Their advance took them through the Waiuku estuary, over the portage from Waiuku to the Waikato River advancing through the north Waikato, including Tuakau and Pokeno, up the Waikato River until they reached the fortified pa of Matakītaki on the Waipa River. Hongi Hika's men overran the pa with great loss of life to the local Waikato Māori.

By the 1840's the situation calmed and the Church Missionary Society set up a Mission Station at the Waikato Heads, by what is now Port Waikato, with another station up river near Taupiri. It was CMS Missionary, Robert Maunsell, who was instrumental in getting some local Māori to sign the Treaty of Waitangi, though Ngāti Tamaoho were not among those who signed.

In 1846 Pokeno became part of the Ramarama Purchase by the Crown from Ngāti Tamaoho. This purchase was considerable, extending some 35,000 acres from the Mangatawhiri Stream in the south through Drury to Papakura.



Rev'd Robert Maunsell, circa 1880.²

We can get an idea of what life was like in the Pokeno Valley in the 1850's from a description written by geologist and scientist, Ferdinand von Hochstetter. Based on a visit to the area in

¹ Hongi Hika, from a sketch by Major General G Robley, based on a portrait painted in England in 1820. *Māori Wars of the Nineteenth Century*, S Percy Smith. Whitcombe and Tombs 1910

² National Library of New Zealand, Ref: 1/2-127076-F

1855, he describes a village called Mangatawhiri to the east of what became Queen's Redoubt. Hochstetter described Mangatawhiri as comprising: *"about 20 huts, with about 100 inhabitants, who are enjoying considerable wealth. They very recently had a neat flour mill built by an Englishman, on a small stream running through, by the village, which cost them not less than £400. The volcanic soil of the neighbourhood is extremely fertile and there is no scarcity of horses, cattle, and pigs in these parts"*.³ It is understood that local Māori were also cultivating crops of wheat, maize, peaches and potatoes, which provided the Auckland market via Waiuku and the Manukau Harbour. It is suggested that within two years the village of Mangatawhiri was abandoned in favour of Pokino. The current spelling of Pokeno can Ferdinand von Hochstetter⁴ be assumed to be a 'corruption' of the original Pokino, meaning a place of refuge.



A Road is Formed



Māori group at Pokeno.⁵

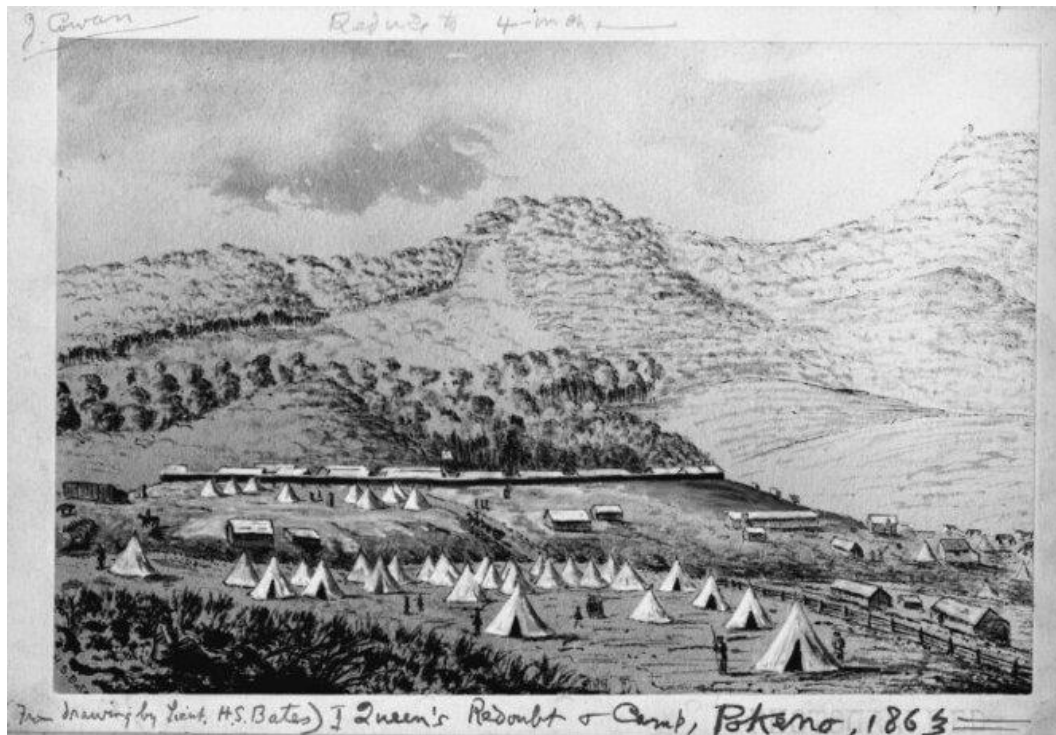
European settlement of the Pokeno Valley was initially somewhat slow due to the physical barrier of what are now known as the Bombay Hills. Access was originally via a bush track following a traditional Māori ara, or route, through Tuakau. An incident occurred when a local Maori Chief had felt insulted when he had taken some pigs to market. In his anger the chief placed a tapu on the track so that neither Maori nor Pakeha could travel along it. A government surveyor, Henry Hayr, when faced with this tapu on the Tuakau track sought an alternative route over the hills to Drury. This track, originally known as Hayr's Line, follows

³ Waikato District Council Historic overview – Pokeno District. p47

⁴ Image courtesy Wikipedia

⁵ Photo: W Temple, Urquhart album. Ref: PA1-q-250-27-2. Alexander Turnbull Library

what is now Razorback Road, then to Bombay Road and along the Great South Road to Drury⁶. Starting out as a bush track, it was widened to become a bridle path. Eventually it was widened to take bullock drays, though frequently it was too muddy and impassable, especially in winter.



Conical military tents on a field at Pokeno, with farm buildings to the right, the redoubt spread across a low hill in the middle distance and wooded hills behind.⁷

2. To a Land at War

As tensions between settlers and Māori increased in the early 1860's, a military presence was established at Pokeno and the track was widened and metalled by the military to form a proper road between there and Drury. In due course a series of forts and redoubts were constructed in the region ending with the Queen's Redoubt completed in 1862. On 9 July, 1863, Governor George Grey proclaimed his contentious edict that Māori living north of the Mangatawhiri Stream swear an oath of allegiance to the Queen, or be expelled to south of the stream. It was reported that Ngāti Tamaoho were initially in favour of negotiating with the Crown, but Grey's policies encouraged them to join with Tainui and the Kingitanga movement south of the stream.

War broke out on 12 July, 1863, when British troops crossed the Mangatawhiri River. The abandoned Māori village of Pokino was destroyed by an apparently unauthorized expedition of soldiers from the Queen's Redoubt. What followed in the subsequent months was the invasion of the Waikato, with significant loss of life on both sides, but particularly among Māori. The succession of battles that followed ended with the eventual defeat of Māori at the

⁶ Nona Morris, *Early Days in Franklin*, p24

⁷ Bates, Henry Stratton: *Queen's Redoubt and Camp, Pokeno, 1863*. Alexander Turnbull Library. Ref: PUBL-0054-1-241.

battle of Orakau in April 1864. The substantial *raupatu*, or land confiscations, that followed continue to be the subject of contention and resentment to this day.

A Legacy of Injustice

As we move forward to consider the colonial settlement of the Pokeno Valley, it is important to be mindful of the way in which Māori were treated by the Colonial Government of the time. There is no question but that there were considerable injustices imposed on Waikato Māori, including Pokeno hapu. It must be a matter of regret that we outline the history of our church in the context of such injustice.



Queens Redoubt, Pokeno, photographed in 1864 by Daniel Manders Beere.⁸

Colonial Settlement of the Pokeno Valley

The colonial authorities wasted no time surveying and subdividing the land into allotments. The Waikato Immigration Scheme was established to provide settlers for the district. The first settlers to arrive came by the sailing ship *Helenslee*, largely Scottish Presbyterian by background, leaving from the Clyde in Scotland, arriving in Auckland on 22 December, 1864, after a three month voyage.

Each settler family was offered a quarter acre town section and a ten acre rural section. They were required to work on and improve the sections for two years after which a Crown Grant would be issued, giving them ownership. However, it was not a prosperous business with many men seeking alternative work gum digging, labouring or gold mining at Thames.

Church worship was an integral part of any community in the 19th Century and Pokeno was no exception. A chapel was built as part of the Queen's Redoubt complex. The Presbyterian minister from Papakura, the Rev'd Thomas Norrie, visited the Redoubt and held services there. Church of England, Bishop George Selwyn, was also a regular visitor. An Anglican church was built on the north side of the Redoubt, but this was later destroyed by fire. The Presbyterians also built a church by the Redoubt, though this was moved to a new site on land

⁸ Queens Redoubt, Pokeno. Alexander Turnbull Library, Ref: 1/2-096088-G.

by the junction of Fraser Road and Avon Road, gifted by the Aked family in 1883. The Roman Catholic services were held in the billiard rooms on Market Street.

Perhaps the most significant development for the post Land War period was the opening of the main trunk railway line in 1874. Surprisingly, this had a negative effect. Initially, Pokeno was in a strategic position with the military road providing good access to and from Auckland. By May 1864, a regular six horse coach service run by Cobb and Co ran between Auckland and Pokeno, which gave a reliable passenger and postal service to and from the community. The arrival of the railway in 1874 which ran through Pukekohe and Tuakau before arriving at Pokeno meant that these settlements were now just as accessible as Pokeno and began to prosper accordingly. It was not until the advent of the motor car in the early 20th century that Pokeno regained some of its lost strategic advantage.



Part B. The Story of Harriet Johnston and Francis Pyne Unfolds

3. What we already knew

When the earlier versions of the history of the church of St Mary on the Hill were written, the internet, in the first instance, was not available, and with Margaret Lyons update in 2000, it was only in its infancy. Researching information was therefore very much based on local knowledge and resources, with limited options for extended research. By contrast, the internet in 2020, is a vast pool of information that crosses international boundaries, and immediately available at one's fingertips. The challenge then, must be to ensure that the information thus researched is verified and correct. Having said this, historical research is very much like a jigsaw puzzle, or even more than one puzzle jumbled together, that takes time and patience to complete. Even then pieces may still be missing.

The earlier versions of the St Mary's story were therefore somewhat limited in providing the backgrounds of the church benefactors, Harriet Johnston and Francis Pyne. There were certainly more questions than there were answers. It was known that they had some connection with each other, but the precise nature of their relationship was a matter of conjecture. Francis, a young man in his mid-20's, arrived from England in 1889 to purchase a 700 acre farm. A year later Harriet Johnston arrived to reside, with Francis Pyne, in the substantial two storeyed residence '*The Springs*' on the farm. When, in 1894, Francis married Bertha Picken, he continued to reside at the homestead.

The fact that Francis Pyne and Harriet Johnston are buried in the same grave plot at Pokeno cemetery has given rise to some speculation. At the time of the restoration of their joint

gravesite in 2016, *Rural Living*⁹ headlined: *‘Tryst Secret taken to the Grave’*, continuing this speculation by writing:

“Harriet Johnston who emigrated from England in 1892, aged 63, to live with another British settler, the much younger Francis Pyne”. Further comment adds: “The Pynes had one daughter, Marian, whose middle name was Johnston adding to the intrigue.

Such speculation is unfortunate and surely would be of considerable embarrassment to Harriet. Further, the date of her arrival noted in the quote is incorrect.

It is really the amazing generosity of Harriet Johnston that brings her into our focus. It was she who decided that it was time for the Pokeno Valley to have its own Anglican church, gifting the land and providing the capital for a substantial church building and Vicarage. It was also she who decided in 1898 that the district needed a community hall, complete with piano. She was a generous benefactor to other organisations as well. The earlier versions of St Mary’s history have less to say about Francis Pyne, other than to suggest that Harriet had instructed him to provide an annual grant to supplement the Vicar’s stipend on her death, a request that he is said to have reneged on the basis of poverty.

It is time to put the record straight!

4. The Pynes of Ballyvolane

We start in County Cork, Ireland

In this update of the story of St Mary’s it is now possible for us to fill in many gaps. Surprisingly though, it is with the Pyne family story that we need to explore first, for therein lies the key to the connection with Harriet Johnston and thus to her arrival in New Zealand. Though it is the amazing generosity of Harriet that saw the building of St Mary’s, it is her connection to the Pyne family, by circumstance, that led to her emigration to New Zealand. This fact must not be discounted!

To begin our understanding of the Pyne family story we need to travel to the southern part of Ireland, in the vicinity of the town of Cork. The Pyne’s were ‘well to do’ and influential landowners who benefitted, like many of their class, from English rule in Ireland. Though it is possible to trace the Pyne family connections further back in time, it is helpful to begin our story with one Richard Pyne (1644-1709). Richard Pyne, later to be Sir Richard, was born in County Cork, the fourth son of Nicholas Pyne of Monageely, Co. Cork. Educated at Oxford, Richard trained in, and followed, a career in law, initially in England, but from 1674 in Ireland.

The Battle of the Boyne in 1690 was to be a defining point in Irish and English history. The politics of the battle were complex, but largely centred on Catholic or Protestant supremacy. In the end the Protestant William of Orange of the Netherlands, with an army twice that of the size of Catholic King James of England, won the day. Protestant ascendancy was secured in Ireland for generations to come, a point of contention in a country that was predominantly Catholic, but ruled by a Protestant England. It was into this political setting that the Pyne family, as with many other landed gentry in Ireland, prospered. In 1691 at the personal request of William III, Richard Pyne was appointed, initially as Chief Justice of the

⁹ Rural Living, May-June 2016, page 12

Irish Common Pleas, which was then followed by his appointment to the office of Lord Chief Justice of the King's Bench for Ireland, a position he held until his death in 1709. He was knighted by King William for his services.

Sir Richard Pyne thus became a substantial landowner in County Cork, including for a brief period, Blarney Castle. Before he died in 1709 Richard Pyne began the planning of what was to be known as Ballyvolane House, destined to be the home of the Pyne family until 1953. The house was built in the Georgian style and completed in 1728, to be enjoyed by Sir Richard's descendants. Sadly, Sir Richard did not live long enough to enjoy Ballyvolane House.



Portrait of Sir Richard Pyne.¹⁰

It is to Sir Richard's grandson, Arthur Pyne (1747-1839) that we need to move to next.

He was born at, and grew up at, Ballyvolane House. In due course he married Mary Masters (1765-1847). They had nine children, seven girls and two boys. The eldest boy was Jasper Richard Masters Pyne (1797-1860). It was Jasper who inherited Ballyvolane after the death of his father, Arthur, in 1839. The second son was William Masters Pyne, the father of Francis William Pyne of Pokeno.

5. William Masters Pyne, Father of Francis Pyne, Pokeno

William Masters Pyne was born at Ballyvolane, County Cork in 1801, to Arthur and Mary (née Masters) Pyne. Arthur and Mary were part of the landed gentry, living in style at Ballyvolane House. Their son William's first years were growing up in Ireland with his siblings. He received a good education, and it is quite possible he could have been sent to boarding school in England, though there is no record of that. His education, however, was sufficiently good enough to enable him to attend Pembroke College, Oxford, where he completed his MA. Shortly after, he was ordained priest in the Church of England and at the relatively young age of 27, in 1828, was given the position of Rector of the Parish of Oxted, Surrey, England, a post he held until his death in 1869, 41 years later.

The Rev'd William Masters Pyne had a big family, to three wives, two of whom died at a young age, leaving him widowed, whilst the third wife was the mother to Francis William Pyne of Pokeno. His family of nine, six boys and three girls, were involved in politics, in the church and as migrants to New Zealand, with son Jasper Pyne having the most colourful story referred to in the Appendix.

¹⁰ [Wikigallery.org/wiki/painting, William-Gandy, Portrait of Sir Richard Pyne, Lord Chief Justice of-the-Common Pleas in Ireland](https://www.wikigallery.org/wiki/painting,William-Gandy,Portrait_of_Sir_Richard_Pyne,_Lord_Chief_Justice_of_the_Common_Pleas_in_Ireland)



Ballyvolane House as it is today.¹¹



Rev'd William M Pyne.¹³

The Rev'd William Pyne resided at the very substantial Rectory at Oxted, suggesting that the Oxted Parish provided a 'good living'. In those days, the incumbents' stipend frequently would depend on the earnings of the glebe¹² land of the parish.

William Pyne's first marriage was to Mary Watson Smyth in 1828. As far as can be ascertained they had one son George Masters Pyne who was born in 1832 and a daughter Mary Elizabeth Pyne, born in 1836. William's wife Mary died after the birth of daughter Mary leaving William a widower for the first time.

In 1841, at the age of 40, the Rev'd William married Mary Jane Maxfield who was 18 at the time. She too, died at a young age, in 1853, being only 30.

¹¹ Ireland-Guide.com/Ballyvolane House.

¹² 'glebe' refers to land owned by the church to provide income for the priest and parish.

¹³ www.oxtedplace, Oxted, A History of the House and Gardens, The Pynes 1828-1869



The Rectory, Oxted, built for Rev'd Wm Pyne in 1828.¹⁴

Between them they had five children:

Arthur John Pyne	1843-1909
William Baynham Pyne	1845-1894
Dorothea Louisa Pyne	1845-1874
Jasper Douglas Pyne	1847-1888
Charles Frank Pyne	1849-1885

(It was Dorothea who emigrated to Canterbury, New Zealand in 1865 after marrying her cousin Denis Pyne O'Callaghan).

The Rev'd William lived as a widower for the second time, for ten years, before deciding to remarry. Again, he chose a very young bride, this time the daughter of Charles Tamplin, a former butler of his. Charles Tamplin is listed in the 1841 Census return for the Pyne household as being the butler. Anne Tamplin was also 18 at the time of their marriage in 1862.

They had two children:

Francis William Pyne	1865-1926
Isabella Martha Pyne	1867-1919

The Rev'd William Pyne died in 1869, at the age of 68. He had been Rector at Oxted for 42 years, which was a significant achievement in those days. His memorial is to be found in St Mary's Church, Oxted.

¹⁴ Oxtedplace.net. Oxted, A History of the House and Gardens

The memorial reads

*In memory of
The Revd William Masters Pyne,
M.A.
died May 22 1869
42 years Rector of this parish.
This tablet
is erected by the parishioners,
as a tribute
of gratitude for his generosity
As a token of affection
for his kindness and cordiality,
and as a memento of the high
esteem
In which he was held by them.*



Memorial to Rev'd Wm M Pyne
St Mary's Church, Oxted.¹⁵

Ballyvolane House again

In spite of being the son of a family that has been well recorded, and in spite of his long service at Oxted, there seems to be very little written of the life of the Rev'd William Masters Pyne that is readily available, which has not already been touched on. One record does stand out however, relating to the family estate at Ballyvolane, Co. Cork. On the death of Arthur Pyne, William's father in 1839, Ballyvolane House and property was inherited by his oldest son Jasper, being William's older brother. On Jasper's death in 1860 the property then passed on to the Rev'd William Pyne, being the next oldest son, despite Jasper leaving a widow and daughters living there. According to inheritance law at the time property could only pass on to a male heir. As William had no intention of residing in Ireland it is recorded that he put the property on the market, and it remained unsold until his death in 1869. The property then passed on to William's eldest son, George Masters Pyne. Ballyvolane House continued to remain in the Pyne family until it was sold in 1953. It is now a private hotel.

Rev'd William Pyne's Death brings big Changes to the Family

The death of the Rev'd William Masters Pyne is the first important link and clue to the connection between Francis Pyne and Harriet Johnston.

Husband William's death meant big changes for wife, Anne. She became widowed at the age of 24, with two young children to care for, with Francis and Martha being only four and two respectively. Their stepbrothers and sisters were all at an age to be self-sufficient with

¹⁵ www.oxtedplace.com, A History of the House and Gardens, The Pynes 1828-1869

Charles the youngest from the earlier marriages being 20. Anne and the family would have had to move out of the Rectory at Oxted and to a new home. However, Rev'd William's family connections and his place in the male lineage of the family would suggest that they would be left reasonably well off.

The 1871 Census records taken just two years after the death of the Rev'd William indicate that Anne and her young family had moved 30 or so miles west of Oxted to Cranleigh Common. Cranleigh, like Oxted, was a village centred at the foot of the North Downs in Surrey.

The 1871 Census records Anne and the children living at Cranleigh Common:

Anne Pyne	26	(widow)
Francis William Pyne	5	
Isabella Martha Pyne	3	
Martha Tamplin	57	(Anne's mother)

6. Significant Developments

The 1881 Census shows significant changes. The record shows that Francis, at the age of 15 is listed as a scholar at King Edward School, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire. Most significantly of all, Isabella, who is now 13, is listed on 1881 Census record as living at *Oakhayes House*, Woodbury, Devon, as the adopted daughter of one Harriet Johnston!

A history of *Oakhayes House* was written up by the Woodbury Historical Society in 2015. In this account it records the tenancy of Harriet Johnston. This record is crucial to the story of St Mary's church and its benefactor Harriet Johnston and her relationship with Francis Pyne. It is reprinted here in bold type to reflect the real significance to the story of St Mary's Church, Pokeno.¹⁶

"The tenant who followed the Hayman family to Oakhayes was a very wealthy single woman, called Harriet Johnston. She lived there with her two adopted children, eventually leaving England to settle in Auckland, New Zealand, with her adopted son."

In fact, as the story unfolds, we will see that both Harriet's adopted children, Francis and Isabella made the move, with her, to New Zealand.

Francis and Isabella are the adopted children of Harriet Johnston

We have now established that Harriet Johnston had adopted Francis and Isabella Pyne. What is unknown is how this arrangement came into being. Adoptions were not formalised in the UK until 1926. Prior to 1926, adoptions were arranged, informally by appropriate organisations, e.g. Barnardos, or directly between the birth mother and the adopting parents. In some case the agreements might have been drawn up by lawyers¹⁷. It is with the 1871 Census records that we find the best clues. The search for Harriet Johnston shows that she lived at *Stonewall*, Cranleigh, Surrey. As noted previously we find that the 1871 Census records show that Anne Pyne and her two young children Francis and Isabella also lived in

¹⁶ Gillian Selley, '*Oakhayes House and some of its occupants.*' Woodbury Local History Society, 2015 Newsletter

¹⁷ British Association for Adoption and Fostering

the village of Cranleigh. What is significant is that the Pyne and Johnston entries are on two consecutive pages on the Census record book. Not only did they live in the same village, but they would have only lived a short distance from each other. It is not unreasonable to assume that, as both had strong connections with the Church, they would have known each other.



Francis William Pyne?¹⁸

A possible, but by no means confirmed, photo of Francis Pyne as a boy, suggested by a descendant. Arguably, there is a possible family resemblance when compared with his father's photo on page 13.

The mystery becomes more intriguing when we search for Anne Pyne in the 1881 Census finding her still living at Cranleigh Common. However, there is no listing for William or Isabella. The records show Anne as the 'head' but also lists a James Boarer as 'head', aged 31, with his wife Charlotte 39, and their children Elizabeth and Annie aged 3 year and three months respectively.

Something changed between 1871 and 1881 for Anne Pyne. Was it a change, significant enough to give up her two children in favour of neighbour Harriet Johnston to adopt Anne's two young children? Was she ill? It is unlikely that we will ever know the reason.

Further searches to find any evidence of Anne's remarriage or death have proved fruitless, but the 1881 Census shows that the adoptions had already taken place.

For whatever reason we now assume that, at least by 1881, that Harriet Johnston had adopted Francis and Isabella into her care. Francis had been sent to King Edward School, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire, a well-established 'public' school in England, even in those days. The 1881 Census shows him listed as a scholar, aged 15. He passed his matriculation in 1884, gaining a place in Worcester College, Oxford. There he pursued a degree course, gaining a BA degree in 1888.¹⁹ Though it is not uncommon for scholars to cease their studies

at the BA level, it was certainly more the expectation that they would continue a further year of study to complete an MA. Francis, for whatever reason, chose to conclude his studies at the bachelor degree level.

We can only assume that, in completing his studies in mid-1888, prior to the beginning of summer, as is the custom in the northern hemisphere, he returned to *Oakhayes House* in Woodbury, Devon, to Harriet. The need to find appropriate employment was not essential as it was a household of means, and his father, William, on his death, would not have seen him without some financial support. There was no doubt that there would have been discussions about the future may hold for Francis. New Zealand clearly was one of those options.

¹⁸ <https://rednicnz.wordpress.com/2011/12/09/nz-descendants-of-arthur-pyne-of-ballyvolane/>

¹⁹ Alumni Oxoniensis: The Members of the University of Oxford, 1715-1886, Joseph Foster.

7. So now to the Family of Harriet Johnston

So far the evidence indicates that Francis and Isabella Pyne were adopted by Harriet Johnston. Despite extensive internet research, it is unlikely that there will be any documented evidence leading to the circumstances of the adoption, nor indeed exactly when it occurred.

Harriet Johnston was born on 23 November, 1828, and baptised on 24 December that year at Old Church, St Pancras, London.²⁰ Her parents were Charles and Caroline Johnston. Harriet's mother was born Caroline Roebuck, in 1804, to John and Mary Roebuck, of Lewisham, Kent. Charles was born in 1801. His father was Frederick Johnston but his mother's name is unknown at this stage. Charles and Caroline were married in Cheltenham in April 1827. Records show that Charles and Caroline eventually settled on a property 'Claramont', in Cheshunt, Hertfordshire. Land transfer records show that the property was purchased on 11 October, 1834.²¹ The 1841 Census data shows that the family were still living at 'Claramont' in Cheshunt. Harriet at that time was 12 and her sister Sophia was 10. The Census record shows that the family have nine servants listed as living at 'Claramont'. Unfortunately, the record does not clearly state Charles employment other than to say 'Head'. With a household of nine servants the property is clearly a large one, suggesting that the Johnston's are very well off.

Our next evidence of the Johnston family background takes us to the *Journal of the Royal Agricultural Society of England*, where in January 1844, Charles Johnston of 'Claramont', Cheshunt, is listed as a 'new member', together with a number of titled people. Perhaps we can assume that 'Claramont' not only has a large house, but also a farm, which may explain the number of household servants. Sadly, Harriet, who is now 20, loses her mother at the age of 42. *The Gentleman's Magazine*, in September 1848, records the death, among its obituaries, of 'Caroline, wife of Charles Johnston, Claramont, Cheshunt on August 7, 1848'. One year later, 'Claramont' is sold, as recorded in the Hertfordshire Archives.

The 1851 Census provides a little more detail of the Johnston family. They have moved to Central London, 8 Southwick Crescent, Paddington. A search of Google Maps, satellite imagery, shows that this is now a suburb consisting of tower blocks, with no evidence of early housing in the street. Nevertheless, the house at the time would have been substantial to accommodate Charles, now a widower, plus Harriet, Sophia and their seven year old brother William Archibald Johnston. In this residence they had seven servants. Charles Johnston is listed as a 'fund holder'. Again, this suggests a family of some means.

The 1861 Census shows that the family have moved yet again. This time they have moved to Tandridge, in Surrey, just south of London. The residence is listed as 'Southlands'. This was a large country house estate just out of the village of Tandridge. Records show that the house was originally completed around 1835. Apparently, it was owned by the Pepys (of Samuel Pepys fame) family for a while. In the 1880's after Charles Johnston owned it, there were

²⁰ My Heritage: Births, Deaths and Christenings (1538-1975), Harriet Johnston

²¹ www.archives.hertfordshire.gov.uk. Land transfer, Claramont, Cheshunt



A view of *Southlands House*, as it is today.²²

The 1861 Census record shows 17 people in residence at *Southlands House* with the Johnston family. It was a big enough household to have a butler, valet, bootman, cook, lady's maid, house maid, kitchen maid and a nurse. The Johnston family include their father, Charles who is listed as a Hertfordshire Magistrate, plus his family Harriet, Sophia, and William, who is listed as a scholar at Winchester College. Interestingly, the list also includes one Henry A Johnston, aged 28, as 'army retired'. It is possible that Henry could be another of Harriet's siblings, though there is no mention of him with the family in the previous two census returns. Staying with the family are 19-year-old Mark Lyndon, a visitor who is listed as an 'army agent'. As well, there are three young girls listed, Mary Davis, aged 11, and two sisters, Lillas and Ethel Cotsworth, aged 6 and 7, respectively. There is no evidence of their parents on the household list or who they are in relation to the rest of the household. Their presence might explain the listing of a nurse.

It is after this Census that things change for Harriet. So far, after extensive research there is no record of Charles Johnston in the 1871 Census, nor indeed when he might have died. As outlined previously Harriet, now aged 42, by 1871 had moved to '*Stonewall*', Cranleigh Common, Surrey, south of London, which suggests that her father may well have died sometime between the two census returns. Her household at Cranleigh consisted of a lady's maid, a cook, a parlourmaid and a 15 year old pageboy. She did have company though. The record lists Catherine Roebuck, aged 55, a widow. Again, it is unclear what relationship she is to Harriet. Perhaps an aunt or cousin by marriage from her mother's Roebuck side.

It is in the following decade, when Harriet is at Cranleigh Common that things change, as noted previously with Harriet adopting Francis and Isabella Pyne. In the latter part of the

²² www.zoopla.co.uk, Southlands House, Southlands Lane, Tandridge

decade 1871 and 1881 Harriet Johnston and household move to Devon. As previously noted, she chose a small country village, Woodbury, and chose *Oakhayes House* as her residence. This property was a substantial home and is still standing. Its story has been written up by the Woodbury Historical Society. The house was built in the 1830's. Several notable families lived in the house before Harriet Johnston moved in.



Oakhayes House Woodbury, Miss Johnston stands to the right.²³

Returning to the 1881 Census, it is clear that Harriet Johnston was a woman of considerable means, not only was Isabella listed as the daughter aged 13, but a Governess, Penelope Bird is listed, whose task it would have been to educate Isabella. The 1881 Census records Harriet as having quite a team of household help:- a cook, a parlourmaid, house maid, groom, nurse and an under nurse. Interestingly, there is also listed a 5 month old 'visitor', Nevill Eliot, who was born in Northumberland. That entry will no doubt continue to remain a mystery but will help to explain the presence of the nurses.

Harriet and her household would have enjoyed some ten years or so at Woodbury. Isabella Pyne, 13, her adopted daughter in 1881 would be growing up into a young woman, whilst Francis Pyne, her adopted son, at 15 in 1881 would have completed his education at King Edward College and headed off to Oxford where he completed his BA in 1888 as noted previously.

As the decade of the 1880's ended, it was time to consider the future!



²³ Gillian Selley, '*Oakhayes House and some of its occupants.*' Woodbury Local History Society, 2015 Newsletter

Part C. New Zealand Bound

8. Why New Zealand?

We can only wonder what influences came into play to help the family to consider emigration. Emigration was very much on the minds of many living in Great Britain at the time. The country was the world's greatest colonial power, embracing much of the globe including India, Africa, Canada, as well as Australia, New Zealand and many more. Though the big land settlement projects that abounded in New Zealand between 1840 and 1870 were no longer as active, the prospects in New Zealand were encouraging for those seeking a new life in the Antipodes.

Perhaps it was the extended Pyne family influence. Arthur Pyne O'Callaghan the nephew of Francis' father, had emigrated to Canterbury, New Zealand, in 1865, bringing with him his sisters Elizabeth O'Callaghan and Emily O'Callaghan, who in due course married in their new country. Arthur Pyne O'Callaghan was the son of the Rev'd William's sister, Sarah who married into the O'Callaghan family. Like his uncle, Arthur was an ordained clergyman. He was for a few years curate to the Rev'd William at Oxted, with the expectation that he would take over when the Rev'd William retired. Instead, Arthur emigrated to New Zealand. Three years later, he returned to England to marry his cousin Dorathea Louisa Pyne, eldest daughter of the Rev'd William, which in turn meant that they were in effect Francis half-sister and brother-in-law! One can only assume the couple struck up a relationship whilst Arthur was at Oxted! They returned to New Zealand where the Rev'd Arthur O'Callaghan became vicar of Oxford and Cust for three years, before giving up ministry to take up farming at Lincoln, just out of Christchurch. This property was, coincidentally, called *The Springs* and is now the site of what is now Lincoln University. Dorothea died in 1874 leaving three children. Arthur O'Callaghan subsequently remarried and had eleven children by his second wife. He was MP for Lincoln from 1881-1889 and was a personal friend of Richard Seddon. He died in Eketahuna, in 1930, at the age of 93. The O'Callaghan family descendants are a well established family in New Zealand today.

Be that as it may, a decision was made and Francis was to head off to New Zealand and that Harriet, with sister Isabella, would follow. And so it was in 1889 that Francis set sail for New Zealand on the *SS Coptic* travelling from Plymouth via the Cape Town and Hobart to arrive in Auckland on 5 May, 1889²⁴.

A farm is bought

We can only speculate about the places around Auckland that William might have looked at in his search for a suitable property. In the end he was attracted to a large, established property in the Pokeno Valley. Land transfer records show that in December 1890, within six months of his arrival, Francis Pyne purchased a property in Pokeno, in various lots, sold as one from a person named Hobbs. The same record shows that Pyne registered a mortgage with Mr Hobbs on the property.²⁵

²⁴ Auckland Public Libraries, shipping lists.

²⁵ Archives NZ. Deeds index - 14A 569 re 56, section 1

Richard Hobbs was well known in the Pokeno Valley, being for a time a Member of Parliament. A visit to Richard Hobbs farm at the time, is described in the New Zealand Herald.

*"The fine estate of Mr R Hobbs stretches right away to the Maungatawhiri Creek, contains some really superb land, capable of producing any kinds of crops. About the homestead, which nestles in a fine grove of shelter trees, the soil is volcanic deep and rich, and here it is that the orchard has been established. The entire area of the farm is 650 acres, most of the land being comparatively level country."*²⁶

The article continues to explain that Mr Hobbs had a fine herd of pedigree Herefords. Taking advantage of the local artesian water supply Mr Hobbs had installed the relatively new, but very effective, hydraulic ram water pump to supply the



homestead and the stock. Mention is made of Mr Hobbs orchard, one of the largest in the province of upwards of 20 acres, growing plums, peaches, oranges, lemons, apples and pears, all well known throughout the country.

The article mentions that Richard Hobbs was one of the first to cultivate oranges south of Auckland. He also was known for cultivating late apples to take advantage of the market at the end of the growing season. Richard Hobbs even went as far as experimenting the export of apples to North America, via steamer to San Francisco. Even though the voyage was only three weeks the apples arrived spoiled, as they were held in the hot cargo hold, instead of in a cool chamber or even on the deck. This was no ordinary farm that Francis Pyne had purchased.

Richard Hobbs.²⁷

Richard Hobbs died in July 1910, having returned to Auckland to live after selling his Pokeno property. The Evening Post²⁸ further confirms his involvement with the Pokeno farm.

"On his retirement from Parliament he went to 'The Springs' near Pokeno where he bred and raised cattle and horses, and cultivated a very fine orchard. This estate he sold when he returned to Auckland."

We are now able to establish that the property was purchased by Francis Pyne, in his name. Subsequent land transfers to the General Trust Board of the Diocese of Auckland, and after his death to the Gulland family, all have his name on the documents. We can also show that the name of the property, *The Springs* was named by Richard Hobbs and that the orchard previously mentioned was of significance. Likewise, it can be confidently stated that the homestead was already built by the time Francis Pyne took over.

²⁶ The New Zealand Herald, 13 March, 1889

²⁷ Victoria University Electronic Texts Collection

²⁸ The Evening Post, 16 July, 1910

9. Harriet arrives in Pokeno

With Francis Pyne established on the Pokeno farm and with a house worthy of her standing to move to, Harriet and Isabella, made the long journey to New Zealand on the *SS Tongariro*, travelling first class, arriving in New Zealand, we think Lyttelton, in early September 1890. Also, on the ship were Thomas and Sarah Bates and their six children travelling 'steerage'. The Bates family were brought out to New Zealand by Harriet, so that Thomas could work on the farm and *The Springs* homestead garden. It seems likely they were met by Francis before they travelled from Lyttelton to Onehunga on the *SS Penguin* a coastal steamer, according to the passenger lists. As there was a two week period before heading north, it is not unreasonable to assume that Francis, and Isabella, together with Harriet, visited their relatives at Lincoln. More about the Bates family can be read in Appendix C.

It does not take long for Harriet and Isabella to become involved in the local community. Isabella clearly has a good voice as she took part in a concert in early 1892 at the Wesleyan Church, presumably at Bombay, where she sang '*The Lost Chord*'.²⁹

Wedding Bells

Isabella does not remain in New Zealand for long. Her suitor, the Rev'd Robert Jenner makes the long journey to New Zealand, arriving in Wellington, on the *Ruapehu*, on 19 June, 1895. A notice in the New Zealand Herald announces their marriage at Bishop's Court, Parnell, Auckland on 29 August that year.³⁰ Clearly the influence that Harriet and Francis had, was well enough established for the family to have the connection with Bishop Cowie to enable the marriage to happen at Bishop's Court in Parnell. However we also cannot discount the influence that Robert Jenner may have had! Harriet and Francis were witnesses to the special occasion. The Jenner couple returned to England shortly after the wedding, where Robert held several ministry posts. According to the 1901 and 1911 Census returns they just had one child, Ella Dorothy Jenner. Isabella Jenner died at Cheltenham, 9 February, 1919 at the age of 52. Daughter Ella died at a young age in April 1925, aged 27. As far can be ascertained Robert Jenner died in 1931, aged 63.

A Community Benefactor

It is not long before Harriet Johnston showed her support for the local and wider Auckland community. She became a generous supporter of several good causes. The New Zealand Herald reports some of these, which include £25 to the Bishopric Endowment Trust in 1903. She gave generously to the Belgian Relief Fund, established to provide support to the people of Belgium suffering a German invasion during World War One. Her donations, in one case of £50, in another £25, were at the time, among the higher recorded donations.

In May 1895, the Pokeno school burnt down overnight, destroying the building, the contents and the library, which also served as the community library. In April, the next year, an aggrieved Harriet Johnston sent a letter to the Editor of the New Zealand Herald. In it she explained that she had arranged to have sent a box of some 20 or so books from a friend in England as a contribution to the Pokeno Library which had been destroyed in the school fire. She complains that the box had been interfered with and that some books were missing. She further complains that her letter to the Manager of the New

²⁹ New Zealand Herald, 13 January, 1892

³⁰ New Zealand Herald, 6 September, 1895

Zealand Shipping Company asking for an explanation was ignored. Her letter wonders if she has 'any redress' or failing that 'the gentlemen in possession of the three volumes may see fit to forward them to me by parcel post'.³¹ There is no record of whether in fact any of the aforesaid books were returned, or indeed, that the New Zealand Shipping Company responded to her!

The Pokeno Public Hall

When it became clear that the Pokeno Valley needed a community hall it was Harriet Johnston who came to the rescue. The new hall, with accommodation for 180 people, was completed in 1898 at a cost of around \$600, a gift to the district by Harriet Johnston. Included was an acre of land. Harriet Johnston also provided the piano for the building. Sadly, the Hall was burnt down in 1919.³²

10. Harriet Johnston's Death

The following account was included in Margaret Lyons 2000 Centennial story:

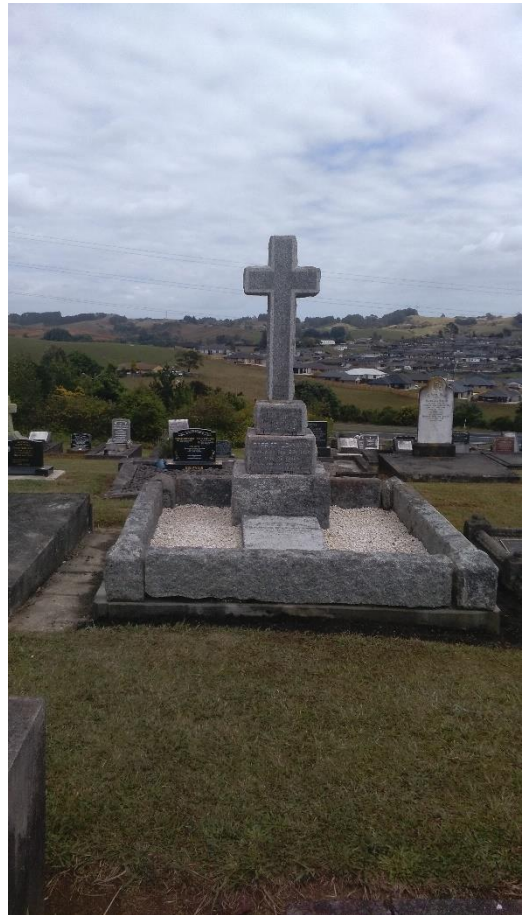
"Miss Johnston died at the age of 87 in 1916. Her obituary in "The Church Gazette" reads:

In memoriam: Harriet Johnston

We have to record the death of one who for many years rendered great service to the church in this district, viz. Miss Harriet Johnston, who went to her rest on Sunday February 20th. Her name was widely known in the cause of charity. The beautiful Church of St Mary's, Pokeno Valley, owes its existence to her liberality, and it is a lasting memorial to her.

This Church is recognised as one of the best out of Auckland, and all who see it are impressed by its beauty and the correctness of its appointments, which include a charming peal of chiming bells.

The late Miss Johnston had attained an advanced age and enjoyed good health up to a few weeks of her death. She attended services regularly with her household and staff. Her body was laid in the Church during the morning of the funeral, prior to which a service was conducted by the Vicar, the Rev. C.A. Vaughan. A large number of people from all over the district attended to show their respect for one who had done so much for this place, which she loved. Among those present were two former Vicars, Rev. H.B. Wingfield, who was in charge when the church was first built, and the Rev. Foulkes of Tuakau.



Miss Johnston's grave at Pokeno Cemetery.

The Church Gazette article continues:

On the following Sunday evening a Memorial Service was held in the Church which was suitably draped in black. After special prayers and hymns, the Vicar delivered an impressive discourse from Numbers 23:10. "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my end be like His". The service, which was largely attended, was brought to a conclusion by the playing

³¹ New Zealand Herald, 7 April, 1896

³² The Cyclopedia of New Zealand, Victoria University of Wellington Library.

of the “Dead March” by the organist, Miss Laurie. Miss Johnston’s last wishes were that everything should go on as before, thus showing her love for and interest in the church up to the last.

Legend has it that Miss Johnston had a large number of white cats, which had to be destroyed after her death, but that while the memorial service was being delivered, one white cat was seen advancing up the aisle.”³³

Harriet’s Will³⁴

Probate records show that the estate was valued at £24,505, a very sizeable sum at the time.³⁵

Harriet Johnston bequeathed to Isabella Jenner (née Pyne), her adopted daughter, her wearing apparel, jewellery trinkets and ornaments. To her adopted son, Francis Pyne, she bequeathed her furniture, plate, plated articles and other household effects, horses and carriages and other outside effects. Her Will also directed the management of various trust money, with income for Francis in his lifetime and after his death to Francis wife, Bertha. She provided Thomas Bates, her gardener, the sum of £300. Harriet’s Will also provided for her staff at the time of her death, plus various sums of money to other relatives and friends.

Interestingly, in 1907, her Will had a Codicil added:

“I bequeath to the Trustees for the time being of the Anglican Church of New Zealand, the sum of £1700, free of duty upon trust, to invest the same in any investments for the time being authorized by law for the investment of trust money and to pay and apply the annual income thereof and for the perpetual augmentation of the maintenance of the resident Vicar for the time being of Pokeno aforesaid”.

Even more interesting is the fact that a second codicil revokes the first codicil in 1908.

Firstly, it is an indication of Harriet Johnston’s generosity to her church and community, but what is more fascinating is to wonder at the reason behind the revocation of the 1907 Codicil. In any historical context it is important not to jump to conclusions without the evidence.

A Benefactor to be Remembered

Harriet Johnston was well known for her very generous support of worthy causes. Her gift of the beautiful church of St Mary on the Hill is perhaps the one she will be best remembered for. It is important for us to ensure that future generations do not forget her generosity. It is only fitting that in the 120th anniversary of the church the story of Harriet Johnston and Francis Pyne are recognized for their contributions to the local communities.

11. Francis Pyne, a Pillar of the Community

It was not only Harriet Johnston that contributed to the community. Within a short time of settling in at *The Springs*, Francis Pyne became involved in many local community activities. As a former boarding schoolboy, and then a University student, sporting activities, as a young man in his twenties, were part of his make-up. New Zealand Papers Past records reveal that he was involved at various times in football, rugby football, tennis and athletics,

³³ St Mary on the Hill, 1900-2000, edited M Lyons

³⁴ Archives New Zealand, Harriet Johnston Will, R21448922

³⁵ Taranaki Daily News, Published probate lists, 13 November 1917

not only locally in Pokeno, but elsewhere in Franklin and indeed, Auckland.

A passion for sport

The earliest record is that of the Auckland Star, 23 May, 1892, where William Pyne is elected as one of the Vice Presidents of the Pokeno Football Club, a position he held for a number of years. At the Annual General Meeting of the Manukau County Cricket Association held in Pukekohe in October, 1893, he was elected a Vice President, once again a position he held for several years. In May 1895, he was elected Vice President to the Franklin Rugby Club. In November 1898, Francis Pyne's reputation and expertise were sufficient for him to be invited to be one of the judges at the annual Auckland Grammar School Athletic Sports at the Domain, with others, under the control of Headmaster, Mr Tibbs.³⁶

Frequently, in the newspaper reports of sporting activities at Pokeno, mention is made of games being held on what was known as 'Pyne's Paddock'. There is no indication of where exactly on the farm this was. Perhaps it may have been where the domain dog walking area is now, on Avon Road, next to the tennis courts.

But not only sporting interests...

Sporting interests were not the only community involvements for Francis Pyne. He was, for several years a member of the Pokeno School Board, especially at the time his daughter Marian attended the school. Perhaps his most significant role is that of being a member of the Pokeno Roads Board for a number of years, including that of being Chairman.

TIME FOR TENNIS The history of tennis in the Pokeno district began in a private capacity prior to 1900. Mr Pyne was responsible for this. Miss Johnston also enjoyed her tennis. An active club was formed in 1910 with Mr Pyne being a member. Regular reciprocal visits were made to the Appleby Court in Mangatawhiri Valley. Binoculars were brought to bear from Miss Johnston's residence and if there was activity at the Valley all available horses and vehicles were soon on their way. When Miss Johnston wished to play tennis, a flag flew from the upper storey of her house.

(St Mary on the Hill 1900-2000 p14)

The Roads Boards in rural areas were attempts by the local districts to provide adequate roading infrastructure. In spite of attempts by the central government politicians of the time to implement reform at the turn of the century, it took until the 1920's before full local body reform and the County/Borough/City Council structure we are now familiar with put in place. The Pokeno Roads Board was established in 1870, serving the local community bounded by the Paparata Road Board in the north, to the south by the Mercer Road Board and to the east by the Maungatawhiri Road Board. Francis Pyne is recorded as being Chairman from 1895, a position he held for several years.³⁷

Once St Mary's was built and the parish established, Francis Pyne was a Synod member representing the parish at the Auckland Diocesan Synod. In December 1924, the Franklin Times reports on a meeting of the Franklin branch of the Auckland Automobile Association. Francis Pyne had embraced the new form of transport, the automobile, which by the 1920's was becoming more commonly used. At the time, the work of the Automobile Associations was very important in supporting the ordinary motorist, especially in lobbying for better

³⁶ Auckland Star, 22 November, 1898

³⁷ Encyclopedia of New Zealand, Victoria University of Wellington.

road conditions, which the Franklin Times article clearly suggests they were doing.³⁸

Queen Victoria's 80th Birthday

The 80th Birthday of Queen Victoria was celebrated with much pomp and pageantry on 24 May, 1899. Albert Park was bedecked with flags for the occasion, as were ships on the harbour. As well as much military pomp and ceremony and speech making, a statue of Queen Victoria was unveiled in Albert Park. The New Zealand Herald records the occasion in detail, as well as listing all the specially invited guests, which include among others one F W Pyne.³⁹ This is a clear indication that within ten years of his arriving at Pokeno, Francis Pyne was a respected member of Auckland society. It is likely that it was through his connection as Chair of the Pokeno Roads Board that he was invited. Harriet Johnston by contrast was not on the list. However, it would be highly likely that Francis would have taken her there for the occasion, as he would have done with his wife Bertha and daughter Marian.

'The Springs'

It has already been established that the farm homestead *'The Springs'* had already been built when Francis Pyne purchased the property in 1890. The property was in his name and initially with a mortgage to Richard Hobbs. It was into this home that Harriet, his adoption mother moved. In due course it would be the house where Francis and his wife Bertha would live with their daughter Marian. It was certainly not a small villa, consisting of some 12 rooms on two levels, giving enough room for Harriet to have her quarters, shared with Francis' family as well. The location is said to be in the vicinity of Birt's Timber Mill, across SH2 from St Mary's. In spite of every attempt to do so it has not been possible to find out when it was demolished or perhaps moved.

More Wedding Bells

On 24 January, 1894 Francis Pyne married Bertha Faith Picken in the church of the Holy Sepulchre, Khyber Pass. The New Zealand Herald announcement stated that they were married by the Rev'd M Kirkbride, uncle to the bride who was the second daughter to Mr G M Picken, formerly from Plymouth, England. Another source indicates that the family lived at Little Omaha.⁴⁰ A further announcement in the New Zealand Herald celebrated the arrival of their only child, at *The Springs*, Pokeno, on 19 October, 1895, a daughter.⁴¹ She was to be named Marian Johnston Pyne. Marian in future years was clearly talented enough to be mentioned in local newspaper reports as performing in local concerts.

Francis Pyne's Death

Francis Pyne died on 26 December, 1926 at the age of 61. His death certificate indicates that he died of prostate cancer. The Franklin Times records his passing: *'Extreme regret is expressed at the death of Francis William Pyne, at the age of 61 years, a well known and highly respected resident of the Pokeno district for a great many years. The funeral was very largely attended. A special service was held at St Mary's church, conducted by the Rev'd Cole-Baker and assisted by the Rev'd Mr Fowkes (sic), at one time Vicar of the Pokeno parish and a friend of the late Mr Pyne. Many beautiful wreaths were sent. The sympathy of the community is extended to Mrs Pyne and her daughter, Miss Pyne, in the sad bereavement.'*⁴²

³⁸ Franklin Times, 3 December, 1924

³⁹ The New Zealand Herald, 25 May, 1899

⁴⁰ *ibid* 23 February, 1894

⁴¹ *ibid* 1 November, 1895

⁴² Franklin Times, 3 December 1924, NB 'Fowkes' should read as Foulkes

Francis was buried at the Pokeno cemetery in the same plot as Harriet, his mother by adoption. His widow Bertha sold the farm to the Gulland family. On his death the estate was given a probate value of £8,240, not an insignificant sum at the time. The New Zealand Herald had a major advertisement in May 1927 selling the contents of *The Springs*, Pokeno on behalf of the estate of the late FW Pyne. Up for sale were the contents of 12 rooms of furniture, together with sundry items of farm equipment. The list of items suggests quality furniture, linen, pictures, drapes and includes kitchenware.⁴³ In the Will, Francis provides for his wife and daughter.⁴⁴

Sadly, daughter Marian Pyne died at the age of 32 in 1928 of tuberculosis. Bertha Pyne, after selling up at *The Springs* moved to Remuera to live for a while before ending up in Rotorua where she died in 1953 at the age of 82.

Worthy of National Honours!

Though it was through the generosity and initiative of Harriet that the church of St Mary was built, it is clear that the influence and connection with the Francis Pyne and his family was significant. Had it not been for the untimely death of Francis father, the Rev'd William Pyne followed by whatever circumstances to drive Anne Pyne to hand over the care of her two young children into the care of Harriet Johnston, they would not have come out to New Zealand, and neither would the local community of the Pokeno Valley benefit from their generosity. Both gave to the local community in a significant way. It is appropriate that both have their names recognised in street names in the new subdivisions at Pokeno. Both deserve to have their stories told more widely. Today, it is more than likely that their support of the community would be recognised in the national Honours List.



Part D. A Church is Built

Preliminary note:

Part D. A Church is Built, and **Part E. Memories**, are based on the 2000 edition of *St Mary on the Hill*, edited by the late Margaret Lyons. The text has largely been repeated but with some editing, and reorganizing of the layout, with some additional material, including photographs to fit in with this version of the story being written 20 years later. The original text did not provide appropriate references, so some quotes are included as they were originally written, but without referencing.

12. From the Centennial Booklet

A well known landmark

The 2000 account of the church story begins: - "Travellers heading westward along State Highway 2 towards Highway 1 see a Church, standing alone on a hill. Its attractive lines, with high-pitched red roof and shingled spire, give it importance, as well as beauty, but where is

⁴³ New Zealand Herald, 11 May, 1927

⁴⁴ Archways, Will, F W Pyne, R9381238 series 1570

the settlement one would expect to find around it? A Church existed in the Pokeno village in the early days of the settlement, which was used also as a school. But in 1871 an inspector reported the inadequacies of the school arrangements. The Education Board made a grant of £100 for the erection of a school and £150 for the teacher's house. The new school opened in 1872 with two teachers, Mr J. Martin being the Head Teacher. The roll of 52 indicated a considerable population. In the new school, standing close to the site of the present Church, Anglican and Presbyterian services were held. In June 1876, a visiting clergy held a service for 30 people, they hoped it would be a regular happening. Sadly, that was not to be, not in the medium term anyway.

Harriet Johnston Comes to the Rescue

After seven years or so of attending church services in the school, Harriet Johnston, now a well established, and well known resident of Pokeno decided that with this absence of an Anglican church in her community that it was time for such a church to be built. *The Church Gazette* reports:-

*"Miss Johnston's generosity has been inspired by the fact that at services conducted by the Rev'd O'Callaghan Biggs in the Queen's Redoubt School at Pokeno and carried on by the Rev. C Bispham in the Valley School and continued to be held monthly, the attendance had been satisfactory and increasing... no doubt prompting Miss Johnston to the generous course she had taken in building at her own expense the exquisite little church."*⁴⁵

Foundation Stone Laid

The Church Gazette account continues:- "On November 4, 1899, a stormy inclement day, one hundred persons assembled in the school. Prayers were read by the Rev'ds J. MacFarland and F. Dobson, and a choir accompanied by Miss Roberts on the organ provided music. The congregation then moved across to the site of the new church, Mr Stevens with his violin now playing for the choir. Miss Johnston laid the foundation stone; beneath it was placed a bottle containing various coins and a paper. As recorded in the minutes of the Standing Committee of the Diocese of Auckland, held at the Cathedral Library, in October 1899, a letter was received from Miss Johnston stating that the Church would, with the site, be conveyed to the General Trust Board and that she would give £50 a year during her life towards the stipend, which sum Mr Pyne, if he survived her, would continue. Pending the completion of the Church, Sunday Services were conducted alternately morning and evening by the Rev. H.R.B. Wingfield, who was to be the first Vicar. Contributions to his stipend were made by the Vestries of Bombay (£60), Pukekohe (£60), Buckland (£20) and Harrisville (£18)."

The Church is Built

*Of compact Gothic Revival design, it had steep roofs, and lancet windows of Early English type. In plan it incorporated a nave, chancel, transepts and a south porch, together with an offset tower with steeple to the north. The building was one of the last work undertaken by Edward Bartley as architect for the Auckland Anglican Diocese, a post he had filled since the 1880's. Bartley is known for the construction of many notable buildings in the Auckland Region. "Some credit may also be due to the Vicar of the time, the Rev'd H B Wingfield who had some training as an architect."*⁴⁶

⁴⁵ The Church Gazette, May 1899.

⁴⁶ New Zealand Historic Places Trust. St Mary's Church, Pokeno.

FOUNDATION STONE. Beneath it was placed a bottle containing various coins and a paper with the wording:

"This stone was laid on November 4, 1899, by Miss Harriet Johnston at whose cost this Church was erected for the benefit of the residents of Pokeno, to be used for Divine Service, according to the rites of the Church of England and in the hope that the ministrations may be the means of bringing many souls nearer to Christ. Architect: Ed Bartley. Contractor: A.Vinson."



The Day of Consecration

On Sunday, March 25, 1900, The Feast of St Mary, the Church was consecrated by Archbishop Cowie. The ceremony is recorded thus in "The New Zealand Herald", March 27, 1900:

Our Pokeno correspondent writes: - "On Sunday, March 25, St Mary's Church was consecrated by the Most Reverend, the Primate of New Zealand. The contract price was £690, which was defrayed by Miss Johnston, and that price does not include the fittings, which are also her gift. The building is 60 feet long and 20 feet wide, the transept being 27 feet with porch and tower (in which are vestry and belfry) and spire. The seats are most comfortable with footrests and shelves for books, and are provided for 150 persons. The Chancel and Pulpit steps are carpeted with crimson, the Lectern is of polished rimu handsomely carved by Miss Motion, the large and splendidly Bound Bible was sent from

MISS JOHNSTON'S PLAQUE

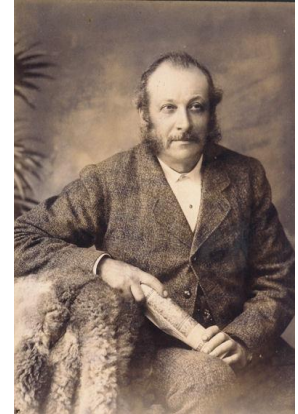
is a diamond shaped brass plate on the north wall, donated by the parishioners.

*ST MARY'S
THIS CHURCH WAS
ERECTED
TO THE GLORY OF GOD
CONSECRATED BY
THE PRIMATE OF NEW ZEALAND
MARCH 25 1900
THE BUILDING WAS THE GIFT OF
HARRIET JOHNSTON
REVEREND H BARNARD WINGFIELD
BEING THE CLERGYMAN
IN CHARGE.*



England as a present to the Church by a relative of Miss Johnston's. Four tall standard lamps light the choir, and two large Rochester hanging lamps light the aisle and transept. The windows are ecclesiastical in form with pointed headings. The coloured ones at present in the chancel will replace the plain ones in the aisle, when the rich stained ones ordered from England arrive for the chancel. The large transept windows are red, green and white; those of the chancel the same colours and yellow. The soft light coming through these windows and shining on the exquisitely embroidered Altar cloth, bannerette and screen, and the lovely bella donna lillies on the table made altogether a beautiful scene. The whole reflects and greatest credit on all concerned, Mr A. Vinson being the builder and Mr Bartley the architect.

Edward Bartley (1839-1919), architect. The story of Edward Bartley the architect of St Mary's is a remarkable one. He was born in 1839 at St Helier, Jersey, in the Channel Islands, one of a family of 12. In 1854, at the age of 15 he joined his older brother Robert and family emigrating to Auckland, where he carried on the family tradition of building. Bartley was influenced by one Edmund Matthews who introduced him to the superior methods and systems of the Royal Engineers. The two worked in partnership for several years. By 1870 Edward Bartley had established himself as a master builder in his own right.



In those days master builders might be called upon for architectural design. By 1877 he had sufficient experience to be able to use the title 'architect', amazing for one who had no formal training in the field. During the 1880's church design became one of his fields of specialty, his first church being St David's in Khyber Pass, completed in 1880. He was responsible for the design of several churches around Auckland and as far afield as Whangarei, Cambridge and Hamilton, most being designed in the 'gothic' tradition. His Auckland churches include St Matthews in the City, Holy Trinity, Devonport, together with the former Jewish Synagogue on Princes Street. Among many commercial buildings his designs include the old ASB buildings in Queen Street, Newton and Ponsonby, as well as many more too numerous to name here.

Bartley's legacy within our parish continues on with a family connection of John Otto, long time St Peter's organist. John's family can trace a connection to Edward Bartley's wife Elizabeth. Their common ancestor also came from Jersey. As if this was not enough John's Form Two teacher, Jack Bartley, was a descendant of Edward's brother Robert!

Ref: M W Bartley *Colonial Architect*, First Edition Publishers, 2006

Proceedings commenced by Mr Pyne standing near the entrance and reading (on behalf of Miss Johnston) the deed of gift, vesting the Church and ground in the Bishop and Clergy of the Diocese; then, while the voluntary was played, all the people standing, the Bishop walked up the aisle, preceded by the Rev'ds. F.B. Dobson, O. Hewlett and H.B. Wingfield. The service was full choral, with appropriate prayers, hymns and anthem.

The Bishop gave an eloquent sermon from the text:

"Whence shall we buy bread that these may eat?" The celebration of the Holy Communion after the service was attended by more than 30 persons. Miss Johnston kindly kept open house and many persons from a distance availed themselves of her invitation to luncheon. The Bishop afterwards left for Tuakau, but the Rev'd. Oswald Hewlett read prayers and preached at half past seven p.m. when there was again a large congregation of nearly 200

persons. Mr Pyne read the lessons. Miss Motion played the organ in the morning, Miss Larsen in the evening, Miss Motion playing the anthem on both occasions. The duet, 'The Lord is my Shepherd' was sung by Mrs and Miss Morrison of Auckland. Mr Hewlett thanked the Presbyterians for the courtesy of omitting their usual morning service so as not to interfere with the Anglican festival.⁴⁷

The Deed of Consecration is preserved at the Anglican Office, Parnell, together with a duplicate certificate of Title under the Land Transfer Act, by which, part of the land was taken for a road. The New Zealand Graphic of September 7, 1901, describes the building as "the finest country Church in the Diocese."

Festivals, Christenings and Weddings

In April 1900, a Harvest Festival drew to the Church a congregation of 100. The first christening recorded was on Easter Sunday, that of Stella Victoria Heward, of the Razorback and this was followed soon after by those of Cyril Eldon Lippiatt (aged 3 months) and his sister Edna Zeta Dawson Lippiatt (aged 5½ years and previously baptized privately); these two were the children of the schoolmaster and continued to live in the district for many years. The first wedding was that of Mr Edward Hayward and Miss Laura Annie Batty. Following its consecration, St Mary's became the centre of Anglican worship for the district. After several decades of makeshift worship centres in the village, at last, regular worship was established. A number of clergy followed the first Vicar, the Rev'd Wingfield, staying for an average of three years. Had Harriet Johnston not offered to subsidise the clergy stipend by £50 per year, it is unlikely the district would have been able to afford a full time Vicar. Harriet Johnston was the security for the future of the church, and it was she who was the driving force for its success. When Harriet died in 1916, everything changed.

All was not as it should have been

Miss Johnston's wish that "everything should go on as before" was not to be realized, after her death. It is evident that there was a decline in church attendance. As shown by correspondence preserved in the Diocesan Archives, it was almost impossible to keep up congregations in a church so far from the centre of the Pokeno village. In addition, there was a very strong Presbyterian community, and although the two bodies helped each other, it was natural for each to support its own needs. Diocesan records held in the Diocesan Archives show that on 26 September, 1916, Mr Francis Pyne, Miss Johnston's heir, wrote to the Church Office:- *"The late Miss Johnston wishes me to continue her £50 a year to the Pokeno Stipend as long as there was a resident clergyman here. This I am doing but as there are no funds coming from her estate and as it will be a long while yet till things are put on a business footing, I may find some difficulty in meeting the charges temporarily."* By 1919, Mr Pyne had *"withdrawn the whole subscription."*

The Vicar, at the time, the Rev. C.A. Vaughan, was obliged to hold his services in the newly built Pokeno Hall. Bad feeling, possibly on personal grounds, seemed to have developed between himself and Francis Pyne. This ill feeling seemed to have been so bad that the Vicar was prevented from conducting services in the church, though Mr Pyne had undertaken to act as a caretaker to the church in the meantime. Mr Vaughan wished sometimes to go into the

⁴⁷ New Zealand Herald, March 27, 1900

Church, especially to conduct baptisms, but Mr Pyne would only carry out the duties of caretaker *“on the stipulation that Mr Vaughan should not have any key to the Church or interfere in any way.”* Such was the state of affairs at St Mary’s that in 1920 a decision was made to close the church, a situation which continued until the end of 1922.

In a letter to the Vicar, Mr Vaughan, from the Diocesan Registrar, 2 November, 1922, occurs this passage:

“Now that Mr Pyne has abandoned his duties as caretaker of the building, the Standing Committee will hold you responsible for the care of the building”. Clearly things were very tense.⁴⁸ It appears also that the Vicarage provided by Miss Johnston had not, like the Church, been vested in the Diocese. Mr Pyne claimed it for his own use and Mr Vaughan was obliged to rent a house in Pokeno, at the Queen’s Redoubt, for £40 per annum, his stipend then being £142. Even this, as shown in several of his letters (written in a beautiful hand) was sometimes in arrears or came in the form of a crossed cheque he had no means of cashing. The half-yearly rent for the church land (£7.10.0) was due to him, but being paid through the Diocesan Standing Committee did not always reach him promptly.



An early photo of St Mary’s from Avon Road.⁴⁹

Time to Shift the Church Building

Things became so bad that in June 1922 the Vicar and a local church member, Mr Thomas Peacock, made representations to the Diocesan Standing Committee that, in view of the fact that Pokeno township was now well established, with a Public Hall built and a Post Office promised, the Church itself should be removed, a more central site having been offered. This, however, was evidently not thought possible, and so never happened.

⁴⁸ **Footnote:** The comments written about Francis Pyne are those written by Dora Hessell for the 75th Anniversary story of St Mary’s. There were certainly issues at the time, such as shortage of funds to continue the annual stipend subsidy, however a number of assumptions have been made here which need to be viewed in that context. Whilst there were problems, were they all of Francis Pyne’s making?

⁴⁹ St Mary on the Hill, Pokeno, ref: 1/2-2000121-G, Alexander Turnbull Library, NZ, / records 23047915
Photograph taken by W A Price.

Changes Ahead

In December 1922, Mr Vaughan gave up the living. The work of the Pokeno parish was carried on from Bombay from January 1923 until March 1928 by the Rev. Hugh F. Baker. The parochial district embraced the Churches of St Peter in the Forest, Bombay (consecrated in 1867), St Jude's, Mercer and in the extensive rural area of Mangatawhiri, entailing a great deal of travelling in those horse-and-buggy days. (A note in "The Church Gazette", 1916 mentions a grant of £5 to the Vicar for buggy repairs!). A proposal had been made in 1920 by the Bombay Vestry that its boundaries should be altered to exclude Mercer and Mangatawhiri in favour of Drury, but this was not found acceptable. In 1921 it became clear that the work could not be adequately done unless the Vicar was provided with a car, but it was ten years before this materialised. The Pokeno Vicarage was sold, and for some years it seemed that St Mary's was in danger of losing its special place in the community. In 1931 the removal of St Stephen's School from Parnell to Bombay augmented the congregation there. Meanwhile the difficulty of keeping the building and grounds in decent condition increased.

Renovations Required

In the late 1920's a plea for assistance to the Diocese was made by the Church Warden, Mr Alfred Gummer. In reply, the Registrar promised a grant of £25 *"on condition that work is carried out in accordance with the Archdeacon's request,"* or more specifically when *"the silver poplar and blackberry has been dealt with."* Mr Gummer in reply insisted that the building required much more than this – *"at least two coats of paint, most of the plumbing needs renewing, the shingles on the roof appear to be rather rotten, and some of the stained glass windows are broken. Some of the external woodwork also needs renewing. The estimated cost will be somewhere between £80 and £100. Money is not very plentiful just now with the dairy farmers and it is useless to promote any entertainments to raise funds because they would hardly pay expenses."*⁵⁰

In such circumstances it is easy to lose heart. In 1935 parishioners set up the St Mary's Renovation Fund, but the following year the Annual Meeting held in the Pokeno Valley Hall, attended by Archdeacon Simkin, mustered only twelve. A tender to replace the shingle roofing with iron was called but the sum of £156.11.6 was not forthcoming; the work was not carried out until 1946, largely by voluntary labour.

War time snippets

- In 1939 £10 was received as compensation for 9 perches (0.03 ha.) of land taken for roading. In 1940 four acres of land behind the vicarage were sold to Mr Dean of Pokeno for £150, enabling the renovation of the interior to go ahead.
- War conditions and limited petrol made church attendance difficult, and some services were held in Mangatawhiri Hall and Kopuku School during these years.
- In the early 1940s a branch of the Mothers' Union was set up at St Mary's.
- The time was approaching when the Pokeno Valley School, attended almost entirely by bus pupils, was abandoned and a new one built in the township.

⁵⁰ **Footnote:** Looking back in hindsight in 2020, it seems quite remarkable that, at less than 30 years old, that the condition of the church had deteriorated to such an extent.

And Now Part of Pukekohe Parish

From May 1942 until June 1951, the Parochial District was administered from Pukekohe, and it seemed doubtful whether St Mary's would survive. Once again the proposal was made that St Mary's should be moved into Pokeno itself. This time the proposal came from the Bishop, the Rt. Rev. Simkin at a Special Meeting attended by parishioners and by others who felt strongly about the church. The suggestion was fiercely resisted, and had the effect of renewing the zeal of all towards their Church. After two years of discussion and consideration of ways and means, at last the decision was reached to repair St Mary's on its site.

Pokeno Vicarage – from Repurchase to Fire:

In 1951 the vicarage was bought back from Mr David Gulland for £2000. The Diocesan Standing Committee approved the purchase and recommended that the Diocesan Loan Board finance the purchase. Once again the Pokeno clergy house became home of the incumbent, this time the Rev. Peter Rynd and his wife. Unfortunately, two years later another blow fell when the house was burnt to the ground, together with Parish records and personal belongings. Once more the Vicarage at Bombay provided a residence.

A Return to Bombay Pokeno Parish

By 1955 affairs had improved sufficiently for the Pokeno-Bombay district to be reconstituted independently of Pukekohe, regaining its old identity. In 1961 a plan to rebuild St Mary's Vicarage was formed, but this was not acceptable to the Diocesan Boundaries Commission. Indeed, the story of St Mary's is one of endless gifts not only of material goods but also of labour to preserve and beautify the structure. One such early working bee is recorded in the Church Gazette, when *"a large party of willing workers, male and female, assembled to clear up the grounds both of Church and Vicarage, besides thoroughly cleaning the Church."*⁵¹

Peter McRobbie - Vicarage Fire

On February 4th, 1953, a fire broke out in the Vicarage, situated next to St Mary's and across the road from the school, which was then also in Avon Road. The senior boys went to assist while the remaining pupils lined up along the fence to watch. The boys shifted what property they could save out the front door, before they were told to leave for safety. Unfortunately, with the extent of the flames, much of what was outside was also burnt.

Local families still represented, as well as others no longer there, have given faithful support of all kinds, and it would be impossible to list them. In those earlier days there are, two people whose names come to mind whenever the story of the church is told. One is Mr Thomas Bates, who, with his family was brought out to New Zealand by Miss Johnston, to work in the house garden and on the farm, for many years caretaker, warden and bellringer and devoted servant of the church. The other is Mrs J.B. Parker, who as Ida Senn, began serving as organist at the age of nineteen. With short intervals for the arrivals of her seven children, she continued for over fifty years, on one notable occasion playing for the golden wedding of a couple at whose wedding she had also been an organist. On festival occasions Mrs Lippiatt, a very talented person with flowers, would decorate the Church with beautiful arrangements.

⁵¹ Church Gazette, 2 July, 1917

More snippets.

- In 1981 after the fire at the Bombay Vicarage it was decided to sell the Pokeno property next to St Mary's on condition that the proceeds be put into the Parish Vicarage at Bombay.
- 1961 saw an addition made to the Church porch and a little later a generous donation by Mrs J.K. Lyons enabled the Vestry to carpet the aisles in 1963.
- In 1938 the Parish adopted the Freewill Offering Envelope System.
- Two visiting campaigns were held.
Firstly the 1957 Combined Funds canvass. Every home in the Parish was visited. Parishioners were asked to pledge for a three year period. The second campaign took place in 1960.

75th Anniversary of the Laying of the Foundation Stone on April 6, 1975

A happy picnic lunch was held in the grounds of St Mary-on-the-hill, Pokeno, to mark the 75th anniversary of the laying of the foundation stone; this coincided with the end of a strenuous week when the building was repainted by voluntary effort. In a short address, the Vicar, the Rev. Ivan Smith, said he felt the occasion was really a thanksgiving for the enthusiasm, which inspired parishioners and friends over the years to look after the Church with such care.Mr Ivan Gummer, people's warden, recounted the gift of the building and hall by Miss Harriet Johnston and said that a more extensive celebration would be held in March 1975 on the anniversary of the dedication.⁵²

ALTAR. A faculty was issued on 31 October 1966 for the Altar from the Church of the Epiphany, Newton, to be installed in St Mary's replacing the original. The crochet cloth was made by Mrs J.K. Lyons and dated 1952. The St Mary's Guild replaced the "Fair linen cloth" in 1998.

The Seasons of the Church determine the colour of the Altar hangings:-

White	Christmas, Easter, Weddings, Baptisms, Funerals.
Violet	Advent, Lent.
Red	Pentecost Sunday, Martyrs, special occasions.
Green	Season of Pentecost.

Mr Trevor Flexman turned the wooden offertory plates. A small shelf by the window in the Sanctuary is where the bread and wine are placed before consecration. The Wafer Box was a gift from Bishop Bruce Gilberd.



⁵² Franklin County Times, April 1975

The spirit in which Miss Johnston gave St Mary's Church to the people of the district was reflected at the celebrations marking 75 years of worship. About 200 people attended the commemorative service, which was conducted by the Bishop of Auckland, the Rt. Rev. E.A. Gowing and the Vicar, Rev. Ivan Smith. The readings were by Clifton O'Leary and Shirley Brattlie, and the intercessions were read by John Cox. Under the baton of Alan Minifi, and accompanied by Carol Scott, the Auckland Boys Choir sang at the service. Bishop Gowing said that *"the building of St Mary's was a great achievement. The Church, even today, inspired comments as to its graciousness, character and picturesque setting"*.



St Mary's interior, looking east to the sanctuary and altar.

The Silver Birches are Planted

A significant part of the 75th Anniversary was a tree planting ceremony in the Church grounds following the commemorative service. Against a background of slowly lifting mist Bishop Gowing planted one of the three silver birches. *"As these three trees grow upright, reaching for the sky, so I hope you will continue to grow in faith and love,"* the Bishop said. Mrs L. Gummer, wife of the People's Warden, planted the second tree on behalf of the St Mary's Ladies Guild, and the third tree was planted by Mr C. O'Leary as Parish representative. The silver birches were a gift from the Rev. Peter Tanton. This was followed with a luncheon catered by the five Guilds of the Parish at the Mangatawhiri Hall, where everyone had the opportunity to exchange stories, renew acquaintances and listened to the recital by the Auckland Boy's Choir. (In 2020 only two trees remain).

Thus the church seems to be entering on an era of renewed success, with *"everything going on as before"* as its first benefactor wished.



Part E. Memories

13. Parishioners Remember

Preliminary note

As with the previous chapter, Chapter 5, this section is based on Margaret Lyons' edition of the story of St Mary on the Hill produced for the Centennial of the church in 2000

For this section several parishioners were approached by her to tell the story of their experiences and memories of worship at the Church. In reading this chapter, it is important to remember that the 'memories' are for the period leading up to the Centennial in 2000.

Mrs Laureen Gummer Remembers

"I arrived December 1938. The Rev'd Taylor was the Vicar, living at St Stephen's Boys' School. St Mary's looked anything but inviting –with its dark coloured paint – brown facing and all over dull colour. Church services were irregular, sometimes afternoon or evening. The grass and bracken were high in the grounds. My father-in-law, Alf Gummer, would take his scythe and just before service time would clear a path from the gate entrance.

Today, 1999, is a different story. It has become a friendly place to look at and also to visit. We no longer seem to keep the quiet we once did on entering the Church. Our services, after years of slow education and people getting used to change, we are much freer in the activities inside. Many people in the district are to be congratulated in the never ending care of inside and out. The floral arrangements are always a source of beauty and the trimmed lawns outside pleasing to walk around. Gone is the unkempt appearance".

Laureen Gummer



The nave looking back to the west window.

Bruce Lyons Remembers

"Since my baptism in 1932, then my confirmation, St Mary's has always been a part of my life. During the war years due to petrol shortages, services for the Mangatawhiri area were held in the local hall, to which we used to walk. My mother played the piano for the Anglican services one week and the Presbyterian the next. Later in my years on the Vestry, about 24, the things I remember doing most for the church were of a practical nature.

The Beef Scheme: The origins of the beef scheme was an idea from Peter Somerville who was a Vestry member from Maramarua. A group of us, Fred Downie, Peter and myself undertook to run the scheme, which started off with the purchase of beef weaner cattle. As we had no money to finance the project, an approach was made to two stock firms, Dalgety's and Wrightson's. They very generously advanced the money to purchase the cattle and took out their advance plus interest when they were sold. I believe that their generosity was sparked by the business the members of the beef scheme had given the firms over several generations. Later Peter left the Vestry and the scheme was run by Fred and myself with Margaret joining to do all the book work involved. We later fine tuned the arrangements to buying 1½ year old cattle as the weaners were often very wild to handle. A further refinement was when I purchased cattle of similar age and quality for our own farm, we would put these steers with the Church cattle, choose the quiet ones, graze them for a time before distributing them to the farmers in the scheme. Eventually the beef scheme was able to finance itself and over the years many significant contributions were made to Vestry funds. It was a great money earner and by association brought, I believe, many people closer to the Church. The scheme was a lot of hard work but also a lot of fun especially on delivery days for Fred and I in our old truck. We carried on the operation until one very bad drought year when none of our farmers could take any cattle and my own research into the future of the beef market was predicting a very poor return, we then invested the money and did not purchase any cattle. This proved to be a sound economic move as the beef market, now many years later, is only starting to improve. The interest from our investment is an ongoing contribution to Vestry funds.⁵³



Other efforts towards the upkeep of St Mary's were the repairing of the foundation of the steeple, installing a water supply, getting a flush toilet and building a kitchenette facility which amongst other things involved crawling under the Church to connect a water pipe to the sink unit. While under there I had a careful look at the flooring and foundations, finding them to be in excellent condition.

There has always been a group of able people working on these projects. The constant ongoing maintenance has helped to make St Mary's the attractive feature of the landscape it is today. Long may it last".

FONT is on a square Kauri stand, is octagon shaped and is constructed of Oamaru stone with four round marble pillars. The carved inscription reads "Suffer Little Children to come unto me".

Bruce Lyons

⁵³ **Footnote:** The Beef Account continued until 2019, when the balance of around \$37,000 contributed to the cost of painting St Mary's exterior that year.

Clifton O'Leary Remembers

"I well remember V.E. day 1945 when just a small boy. The Headmaster of Pokeno Valley School just across the road, Harry Richards, sent two of us over to St Mary's to toll the bells in celebration. I was no doubt chosen as one who knew my way around the Church. We were greatly excited and ran flat out over from the old school and pulled on the ropes with all our strength. Cyril and Edna Lippiatt were two who heard the bells that day and knew what it meant.

At that stage the Church was in very poor condition due to lack of available finance and no spare materials. Attendance at Church always involved checking the seats for pools of water and picking a dry spot on wet days. Boring sermons could be spent looking up at the sky through holes in the roof. During the restoration work in 1946 I remember we had a member of the glass repair company from Auckland staying at our home for a period to save cost of travel.

St Mary's has survived over the years on voluntary labour to scrub down the outside – to paint – to concrete the drive and entrance – to remove the lawsoniana hedge that used to be all around the section – to strengthen the foundations of the steeple. The Church would have fallen down long ago without all this assistance. At least twice, members of the Maramarua Lions Club attended painting working bees at the Church. Members of the

The Bells and the Steeple

In July 1900 the bells arrived from Messrs. Warnock, London.

They are inscribed as follows:

The 23 inch bell -- *Praise the Lord.*

The 25 inch bell -- *To the Glory of God.*

The 27 inch bell -- *Harriet Johnston gave us.*

Over the years they have given out their messages of joy and sorrow. On their first New Year's Eve in St Mary's, they tolled for ten minute's for the passing of 1900, then rang a merry peal. Soon after they gave the message of Queen Victoria's passing. The first Bellringer was Thomas Bates, Harriet Johnston's gardener and farm hand.

Steeple Renovation

Around 1974 a special fund raising raised over \$2000 for the recladding of the steeple. It was done through a contact with Neil Aitkenhead and was clad in shingles similar to the original roof of the Church. Scaffolding was kindly loaned by Meremere Power Station. The old weather vane was beyond repair, so a new one was made by Theo Steenkamer, Pokeno Engineer.

"It is not often that the three bells of St Mary's Church, Pokeno, are rung together" was noted in the local paper of 20th May 1986.

A church service marking the dedication of the renovated church steeple was attended by approximately 100 people; those parishioners who had contributed to the steeple and those who had worked on it. Earlier that year the steeple was jacked up and its foundations replaced with treated timber poles set in concrete. Builder, Peter Morrison of Tuakau, along with parishioners Clifton O'Leary, John Bratlie and Bruce Lyons did this work. Once the foundations were consolidated, the steeple was replaced. Then the professionals erected scaffolding and re-shingled the sound structural timbers. This was all made possible by a "Telephone" canvass by Mrs Molly Pendergrast and her team.



Mangatawhiri Young Farmers Club also assisted on one painting job. For as long as I can remember, ladies in the area have cleaned and decorated the Church week by week.

A brand new roof: The one single most exciting project in the entire life of St Mary's must be the new roof entirely donated by New Zealand Steel as an advertising exercise. This entailed the removal of the old fibrolite roof (asbestos) and installation of a new colour steel roof. This was done so that a television commercial to advertise the product could be produced. This was a real load off the mind of parishioners who knew that the life of the old roof was nearly over and had no idea how they could afford to replace it. Thanks must go to the Auckland Church Office who suggested St Mary's as a suitable subject to New Zealand Steel.



The new roof being installed, the old corrugated iron is on the left.

THE ROOF. "The Church sports a new roof in return for the use of its buildings and grounds as a film set" states the "County News" on 3 November, 1990. NZ Steel needed a Selwyn Style Church within one hours drive of Auckland to feature in a T.V. advertisement. St Mary's became the "chosen one". The roof was leaking so the new roof was a "Godsend".

Those bees: Bees were always a problem inside St Mary's for as long as I can remember. When assisting my mother and later my wife, I had the job of sweeping and vacuuming up the dead bees that appeared to be almost knee deep on the floor! When attending Church one had to be careful that you did not sit on a half dead bee or that a child did not stand on one. Many people attempted to remove the hive but no one had any success. I remember Jean Austin arriving at the Church complete with a veil and smoker but the job proved to be beyond her. When Rev'd Richard Hancock became our Vicar, he knew of an expert bee exterminator. This man had to remove the lining from top to bottom in the east wall of the Transept to remove all the honeycomb. This was a huge job and if I remember correctly, a huge cost. However, this time there was success, with no more bees. It was a great relief especially to the weekly cleaning ladies.

The ladies of the Parish worked under extreme difficulties when a cup of tea was provided at

a special service. At first, there was not even a bench. It is great to now have some better facilities. Also for years there was no toilet and then the old style pioneer 'long drop' model was built. After much discussion and some effort by locals a new flush model complete with septic tank was installed. What an improvement!



The toilet installation that Clifton O'Leary comments on.

In 1982 we were obliged to sell the Vicarage land to assist with the financing of the new Vicarage at Bombay. This became a decision that gave away the chance of having a Vicarage or even a Parish Hall at Pokeno just for the chance of building a new Vicarage at Bombay for the whole Parish.

Over the years, there have been many people who have given exceptional time and energy to the general well-being of St Mary's. This comes in many forms, ranging from leadership - organising abilities to general working bee assignments. Mention should also be made of three generations of the Gummer family, Bernice Pope, Geoff and Jean Austin, Molly Pendergrast, John and Barbara Bratlie and Angela and Ernie Morey for their hard work and support. Janet McRobbie arrived as a new bride in the district in 1967. Except for a period when she was Superintendent of the combined Anglican-Presbyterian Sunday School, Janet has regularly played the organ for over thirty years with the same dedication as Ida Parker before her. By 1999 services were being held weekly and the Vicar of the time, the Rev'd Iris Temple has encouraged and trained lay people to participate in the services in the form of assisting with the serving of the sacrament, leading the prayers and intercessions and at times delivering the sermon".

Clifton O'Leary

The Rev. Cecil Wright, QSM, Remembers.

"My first visit to the parish was made in early 1939 when Captain Douglas Caswell, N.Z. Church Army, was caring for the souls of the parishioners. Three Brothers and two Sisters were sent from Church Army Headquarters in Richmond Road for three weeks country service. The ladies were billeted at the Headmaster's House, St Stephen's School, and the men batched in the Bombay Vicarage.

My second visit was as Vicar of the Parish and of much longer duration. It was in 1960 when my wife and family and I arrived at the Vicarage, Bombay, 5 August. The parish consisted of six main centres and each was entitled to its own identity. To this end services and functions were held in each centre with common allegiance to the parish family as a whole. There were three Churches in the Parish: St Peter's, Bombay; St Mary's, Pokeno; St Jude's, Mercer, and later at Maramarua. Services in other centres were held in the local hall, school or private residences. The area covered by the parish boundaries was in good heart in those days. The farmers and produce growers were busy. The Timber Mill at Maramarua and the Coal Mine at Kopuku were in full production – everyone was working and contented. In general, people were enthusiastic about Church and district activities. In all these things the schoolteachers of the day were deeply involved. They were welcoming to clergy taking Bible

lessons and generous in the provision of school buildings for local functions. A staff member of Pokeno School cared for a very fine Brownie and Guide Group associated with St Mary's, Pokeno.

Most families attended Church; the young folk accepting the Church's blessings appropriate to their growing years. Churchmen and Churchwomen readily took Office and supported the many parish organisations. The parish was richly blessed with wonderful Sunday School teachers and happy children. Classes were held at Bombay, Mangatangi, Mangatawhiri, Mercer, and Pokeno on Sundays and at Maramarua on weekdays. There was a Parish branch of the Mothers' Union centred at Bombay and Ladies' Guild at Bombay, Mangatangi, Maramarua and a Young Wives' Group at Kopuku and a St Mary's Garden Party Committee.

St Mary's was blessed with a splendid choir. Choristers came from far and near in all weathers to practice and then to enhance the Sunday services. The Bishop's visits for Confirmation were the highlight of the year. St Mary's and St Peter's were then filled to overflowing. October 1st 1967 was another such occasion when special services and gatherings were held to celebrate the Centenary of St Peter's Church, Bombay. Parishioners and their friends of the 60's will no doubt remember the happy Winter Socials held at different venues.



STAINED GLASS WINDOW. It was not until 1910 that the beautiful stained glass window arrived to grace the west wall of the Church, thus completing the building. The work of the famous Whitefriars makers, it was according to "The Herald", intended for the east end of the Church and it seems rather unfortunate that this plan was not carried out to give better opportunity of seeing what is the glory of the building. The following account is from "The Church Gazette" June 1910:

"At Pokeno the new west window presented by Miss Johnston was unveiled and dedicated by the Rev. Canon G. MacMurray M.A. at a special afternoon service, on the 12th April, in the presence of a good congregation. The school children attended by the kindly arrangement of the Headmaster, Mr Lippiatt, who was himself present. The window, made in London, is a great adornment to the church. The subjects in the three lights are emblematic figures of three Christian virtues, Faith, Hope and Charity. The greatest of the three occupies the centre, and is represented as about to be crowned by an attendant angel, who holds over her head a golden crown, while the sweet fragrance is suggested by a posy of Rose of Sharon at her feet. The general effect on the light in daylight services is most refreshing and restful and cannot help but contribute to the sense of quiet reverence which is so desirable in the House of Prayer."

Likewise, the Anzac Day Commemorative Services; the Dawn Parade at Mercer (usually in the fog) at Maramarua and Pokeno. Church Working Parties were always well supported and happy occasions. The Parish has a link with the one-time famous Mission Church of the Epiphany, Newton, demolished 1960's. The Church Altar came to St Mary's Pokeno and some pews to the Anglican Church at Maramarua.

In 1971 the Bishop made another appointment to the parish. On the 9 February, 1971, the Wrights moved to Orewa – Whangaparaoa and Districts. We were sad to have left so many local Church people and friends. There was still much to have been accomplished, but it was time to thank God for the past privileges, to thank our friends and say Farewell"

Cecil Wright

Some Statistics from the 1960's:-

- The Sub-districts of:

Bombay, Paparata, Raventhorpe,	
St Stephen's School	68 families
Kaiaua – Miranda	21 families
Mangatangi	46 families
Maramarua – Kopuku	89 families
Mercer – Island Block	44 families
Pokeno – Mangatawhiri	82 families
- Services per Month (on average) –

Bombay 4	Kaiaua 1	Mangatangi 2–3
Maramarua 2–3	Mercer 1	Pokeno 4
- The monthly cost of running the Parish –

Vicar's stipend	\$267
Travelling expenses etc	\$59
Telephone Stationary etc	\$5
Insurance, rates	\$13

By contrast in 2020:

- There about 170 families or individuals on the parish mailing list, with around 50 more or less regular attenders.
- Services are held: St Mary's, Pokeno, 2nd and 4th Sundays
 St Peter's Bombay, 1st and 3rd Sundays
 Kaiaua once a month and St Jude's Mercer, once a quarter
- The cost of running the parish in 2019 was \$85,000, excluding major repairs and maintenance, but also takes into account a half stipend for the priest in charge.

Mrs Connie Flexman Remembers

Painting of St Mary's 1974:- "St Mary's was in distress! The paintwork was at the last stages and no funds were available! The Ladies' Guild were at their Monthly Meeting at Mangatawhiri Hall trying to think up any possible means for a fundraiser. Suddenly a bright possibility! The Young Farmers were holding their meeting in the adjoining hall. Why not ask their Chairman to put it to his meeting that their Club, plus anyone else they could gather in,

help paint the Church which was, and still is, a “*District Monument*”. The motion was put forward, carried unanimously, with Eric Waterman, a professional painter, to be the Director. Within a few days it was “All go” and the Church was painted. The Ladies’ Guild and supporters provided food and drinks. At completion we loudly proclaimed that we would have a Celebration Luncheon in the Church grounds – it just appeared to be that every Parishioner from every Church in the District was there. The whole effort had been made possible by volunteers and a generous donation of the paint by a couple who were married in St Mary’s in November 1974.

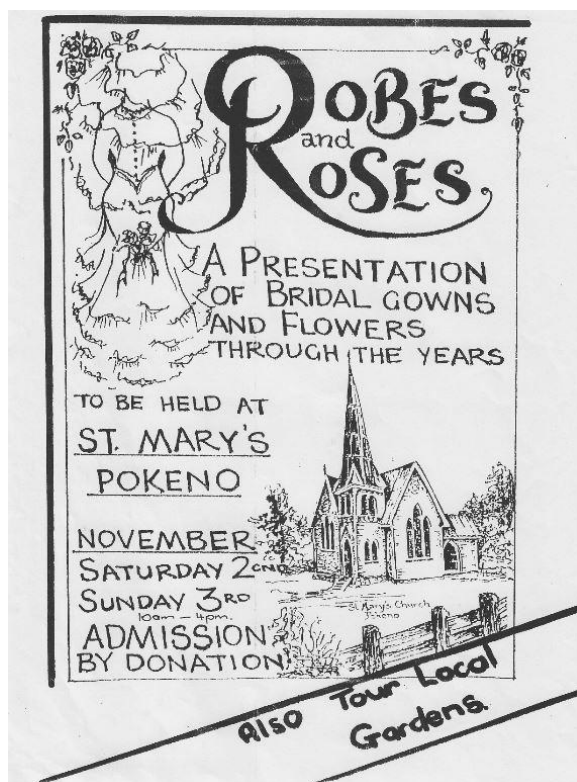
Painting Exhibition at Pokeno 1975:- This Art Exhibition was quite the largest project we ever tried. We had the men hanging pictures by 6.00am and all had to be cleared at night as some extremely valuable paintings had been loaned for the day only! John Speedy, a noted N.Z. Artist, came to give commentary. From that day a strong interest in Art was formed in Franklin. An article in the local paper stated:-

“As a follow up to the 75th anniversary celebrations of St Mary’s Anglican Church at Pokeno, the Ladies’ Guild is holding an exhibition of paintings in the Mangatawhiri Hall on Wednesday, July 2. The collection is from well-known and famous artists of past generations, combined with many fine works by New Zealand artists, both professional and amateur.

Residents of Pokeno and surrounding districts have made the display possible by their willingness to lend their paintings for the day. An interesting section is for the art class. Amateur painters who consider they are involved in a hobby are virtually knocking on the door of professionalism without realising it. The Guild is interested in anyone who is willing to exhibit and sell their work to contact the president, Mrs Ivan Gummer or Mrs Trevor Flexman of Pokeno. On the show will be works from Blomfield, Hayt, Angus, Gaugain, Van Gogh, Daniel (Paris), Peggy Spicer, Dorothy Morton and Helen Brown”.

Connie Flexman

Margaret Lyons Remembers



Robes & Roses, and Garden Tour “Robes & Roses”, along with the Garden Tour was without doubt a great success. From a meeting to discuss fundraising for the Parish on April 28, 1991, we formed an organising committee of two, Nora Thomson and myself. Robes & Roses grew in six months to a happening which involved many people of the Parish.

St Mary’s, when filled with beautiful wedding gowns and fresh flowers, was certainly a sight to behold. Lent by parishioners, the garments ranged in age from 1870 – 1991. Floral artists of the Parish arranged the flowers. Amongst them were two professional florists, and members of the Pokeno Floral Art Group. A book was printed to describe the gowns and the flowers which complimented them. Admission was by donation and \$5 bought a

map of the Garden Tour, which was in the Pokeno-Bombay area, and 'teas' were served in the grounds of the Church. \$4333 was the cash profit for the Church Vestry and \$148 of cards and Church prints were donated to St Mary's Guild. Marion Ogilvie did the drawing of St Mary's which was used on the posters, book, cards and prints. It also features on the cover of the 2000 history of St Mary's. Robes & Roses was a most delightful occasion.

Margaret Lyons

Archdeacon Bob Hansen Remembers

"I remember a parishioner at St Mary's saying with a faraway look in her eyes and a sage-like movement of her head: - *"Vicars come and Vicars go, but we go on forever."* I understood what she meant and it wasn't a criticism of Vicars, for I had received nothing but kindness and hospitality from these people. We were friends. I knew because whenever I drove home to the Vicarage at Bombay from Maramarua and the far reaches of the Parish, St Mary's was there in the distance, standing permanent and sentinel at the mouth of the great sprawling valley that owned her.

I remember St Mary's, not so much for what went on inside her, but for the wholesome earthiness, the love of the land, the battling with nature, the individualism of strong people with minds of their own and strong views about religion, politics and all other matters pertaining to good life, up and down that valley. It was a privilege to be allowed into the community for a time, but *'Vicars come and Vicars go'* and I'm sure the spirit of the people will go on forever in the valley with its sentinel at its head pointing silently upwards".

Bob Hansen

Fred Downie Remembers

Church choir: "It is indeed a pleasure to be given the opportunity to give a report on our Parish Choir and its activities in our Parish of Bombay-Pokeno from 1954 to the end of the century, 1999.

-1950's: The Vicar in the mid 1950's was Rev. Mark Mete. He was very pleased when Mrs Lydia Peacock, a talented musician from Pokeno, offered to organise a choir for St Mary's. Mr & Mrs J. Denly would drive Lydia to practice and Percy would mind the children. We regularly sang at Evensong and all festive Church celebrations. We sang Anthems, Psalms and from time to time attended combined choir music festivals at Pukekohe and Papatoetoe where we received a Certificate of Merit. Our conductor for these occasions at Papatoetoe was Mr Peter Godfrey, one of NZM's best conductors.

-1960's: In 1960 Rev. Cecil Wright became our Vicar. He welcomed the choir and we worked harmoniously until Mrs Peacock and family left Pokeno and moved to Pukekohe in 1968. Mrs Peacock was farewelled by the choir and presented with a music stand engraved with her name for her 15 years of service in leading the choir. Our services were not without humour - one winter Evensong an elderly gentleman was singing with great gusto as he took up the collection, and as he passed Lydia and myself, he reached for his top note and his false teeth shot out into the collection plate!!! Lydia and I were silent for the rest of the hymn as we were unable to sing a note. (Fortunately he retrieved his teeth so that the collection wasn't falsely blessed!) On another occasion at practice a possum was creeping around on the beams over the heads of the sopranos and they were petrified; a few days later when we had Evensong I kept looking up over their heads which made them very nervous (the possum had not returned), I was most unpopular and threats to banish me from the choir if such teasing occurred again. After Lydia Peacock left, the choir was not active until Rev. Ivan Smith became our Vicar and he invited a choir from Auckland to St Mary's on several occasions.

MEMORIAL PLAQUE. "In grateful memory of Rev. Peter Tanton who served this Parish 1975-1979". Peter will always be remembered by St Mary's parishioners for the many services he took in the Church. He lost his life in the Mt Erebus disaster. The golden totara in the grounds was planted in his memory and the memorial plaque was dedicated by Bishop Godfrey Wilson on May 2nd 1982.



-1970's and 1980's: The Rev'd Peter Tanton served the parish from 1976 to 1979. Sadly, he lost his life in the Mt Erebus plane crash in 1979. A memorial plaque was installed in his memory. When Rev. Peter Tanton left in the mid seventies our next Vicar, Rev. Richard Hancock, came into the Parish and reconvened the choir. He was a fine musician and our numbers increased to about 23 members. We again sang at Evensong and at all the main events on the Church calendar. Rev. R. Hancock's stay was all too short and our choir was less active until a Presbyterian minister Rev. Frank McKean formed a combined Presbyterian and Anglican choir and we were once again singing at all main services. We practiced alternately in St Mary's and St Andrew's in Pokeno. When Rev. McKean retired near the end of the 'eighties, Mrs Glenys Marsh and the dependable Mrs Janet McRobbie kept the choir going until we welcomed Rev. Iris Temple in October 1989.

-1990's: The Rev. Temple had a fine alto voice and a wealth of musical experience which she soon put to work. Everyone's talents were used from singing in tune to blowing a tin whistle. We sang at all the main events on the Church's calendar and up to 1998 we sang with our Presbyterian friends; Glenys Marsh has been our able conductor and Janet McRobbie our regular organist. The following are special musical events in which the choir have been involved during the 1990's:

-1991 at Waiuku to celebrate the launch of the New Zealand Prayer Book; Easter Worship; Floral Festival; at Mangatawhiri - special music service; Carol services.

-1992 *Behold your King; Sir Oliver's Song*; Welcome to Bishop Bruce at Thames; Mrs Molly Pendergrast's funeral; Carol Services.

-1993 Passion Play at Easter; *Psalty's Christmas Calamity*; Progressive Service round the Parish including Confirmations at Pokeno and the Dedication of the Merryweather and Millar Windows at St Peter's.

-1994 *Antshilvania*; Christmas Carols from many lands.

-1995 Easter Services; Mr George Lyons' funeral; with Papakura Choir to welcome Bishop John Paterson; farewell to Mr & Mrs Clifton O'Leary and family; dedication of the Mills Window in the porch; *Psalty's Christmas Calamity*.

-1996 Easter Passion Play; Holy Trinity Cathedral Choir sang at St Mary's, *Christmas Rock Cantata*.

-1997 Easter Services; Advent Services at Mangatawhiri; Carol Services.

-1998 Easter Services; *Music Machine*; Advent and Carol Services.

-1999 Easter Services; The Reverend Linda Braid's funeral...

All the musical performances were supported by the parents of our children taking part. Our main organists for the performances being Mrs Moya Joslin and Mrs Janet McRobbie. "*The Music Machine*" was conducted by Mr Roy Joslin. Rev. Iris Temple was an inspiration to all, with the support of Rev. Linda Braid who made all the scenery and stage props.



The Easter Candle stand was made by David Braks of Bombay and is dedicated in memory of Nick Overdevest

I am listing here, to the best of my memory (and with the help of others) a record of our Choir members and organists from our beginning up to the time of writing, 1999:-

Ladies:- Lydia Peacock, Muriel Denly, Freda Averill, Ivy O'Leary, Evelyn Hewitt, Jean Austin, Janet McRobbie, Glen Marsh, Angela Morey, Jean Beattie, Laureen Gummer, Barbara Jeffs, Christine Pullin, Jocelyn Lane, Cherry Lyons, Marie Morrison, Mary Somerville, Iris Jones, Claire Main, Margaret James, Pam Davidge, Gail Foote, Pam Lockhart, Dianne Evans, Margaret Nickiel, Annette McPherson, Margaret Overdevest, Una Harris, Pauline Ackerley, Kitty Ackerley, Helen Baines, Joan Hills, Leonie Parker, Marie Henry, Marie Galloway, Alison Twist, Glenis Menzies, Judy Williams, Doris Peel, Sue Bell, Glenda Aitkenhead, Susan Forsyth, Jennifer Roberts, Leah Cooper, Pauline Cheyne, Rev. Iris Temple.

Men:- Jim Denly, Guy Hessell, Bill Heald Snr, Gordon Mace, Howard Wright, Alan Lane, Mike Caldwell, Fred Downie, Mac Lynch, Clifton O'Leary, Keith Chipman, Alan Fleming, Peter Gummer, Gordon Mather, Peter McRobbie, Laurence Bond, Bob Harvison, Malcolm McLean, Jack Watson, Roy Joslin, John Otto, Jan Brockhoff, Pip Ackerley, Rev. Bill Heald.

Organists:- Janet McRobbie, Glenys Marsh, Gail Foote, Betty Keene, Ted Pope, Colleen O'Leary, Julie Pendergrast, John Otto, Ida Parker, Moya Joslin, Helen Baines, Jean Austin, Lydia Peacock, Matty Dove, Rev'ds Bill Heald, Richard Hancock, and Chris Apthorp.

Other Instrumentalists:- Peggy Brough - Cello; Alan Lane & Alan Fleming - Piano Accordion; Jeanette Fleming - keyboard; Ada, Truesu & Wilhemina Brockhoff and Geoff Austin - Violin; Simon Cole-Baker - Clarinet; Peter Gummer - Trumpet; Howard Wright - Guitar; Roy Joslin - Cornet.

In conclusion I would like to say that our Church Choir has played a most important part in the activities of the Parish. It creates fellowship and lasting friendships and is very much appreciated by Church members. I've often heard the comment, "*Thank heaven for the Choir, I've never heard that hymn before!*". Special thanks to my friends Lydia Peacock, Jim Denly, Laureen Gummer, Barbara Jeffs and the Rev. Iris Temple for all their co-operation and help in compiling this mostly unrecorded data. God bless you all."⁵⁴

Fred Downie

⁵⁴ **Footnote:** In the original text Fred Downie included an explanation that his list of the choir and the musicians was from memory and extended an apology to any he overlooked.

Mrs Dora George Remembers

"When we were very young, father, J. B. Parker, drove the car to Sunday morning service. We would pick up Mrs Raymond. On arrival, mother, Ida Parker, the organist, went up the aisle to the organ. Mrs Raymond and the kids settled in seats at the back. Father stayed in the car. He only went in when Archbishop Averill was preaching. Apparently, he thought a lot of Archbishop Averill. Mrs Gummer, senior, arrived with a bowl of flowers - she took them home afterwards. Childlike, I thought Mrs Raymond sang too loud. Later, I realised she not only had a good voice, she knew how to use it. When the Service was over, we went out to Whakatiwai for a picnic lunch, previously prepared. It seemed a long way. In those days a large part of Mangatangi was still clad in titree. It was always a welcome sight when the sea came in view.

PRAYER DESKS and HAND RAIL.

There are two prayer desks, one on either side of the main aisle in the chancel area, made of kauri with a traditional carving along the front panel. One was installed when the church was built and the second, a gift from the ladies of the Maramarua Guild commemorating St Mary's Centennial in 2000. The second one was crafted by Mr A. Watson, also from kauri timber and carved by Mrs Betty Keene, following the pattern of the first Prayer Desk.

The handrail on the Chancel steps, made of rimu and assembled by John Bratlie and Noel Ottaway, was given by the Gummer family in memory of Mr Ivan Gummer 1915-1978, who was People's Warden for many years.



Harvest Festival:- There were no handy supermarkets or vege shops, then. Most folks had their own orchard and a vege garden. A number of farmers, including father, grew crops of maize and turnips for the cows. On the day of the Harvest Festival, the back of the Church was filled with fruit and veges. Vegetables were mostly grown in part of the area used for crops. Maize was used for decoration, as were apples on the window sills. We sang the harvest hymns like "*We plough the fields and scatter*", and "*All things Bright and Beautiful*". Next day, the goodies were moved to the Pokeno Valley Hall just across the road. A dance was held, mother providing the music. The goods were auctioned and in usual country style the ladies provided a lavish supper. The Hall was on an unopened Rimu Road and was later moved to Ben Holmes property, opposite Sally and Russell Adams where it remains as a wool shed. I wonder how many recall the little Irish Vicar, Rev. Salmon, or the very popular Rev. Harry Taylor. I believe he became a Padre in World War 2.

I don't know what became of the stained glass windows which have been replaced with plain

glass. Similar in design to the existing ones. They comprised red and white squares rather attractive with the sun shining through. I well remember the move by the village folk to have the Church shifted down there. What a crazy and unpopular idea. A well attended meeting convened by Molly Pendergrast put a stop to that nonsense and the Church remains in its original prominent position".

Dora George

Janet McRobbie - Notes from Guild Minutes

"St Mary's Guild was formed at a meeting on 16th September 1953. Founding members were Mesdames Rynd, O'Neale, O'Leary, Leathem, Richards, Moyle, Lippiatt, Thompson, Lindsay, Averill, Keene, Watson.

LECTERN is of polished rimu handsomely carved by Miss Motion. A large and splendid bound Bible was sent from England as a present by a relation of Miss Johnston.



The Bible was restored to its original condition in 2018.

The first activities of the Guild included purchase of linen for an altar cloth, a party for St Mary's Sunday School children, and a street stall. Fund raising provided a carpet which was dedicated on 11 July 1954. During 1955-56-57 green altar drapes and hangings were made. From 1957 until 1962 the Guild was in recess. It was reformed with the aims of increasing members knowledge of the Church and its teachings, caring for the furnishings of the Church and raising extra church funds. In 1964 the usual attendance at meetings numbered 17. In these years, parish guilds combined for a Christmas party with items and competitions and carol singing. 1964 saw the making of 20 kneelers.




Activities over the years have included Garden Parties and Fairs, support of Leprosy Mission, Seaman's Mission, entertaining patients of Renthorpe Hospital, Catering for functions, Fashion Parades, organising Parish Balls and numerous guest speakers on a wide range of topics and hosting Japanese students each year. In September, 1969, a linen altar cloth was donated by Mrs Laureen Gummer and embroidered by Mrs Jean Austin. 1977 saw funds raised provide furnishings, hymn books, heaters, and supported a World Vision orphan and helped with the upkeep of the Church while supporting Bible in Schools work. At the time of writing in 2000, the Guild continues to meet as required and has at least one activity each term".

Janet McRobbie

Betty Keene Remembers

Sunday School and Bible Class: “Mr Keith Howell had been in charge of the Pokeno Sunday School which met in the Pokeno Hall. His parents and he sold their store, by the Railway Station, and moved out of the district. I was asked to lead the Sunday School - about 1954, I think. For years, a group of parents were the teachers - we had “preparation” evenings every week and they were well equipped with “extra” activities, puzzles, paper for drawing - all based on the lesson. Each term had a theme - which at the end of the term was presented in service form by the children and the day finished with a special tea. Then the Sunday School closed and Mr Wright conducted a Sunday School on Sunday afternoons at St Mary’s.

On his arrival Rev’d Richard Hancock initiated a combined Presbyterian and Anglican group held on Thursday afternoons after School - term by term alternately in the two Churches with the same systems of end of term services conducted by the children. The combined Bible Class Club was a development from the Sunday School. Four table



Lectern made by David Braks of Bombay, made from unused church kneelers from St Mary’s.

tennis tables, volleyball, and table games provided one and a half hours of energetic or more quiet fun and then Bible Study and discussion tested their developing brains and challenged their ideas of Christian living. The members were from Presbyterian and Anglican families and others. At one time there were 18 sixteen year old young men. Gradually the numbers of girls-boys evened out.

Occasional excursions, Rangitoto Island was one, were enjoyed. The Rev. Richard Hancock and the Rev. Bert Orange (Presbyterian) were stalwarts in the organisation. The Bible Class provided readers for a series of half hours on 1YA. The Club flourished for around 15 years until illness in the leaders’ families caused its closure as there were no new leaders forthcoming”.

Betty Keene⁵⁵

A Message from the Treasurer - George Trounce

“In the year 2000, throughout the country, many churches are without the services of a full-time Stipendary Priest for the reason that these Parishes cannot afford one. Although our Parish has \$200,000 invested in the Diocese; plus \$37,000 invested from the beef scheme; and \$16,000 held by the Church Cemetery Board we have not got sufficient income to pay for a full-time Stipendary Priest. At the time of writing one quarter of our Vicar’s Stipend is met by St John’s College Trust Board, in exchange our Vicar, the Rev’d Iris Temple, oversees a training programme to equip laity to take up non-stipendary ministry. If and when we lose

⁵⁵ **Footnote:** Betty Keene was ordained a ‘Local Priest’ in 2002, licensed to the Parish of Bombay Pokeno and continued in that capacity until her death in 2013.

the services of our present Vicar, our Parish would be extremely lucky indeed if the incumbent was also appointed to carry out a similar task. The most likely scenario would be that the Parish would have to find an extra \$10,000 per year for a full-time Stipendary Priest. This prospect is the most daunting task facing our Parish at the present time.

MEMORIAL WINDOW IN THE PORCH.

"To the Glory of God and in loving memory of Allen & Mary Mills (nee Stokes) Married in this Church 23 February 1933, Died 20 June 1993 & 7 September 1985." Their ashes are under the tree on the left of the drive.

We, the parishioners, will have to consider the consequences if we do not meet and fulfil this challenge. Our Parish, in addition to the invested money earned by our predecessors have a lovely Vicarage and Churches at Bombay, Pokeno, Mercer and Maramarua that are debt free. BUT they must be maintained. Age is catching up with the majority of our Parishioners. This is not confined to our own Parish but is recognised by the Diocese and was a discussion topic at the last Synod. We currently have 52 families on the "Envelope" scheme or contributing regularly by "Direct Bank Credit". Unless we can encourage/find more families to join this form of giving, or in some way increase our income, it seems inevitable that this Parish will join the ranks with non-stipendary and laity keeping the Christian message alive".



George Trounce

The Rev'd Iris E. Temple Remembers

"My first close up view of St Mary on the Hill was on a foggy morning when we stood by the door, not realising it was unlocked, and struggled into stockings to be ready to meet the Parish Nominators at the O'Leary home! My first service at St Mary's was the funeral of Roy Wills on the day before my induction as Vicar of the Parish, (since then there have been another 163 funerals in the Parish). On the night of my induction, 3 October 1989, it poured with rain which was obvious inside the Church as a group of seats were left vacant as the rain came through the roof. Elsewhere in this booklet you will find the story of how we managed to get St Mary's re-roofed free of charge.

A first impression was the long-drop .. I have been assured that it wasn't put there when the Church was built .. but it was great to see the up-grading in 1992 and the putting on of water thanks to some very energetic parishioners.

Another vivid impression I had was the quality of the floral decorations in the Church especially at Christmastide when I never know what to expect as imagination and skills are put to the test. I hate naming names in case of omissions but must mention Angela Morey, Anita Filkin, Colleen O'Leary, Janet McRobbie, Nancy Pope, Dora George, Barbara Bratlie, Dorothy Cooper and the Rev'd Linda Braid who have taken floral decoration to great heights at St Mary's. (Also Ernie Morey whose skills have been used to suspend decorations from various points of the Church!) Who could ever forget that great ball of flowers suspended from the rafters one Eastertide .. or the cross covered in flowers outside the Church?

St Mary's has seen some very large, overflowing, services during my time here, as well as some sad occasions such as the funerals of Molly Pendergrast, Trevor Flexman, Ivy O'Leary, Neil Pullin, George Lyons, Richard Doake and The Rev'd Linda Braid. I also recollect some sad but fun evenings such as the farewell to the O'Leary family.

Seventy seven weddings and one hundred and six baptisms were conducted during my time here, are other occasions for a full Church. Good Friday Services, Carol Services, and Christmas at Midnight are always well attended. However, for most of the year the pews are not overflowing, the childrens' services are usually reasonably well attended but weekly regular attendance is obviously not a priority for many in the Pokeno Valley.

The Church of St Mary on the Hill is a beautiful Church, in a great setting, I pray that its future may be as a centre for worship not just a landmark and a resting place for travellers".

*Iris Temple*⁵⁶

Organ. In 1939 the pedal organ was so bad with borer it was not worth repairing. A faculty states that the organ from St Jude's Mercer was temporarily moved to St Mary's. 25 years earlier this organ cost £10. Pedal organs gave way to the electronic and the present one was installed in 1992. This, too, succumbed to the ravages of time and in 2016 Ken and Tricia Graham generously donated the current magnificent Johannus electronic organ.



Footnote: This concludes the edited version of the 2000 edition of St Mary's Story.

⁵⁶ **Footnote:** The Rev'd Iris Temple married her long-time friend, Ronnie Alden in February 2001. Shortly after, the newlywed couple retired to Taupo.



Some additional snippets:

PULPIT. The Church Gazette, May 1900, indicates that the pulpit was carved by Mr & Mrs Pyne.

HYMN BOARDS. The hymn numbers for the congregation to sing are placed in order on this board, also the first page number for the "Order of Service". The second Hymn board was made by Ernie Morey.

PEWS provide seating for 150 people. Constructed of solid heart kauri they have moveable footrests and on the backs are shelves for books and racks for kneelers.

PORCH. The West door, the main entrance for the Church opens from the porch which was 9 feet square when the Church was built. In 1961 the south porch was enlarged.

Kitchenette. For many years there was no facility for tea making. A sink bench with cupboards was donated by Angela and Ernie Morey and in 1996 it was installed in the South porch extension by a working bee. The current sink bench and facilities were upgraded in 2007.

The Golden Totara

This magnificent tree was planted in 1982 in memory of the Rev'd Peter Tanton, Priest Assistant in the parish from 1976 to 1979. Peter Tanton lost his life in 1979 in the Erebus disaster.



Part F. A New Century Begins

14. Celebrating 100 years

Foundation Stone Anniversary 1899-1999

It was decided that the Centennial of St Mary's construction and consecration was worthy of some celebrations. The first celebration was that of commemorating the laying of the Foundation Stone in 1899. On 7 November, 1999, a special service was held which began inside the church with the address given by the Vicar, the Rev'd Iris Temple. The service inside concluded with the hymn, *'The Church's One Foundation'*, with the choir leading the congregation outside the building, dividing left and right of the church to meet at the east end to witness the retrieval of the 'time capsule' laid in 1899 and adding some new artifacts



The Rev'd Iris temple, Vicar, with Bruce Lyons holding the time capsule and John Brattlie.

relevant to 1999. The time capsule contained a copy of the New Zealand Herald dated 4 November 1899 and some coins of the period. They were replaced by a copy of the latest New Zealand Herald and some 1999 coins. Once the time capsule was replaced in its space under the foundation stone everyone sang *'Shine Jesus Shine'*, led by the choir, with Peter Gummer on the trumpet.

The Centennial Service was held on 26 March 2000, being the 100th Anniversary of the consecration of St Mary's. The Assistant Bishop, the Rt. Rev'd. Godfrey Wilson, presided and gave the address. The Gospel reading for the occasion was Luke, Chapter 1:39-46, *'Mary visits Elizabeth'*. As part of the service Bishop Wilson blessed the new prayer desk, with carvings done by Betty Keene to match the carving of the original prayer desk, together with the blessing of the handrails and the processional cross.



During the weekend of the Centennial St Mary's was open on the Saturday from 1.00-5.00pm with the church decorated with a floral display. The booklet outlining the 100 years of the history of the church, edited by Margaret Lyons was on sale for \$5.00.

Centennial Kauri

To mark the occasion of the St Mary's Centennial in 2000 a kauri tree was planted. Unfortunately this tree, which has grown very well in the ensuing 20 years was planted too close to the building and as it has got bigger its leaves have been causing problems with the spouting and the expanding root system is in danger of damaging the foundations and the kitchen drain nearby. A dilemma now faces the parish as to how best to resolve the problem. Because it is such a lovely specimen the reluctance to remove it is understandable, but for it to be left will result in expensive structural damage longer term. Perhaps readers in the next revision of the story of St Mary's will find out what the final decision was!



Footnote: Foundation Stone:- It is intended to lay an additional time capsule' with the Foundation Stone, to commemorate the 120th Anniversary celebrations in November 2020.



15. The First Twenty Years

The Rev'd Betty Keene

Readers will have just read Betty's contribution in '*Betty Keene Remembers*' in Chapter Four. Her association with St Mary's goes right back to the mid 1950's when she and her husband Clarence bought a farm on Helenslee Road, where their family grew up. Betty was very much involved in church and community activities. Her school teaching background made her an ideal person to look after the Sunday School and Bible Class programmes at St Mary's. Betty had a remarkable background having spent time working at the BBC on her OE in the late 1940's. As a trained teacher she taught at Matakana Island on the Tauranga Harbour, before marrying her farming husband, Clarence. Initially, they farmed in the Far North, before settling in Helenslee Road. As well as her Sunday School involvement she was a lay minister and liturgist, leading services, including preaching. In the later part of the 1990's she participated in the Franklin Ministry Training programme and was ordained to the priesthood in St Mary's at the age of 80 in 2002. Betty served her church faithfully and well for many years, as lay and ordained. Betty Keene died at Raglan Hospital in July 2013 at the age of 90. Her funeral was held at her beloved St Mary's.

Harriet Johnston's Grave Restoration

When Harriet Johnston died in 1916 she was buried at the Pokeno Cemetery in Fraser Road. Her grave was marked by an impressive granite cross on a granite plinth. In 1926, her adopted son, Francis Pyne, was also buried in the same plot with a simple stone slab with an inscription, marking his presence. Unfortunately the ravages of time and weather caused the cross and plinth to develop a dangerous lean. The grave surrounds, including the slab marking Pyne's presence were also in poor condition.



In 2016, to mark the 100th anniversary of Harriet Johnston's death, Vestry decided that it would initiate a grave restoration. Accordingly, quotes were obtained and one for \$4600 was accepted by Franklin stonemason, Paul Harris. An application was made to the Waikato District Council Heritage Fund for financial assistance. The parish was fortunate enough to be given a grant by the WDC of \$2650, covering just over half of the cross. The project was duly completed during the year and the grave site given a blessing. In its restored condition, the grave, with its granite cross standing proud, should last for at least 100 years or more.



The seat surrounding the tree at the entrance is a gift from Maramarua Guild to commemorate 40 years of their Guild in 1997.



Palm Sunday Procession, 2019.

The Choir Continues

Mention has already been made of the strong choral tradition at St Mary's continuing into the new millennium! The choir is brought together for special occasions, but in particular for Good Friday and for the Christmas Carol Service. The parish continues to be fortunate in having very capable choir leaders. Joan Hills was the choir director for a number of years before she stepped down to make way for Glenys Marsh. In more recent times the choir has been led by Linda Speight and Janet McRobbie. The choir has been loyally supported by Cherry Jefferis and Marie Morrison with their duets. Michael Caldwell has also been a supporter including as an occasional soloist. Until relatively recently the choir was supplemented by members of the Bombay Presbyterian Church with Roy Joslin and Peter Gummer providing brass accompaniment.



'Clipping' the church on Palm Sunday, 2019.

Family Services

During her time as Vicar, the Rev'd Gayanne Frater made a point of encouraging young families to be involved, especially at St Peter's, Bombay. Her initiatives following the precedence set in the 1990's by previous Vicar, the Rev'd Iris Temple, encouraged the continuation of Family Services and Sunday School. By 2008 a tradition of a family service and Sunday School had been established at both Bombay and Pokeno. On the first Sunday of the month the Family Service and Sunday School was held at St Peter's, with St Mary's having the Family Service and Sunday School on the second Sunday. Martha Hosick and Janet McRobbie became responsible for a very successful programme. Martha would be the facilitator and liturgist, whilst Janet ran the Sunday School programme. The success of the families services is very much attributed to the hard work of Martha, who would diligently contact families to involve them in different aspects of the service, and to Janet who ran innovative activities for the young people. In 2020 Sandra Hannaford took over the leadership of the family Service at St Peter's, Bombay, whilst Martha Hosick continued her role at St Mary's.

A Challenge for Parish Unity

The Mission District of Bombay Pokeno is one of the largest geographical ministry units in the Diocese. In the past there were worship centres, not only at Bombay and Pokeno and Mercer, but also at Mangatawhiri, Mangatangi, Maramarua and Kaiaua. Each had their own worshipping communities with services being held on a regular basis, making for very busy Vicars!! Over the years each of these worshipping centres had been encouraged to develop their own identity with their own local committees and activities. But as time went by, the number of worshippers decreased, so that by 2006 the only centres remaining were Bombay and Pokeno with regular services, with Kaiaua once a month and Mercer on a quarterly basis.

Local church allegiance remained strong at Bombay and Pokeno, where each church continued with its own local church committee as well as the Central Vestry. However, as time passed Vestry became more involved in the decision making for the churches that the local committee became less essential. In 2018 the Parish Annual General Meeting resolved to disband the local church committees of St Peter's and St Mary's, with Vestry assuming oversight.

For about three years up to 2010 it was possible to have two services running concurrently at Bombay and Pokeno. As well as having the Vicar, the parish had two non-stipendiary priests, the Rev'd Betty Keene and the Rev'd Bruce Owen. The congregations at each centre were quite small and sometimes little more than those scheduled to take a role in the service. It became clear that it made sense to have just one service each Sunday, alternating between the two centres. Peoples' Warden, George Trounce, led the call in 2011 to rationalise the services and at a parish meeting it was resolved to do just that. Not everyone was in favour, with one parishioner making it clear that people would not be prepared to travel to the other centre from their preferred place of worship. In fact the opposite has been the case with the pattern of the first and third Sundays being held at St Peter's, Bombay, and second and fourth Sundays at St Mary's, Poekono, becoming the norm, with Family Services being held on the first and second Sundays, parishioners travelling to both centres.

The St Mary's Guild

Mention has already been made of the work of the St Mary's Guild which began its work in

1953. For several decades, the Guild has been one of the 'guardians' of St Mary's, providing support where needed with the cleaning, flower arranging, and not least, fundraising. It was also an opportunity for the women of the St Mary's congregation to gather socially. This dedicated team of St Mary's women have made sure the church is well looked after, that it was always ready for worship and decorated for special occasions, as well as being attractive to the many visitors who passed through in the days when the doors were unlocked.

In more recent times worship became focussed on the two centres of Bombay and Pokeno, with occasional services at Kaiaua and Mercer. This, with the disbanding of the local church committees and greater unity within the parish saw the Guild cease to function. In this record of the story of St Mary's it is important that we honour the service of the St Mary's Guild.

A Heritage Building

In 2011 Vestry discussed the heritage status of St Mary's. As St Peter's had already been given Heritage 2 status it was felt that the same should apply to St Mary's. As the Presbyterian Church in Fraser Road had been sold in 2006 to become a private dwelling there was concern by some Vestry members that a similar fate could apply to St Mary's at some stage in the future. The Historic Places Trust, now Heritage New Zealand, were approached and duly gave an assessment. Their report recommended that St Mary's be regarded a Category II listed property. The Auckland Diocese was consulted on the process but in a letter to Vestry the then Diocesan Secretary, Geoff Clark, expressed his disapproval:

*'The Diocese of Auckland usually opposes proposals to register any of its churches because registration results in significant restrictions on future use as little or no changes can be made to the building. Even maintenance can be a frustrating experience.'*⁵⁷ Geoff Clark did add that any opposition by the Diocese was rarely successful, *'because little or no weight is given to our concerns'*. He left it to Vestry to decide whether to accept heritage status. At its meeting in May 2011 Vestry formally resolved to accept the recommendation that St Mary's be registered as a Category II historic place.

Lock the Doors

Until 2014 St Mary's, as with St Peter's in Bombay, had an 'open door' policy. The churches were never locked, thereby allowing visitors to have a look around, or for parishioners to come and go at will to have a quiet time of prayer and contemplation. St Mary's was always a point of interest. Travellers along State Highway 2 heading west towards Pokeno were attracted by the tall spire. A Visitors' Book in the porch showed that there was a constant flow of visitors from all over the world.

The Franklin County News in August, 2014, reported that church member, Chris Pullin, had noticed that the Visitors' Book was missing and that some lights and a heater were left on. As well she found a blue candle burning in the font. Some items were missing, a small table, a teapot, together with a dust pan and brush. The article also noted that on previous occasions locked cupboards in the kitchen area had been broken into and a vacuum cleaner stolen. Around the same time there was a serious break in at St Peter's causing considerable damage. Following a great deal of discussion Vestry decided that they had no option but to have the church locked. It was not a unanimous decision as some members felt strongly that a church

⁵⁷ Letter to Bombay Pokeno Vestry, G Clark, Diocesan Secretary, 19 April, 2011, Bombay Pokeno Parish Records

should be open to all.⁵⁸ This was not the first time problems had occurred at St Mary's because the local paper had a report in 2002:-

Spaniard deported

A Spanish man was deported last Tuesday after he was found squatting in a church in Pokeno police say.'

A tip off suggested that he had been staying in the shelter of St Mary's a number of days before being arrested and then deported!!⁵⁹

More Maintenance

Maintenance has been an ongoing challenge for St Mary's. Some suggest that the kauri timber used in its construction was not the best choice for a long term basis. Several weatherboards have required replacing and the window frame around the big window of the chancel on the south side showed signs of rot which had to be fixed in 2012. In 2016 the beautiful 'Faith, Hope and Charity' west window likewise, had rot. This project was quite an undertaking requiring the removal of the large exterior protective glass panes in order to undertake the repairs, but also to replace the rusting metal lugs holding the protective glass in place.

Perhaps most mysterious of all was the sudden appearance of several golf ball size holes in high up on the wooden panelling in the sanctuary area in 2015. Fortunately these were able to be fixed by replacing the damaged panelling. The reason for the holes was never found, though birds were felt to be the most likely cause.

By 2018 it was clear that the St Mary's exterior paint work was in a poor state. Also, of concern was the church spouting and the condition of the roof and the shingle cladding of the steeple. This was to become a major project for the church community.

Roof: In late 2018 the contractors were engaged to clean the roof and the spire. This certainly made a difference to the amount of dirt and algal growth on the paintwork of the roof and the wooden shingles of the spire.

Spouting: The spouting was in a poor state of repair, with a section missing on the south side. The remaining spouting was clogged with leaves and debris which was hastening the rusting process. Contractors replaced the spouting around the church in early 2019.



The steeple being cleaned, 2018.

Exterior painting: by far the largest, and certainly the most expensive, project was that of

⁵⁸ Franklin County News, 7 August, 2014

⁵⁹ Franklin County News, 14 May, 2002

painting the exterior weatherboards of the church. The last time this was done was in the early 1990's undertaken by voluntary labour. Vestry agreed that it required professional painting and the quote provide by Rhys Cadness Painters was accepted. The job was a major contract, being undertaken in January 2019. The work entailed erection of scaffolding, preparatory work to rectify rot issues, priming where necessary, undercoating and finishing with two top coats. It is hoped that the work will last another thirty years! This project, including the roof clean, spouting replacement and exterior painting was more than \$60,000. Fortunately, Vestry were successful with their application for a funding grant of



\$20,000 from ASB Foundation North. It was also decided that the balance of \$37,000 from the 'Beef Account' would be used to help with the cost, together with some generous donations. Acknowledgement is made to Foundation North for their support, as well as to those parishioners who had the foresight to set up the Beef Account in the first place.

Painting project underway January 2019.

Driveway Entrance Improvement

By 2018 the access to the driveway leading to the church from the road was in poor condition. Heavy rain had caused rutting and potholes to develop. Thanks to the generosity of James McRobbie and his team at McRobbie Bros Contractors, a culvert was laid and the approach to the driveway was greatly improved with the addition of extra road metal to widen the approach and improve the incline. The support of McRobbie Brothers Contractors is acknowledged and appreciated.



The improved entrance.

Engaging with the Community

One of the challenges facing St Mary's is that its position on Avon Road is well away from the centre of the village, where everyone lives. The old village of Pokeno had developed

Some Snippets

Pew cushions: Thanks to the generosity of donations from parishioners in 2003, Tom Hosick made enough quality squabs for each of the pews.

Memorial rose garden: A memorial rose garden was established in 2004 along the rear boundary between the golden totara and the water tank.

Family Services: Though Family Services and Sunday School had been held previously at St Peter's Bombay, in 2008 they began at St Mary's led by Martha Hosick and Janet McRobbie.

Sprinkler system: in 2010 a quote for installing sprinkler systems at St Mary's and St Peter's came in at \$65,000, a cost which made the project unaffordable.

Sound system: A sound system was installed in 2013

between the railway line together with the former railway station and the main road south. It was for this reason that on more than one occasion serious discussions were held about physically moving the church closer to the village. For many years Pokeno remained a small rural village which was fortunate to survive the opening of the expressway bypass by virtue of the popularity of the famous and iconic Pokeno ice creams, together with the very highly regarded Pokeno Bacon butcher's shop and the Pokeno Sunday Markets.

-Residential growth: Around 2009 to 2011 plans were afoot for a substantial industrial and residential development. It was to be large, with an expected population of 10,000 in the years to come. By 2020 the industry included two dairy factories, a large concrete pipe works and well as other established industries. The number of houses had increased to several thousand.

-Meet and Greet: When the Rev'd Andrew Beyer became Priest in Charge in 2016 he saw that one of his initiatives needed to be that of community engagement. He, with others, was instrumental in establishing the fortnightly Pokeno 'Meet and Greet', an occasion where local residents can gather at the Pokeno Community Hall between 10.00 and 12.00 on a Thursday morning once a fortnight. It was an opportunity for the local people to make new friends and engage in some activities over a 'cuppa'. Andrew Beyer's involvement, together with the support of other parishioners, have been instrumental in promoting St Mary's as a worshipping centre.



Carol singing in the Pokeno shopping centre, 2017.

-Carol Singing: As part of Andrew Beyer's community engagement strategy was the idea of travelling around the residential area singing Christmas carols at strategic points. A hardy group of parishioners, led by Andrew, with Janet McRobbie playing on the portable keyboard would start off at the shopping centre and then move to several strategic points singing carols. At each point, a goodly number of residents would emerge to come over and join in.

In 2018 the Community Committee resolved to undertake the Pokeno Christmas Parade, starting in the shopping area and then ending up at Pokeno School. Again, the church group turned up, led by Andrew Beyer and with Janet McRobbie on the keyboard, to support the singing of carols. The event was repeated in 2019.



Singing Carols at Pokeno School after the 2018 Pokeno Christmas Parade.

-ANZAC Day Commemoration: For many years, the congregation of St Mary's was involved with leading the annual ANZAC Day commemoration at the Cenotaph on the Great South Road. When ill health became an issue, the Rev'd Betty Keene handed over conducting the service in 2012 to Rev'd Bruce Owen. Since then the commemoration has become quite a team effort working with representatives of the RSA, the Fire Brigade, the local community committee, especially Helen Clotworthy, Janet McRobbie and Waikato District Councillor, Jacqui Church. The Guides were also very much involved. Sadly, in 2019, the Christchurch Mosque shootings aftermath prevented gatherings from occurring that year though an informal observance was held in the Community Hall. In 2020 there was no service at all as the country was in total lockdown because of the Covid-19 epidemic.

Ecumenical Co-operation

In 2018 the Rev'd Andrew Beyer was approached by Father Robert Steele from the Pukekohe Roman Catholic church to explore the possibility of the use of St Mary's as a venue for the local, mostly Filipino, RC community who had no local place of worship of their own. Having sought the support of Vestry and having confirmed the approval with Bishop Ross Bay, the go ahead was given. Consequently, on the first Sunday of each month at 4.00pm, Mass was being held for some 60 or so local people. This has been a most successful example of ecumenical co-operation.



The Rev'd Andrew Beyer receives a thank you from the Pokeno Catholic community for the use of St Mary's once a month.

A Nation Mourns

15 March, 2019, will go down in the annals of New Zealand history as one of its darkest days, when a lone gunman attacked two Mosques in Christchurch. 51 people died whilst at Friday Prayers and many more were injured. Outside of war, it was the biggest loss of life in any attack on people that the country had known. The nation was shocked. Out of the shock though came a remarkable rally of national support. That support was enormous and very much appreciated by the Muslim community. A week later, on Friday 22 March, the Muslim Friday Call to Prayer was broadcast live from Christchurch and communities were invited to join in. Many Christian Churches joined in as a mark of solidarity, including St Mary's. The local community were invited to join in and with a number doing so, coming to St Mary's to have a time of reflection as the Call to Prayer was broadcast inside the church. At its conclusion Margaret Lyons tolled the bell 51 times representing the 51 deaths a week before.



Margaret Lyons tolling the bell.

A Nation in Lockdown

When this update of the St Mary's story was begun in earnest at the start of 2020, no-one anticipated the global pandemic ahead. This pandemic Covid-19 as it became known was to have a catastrophic effect on the global and local economies, with international air travel decimated, global tourism stopped in its tracks and with devastating impacts on national health systems. This account is only the beginning, which may be picked up with future updates of the St Mary's story.

It is true that, in early January, 2020, news was circulating about a deadly virus that was

spreading in the city of Wuhan, China. By the beginning of February, it was evident that this deadly virus was on the move, as other countries, especially in Asia and parts of Europe, began to see an increasing number of cases. It was a highly infectious virus with a death rate of around 4% of positive cases on a global scale, though New Zealand was fortunate enough to fare better with a death rate of 1.3% of positive cases. New Zealand was quick to close its borders with China in early February. During that month, the numbers of infections being reported globally were increasing at an alarming rate with Italy and Spain experiencing exceptionally high rates of infection.

On 28 February, New Zealand reported its first case of the virus. A week later, on 8 March, the World Health Organisation declares a global pandemic, with Europe the epicentre. Countries around the world were closing their borders, with New Zealand requiring a 14 day quarantine period on arrival. By 19 March, New Zealand closed its borders to all but returning New Zealand citizens and residents, a situation that was to continue for months ahead.

As the number of cases increased in New Zealand the Government asked that all those over 70 years of age and those with compromised health, self-isolate by staying at home. Those who could, were encouraged to work from home. There was panic buying of supplies in supermarkets, with shortages of some essentials being experienced. On 21 March the Government introduced a four level Alert system, placing the country on Alert Level Two.

Level One	Prepare
Level Two	Restrict
Level Three	Reduce
Level Four	Eliminate.

It was to be at Alert Levels Three and Four that were to have significant impacts on local business activities, with many being forced to close for weeks.



The “Jack & Jill” seat on the by the silver birch trees was built by John Brattlie.

By March 23, with the number of cases increasing daily, the country moved to Alert Level Three. All non-essential services, businesses and schools had to close, with essential services like supermarkets, pharmacies and medical centres allowed to open and even then, with very strict access conditions in place. Two days later, 25 March, 2020, the Government declares a

State of Emergency beginning at midnight, taking the country to Alert Level Four, for a minimum period of four weeks. Within a month everyone's lives had changed. Normal day to day living was stopped in its tracks, whether it be work, school, church, travel, or socialising. The whole country was required to remain at home and 'stay in their own bubble'. Short, local walks were allowed. New terms like 'social distancing', 'stay in your bubble', and 'self-isolation' became the norm. Everyone commented on 'extraordinary times'.

SCAN HERE TO SIGN-IN WITH
THE NZ COVID TRACER APP



St Mary's Anglican Church, Pokeno

20 Avon Road,, Pokeno

On 28 April, just over a month later, the country heaves a sigh of relief as the infection rate has stabilized enough to allow everyone to move to level three for at least two weeks. Take away service was allowed in cafes and fast food outlets, with enormous queues at the 'drive through' fast food outlets experienced in the early days of Level Three. Social distancing and recording one's visit to the premises became the norm.

All this had a dramatic impact on churches everywhere. Suddenly, worship, whatever faith, be it Muslim, Christian, Hindu, Buddhist and so on, could not gather as a community together. This led to a whole new approach to worship as faith

communities responded to the need to keep in contact with their congregations. Some used on-line video conferencing platforms like Zoom, to engage. The Diocese of Auckland held its annual Maundy Thursday Renewal of Vows service for clergy, usually held at Holy Trinity Cathedral, through Zoom with just over 200 participants. Some churches used live or recorded podcasts through social media. With many older people, such online innovations left them isolated and to compensate, many communities made regular phone contact.

At Bombay-Pokeno three approaches were taken. Priest in Charge, Andrew Beyer, used the weekly Tidings, via email circulation, to keep in contact. He included a message based on the readings for the Sunday, together with some questions to reflect and ponder on. Priest Assistant, Bruce Owen started a closed Facebook group, *Bombay-Pokeno Anglican Churches*, which ended up with around 25 members. Members of the group kept in touch with their own postings, but every Sunday during lockdown Bruce prepared a 10-15 minute, prerecorded 'podcast' which included an abbreviated Morning Prayer Service and a reflection on the readings for the day. He chose a hymn from YouTube to go with it. Thirdly, for those who were not up with Social media, phone calls were made.

It was nearly three months before services could resume, and even then, only on a restricted basis. Covid-19 had a huge impact on the way society interacted. Its influence on global and national economy will be a source of much comment and analysis for years to come. They were indeed 'extraordinary times'.

Lockdown Again with Checkpoints



The time in Level One, with freedom of movement, lasted for 102 days, without any new cases, until, in early August, a new cluster was identified. Over the next two weeks over 100 people were tested positive, who were associated with this cluster. This meant that a decision was made to require

the Auckland 'Super City' to be put into Level Three, with the rest of the country on Level Two. Movement north and south of Auckland, between Levels, was restricted with Police and Defence Force border checks being put in place. The consequence of this decision was to divide the parish, with Bombay on the Auckland side on Level Three and with Pokeno in Level Two on the other side. As both Andrew Beyer and Bruce Owen lived on the Auckland side it meant that they were unable to travel to Pokeno where it was possible to have a church service. It was not until the end of August that the Level Three restrictions were removed allowing for freedom of movement to the south of the city and for a return to normal church services.



Checkpoints at Bombay, border between Level Two to the south and Level Three to the north.

Once again, church worship required some thinking outside the box. Liturgist Martha Hosick agreed to lead Morning Prayer and to preach at St Mary's where it was possible for larger groups to meet and for those living in the Pokeno district. Congregation north of the 'border' including the Rev'd Andrew and the Rev'd Bruce were unable to go south. The Rev'd Bruce resumed his on line podcasts to the church FaceBook group whilst the Rev'd Andrew communicated through an expanded tidings message.

They were indeed extraordinary times!!



16. Clergy:- the First Twenty Years of the 21st Century

The Rev'd Iris Temple (1989-2001)

Iris Temple was a very popular and much loved Vicar. She began her ministry in the parish in October 1989 and continued through to her retirement in early 2001. She married her long time friend Ronnie Alden in May 2000. The newlyweds chose Taupo as their place of retirement. Her ministry of 11 years or so, saw hers as the longest of all clergy to serve the parish. She achieved a great deal in this time, bringing unity to the parish, encouraging lay participation, and encouraging the involvement of young people. The Rev'd Iris was on a three-quarter stipend, with an additional quarter funded by the St John's Trust enabling her to be involved in the Franklin Partners' programme which provided theological and pastoral education to the laity of the Franklin Anglican churches.

A Time of Transition

Following the Rev'd Iris Alden's retirement, a transitional period followed. A number of decisions were needed by the parish to decide on a way forward as it was not possible to fund a fulltime priest, with the likelihood of it being only half time. Initially, Assistant Bishop, the Rt Rev'd Bruce Moore, Bishop of the Southern Region, together with Archdeacon Marylin Welch covered services.

The Rev'd Canon Bob Newman (2002 – 2004)

In 2002, the Rev'd Canon Bob Newman was appointed transitional priest for a period of two years, on a half time basis. He was assigned the task of guiding the parish through the various options available. He came to Bombay-Pokeno having served as hospital chaplain to Middlemore Hospital for the previous 12 years. Canon Bob's ministry in the parish was appreciated by all. Angela Morey remembers him as *'a lovely person, easy going, who was always able to keep the peace and everyone loved him'*.⁶⁰ He left the parish in May 2004.

The Rev'd Gayanne Frater (2004-2007)

The Rev'd Gayanne was appointed Vicar in early 2004, taking up her appointment in May of that year. Her position was to be on a full time basis with the parish contributing three quarters of the stipend, but with the St John's College Trust contributing one quarter and for a specific three year period, after which the position would be under review. The Rev'd Gayanne had been ordained in 2001 and had previously served as assistant priest to the parish of Papakura from 2001 prior to her appointment to Bombay-Pokeno. Her husband, the Rev'd Nick Frater, at the time of Gayanne's appointment, was priest assistant at Manurewa. Shortly after he was appointed an Enabler to the Local Shared Ministry team. The Rev'd Gayanne will be best known for encouraging young families to engage with the church, particularly at St Peter's, Bombay. She was also very successful in building up a strong following at Kaiaua where she initiated the monthly Bible Study programme, 'Faithworks'.

At the beginning of 2007 the Rev'd Gayanne's three year term was coming to an end. The parish had to decide whether it could continue with a full-time stipend. A special meeting of the parish saw a robust debate, Bruce Owen in *The Little Church on the Hill*, records the situation:

'In the end it was accepted that the parish was not in a position to pay a full stipend.'

⁶⁰ Bruce B Owen, *The Little Church on the Hill*, page 66

Noel Derbyshire who led the Parish Review in 2007 made it clear that while the parish had been given a certificate of means for a three-quarter stipend, he believed that half a stipend was more realistic'.⁶¹

Derbyshire offered three alternatives to the parish:

- Amalgamation with another parish.
- Become a co-operating parish joining with another denomination.
- Local shared ministry.

The parish agreed to explore local shared ministry, somewhat reluctantly.

Exploring Local Shared Ministry 2008.

The Rev'd Bruce Owen was asked to be Ministry Developer for 2008 tasked with the responsibility of guiding the parish to understand Local Shared Ministry. It was to be a full year appointment as part of the Diocesan Local Shared Ministry Team, led by Barbara Wesseldine. At a Special General Meeting of the parish in September the decision was made to seek the Bishop's approval to appoint a half time Vicar. The choice of becoming a Local Shared Ministry unit was rejected. The Bishop, The Rt Rev'd John Paterson, gave his approval for a half time appointment.

The Rev'd Kumar Anandanayagam (2009-2016)

The Rev'd Kumar was born in Sri Lanka, where he was educated and where he completed his ministry training. He married Gowri, a medical doctor, who died from cancer in 2005. However, the political situation in Sri Lanka forced the family to leave for India where they lived for three years before emigrating to New Zealand where Kumar had been offered an assistant priest position in Ashburton in 1987. The Rev'd Kumar then served in Invercargill and Oamaru before being offered the position at Bombay Pokeno on a half stipend. As well as starting his ministry in Bombay-Pokeno, Kumar married Josephine at St Peter's, Bombay, in January 2009. The Rev'd Kumar was a popular vicar, well liked by all. He will be remembered for his sermons beginning with some lighthearted humour. Kumar retired in January 2016.

The Rev'd Andrew Beyer (2016 to date)

Previously the Rev'd Andrew was Priest in Charge at Selwyn Anglican Church in Mangere East starting at Bombay-Pokeno in September 2016 on a half time basis. The Rev'd Andrew came with over 40 years of ordained ministry in a variety of capacities in the Auckland Diocese, but also in work 'outside the Church structures'. This work included managing and organising within the New Zealand Labour Party. The Rev'd Andrew has worked hard to engage with the community especially within the fast growing Pokeno housing development, as well as encouraging initiatives to increase the numbers attending services such as his pre-Christmas 'Summer Series' which were weekly studies centred on a theme.



⁶¹ Ibid p.71

17. And Finally.....

This history is a tribute to many people. However, one person must stand out, that of Harriet Johnston. Early versions of the St Mary's story were unable to give us much background, giving rise to unhelpful speculation as to who she was and what her connection was with Francis Pyne, whom we now find is her adopted son. Both Harriet and Francis have made their mark on local history and it is fitting that both have roads in Pokeno named after them. Whilst Harriet provided the capital, we must also acknowledge the skill of architect Edward Bartley, himself a self-taught architect whose legacy also continues in numerous Auckland churches and commercial buildings. Let us not forget the building contractor, A Vinson, and his team, for their skills, which of course in those days would all have been by hand.

Every church community, wherever they may be, has a story to tell. For some, they will be tales that cover centuries, for others it will be a story much shorter in the making. They have one thing in common though, that of proclaiming the gospel to their community. For the past 120 years the bells of St Mary's have rung out over the Pokeno Valley, calling the faithful to worship. The story of those bells and the beautiful heritage church they proclaim their chimes from are testimony to that. In many ways it is a story that may well be unique in the Auckland Diocese, if not beyond. There will not be many churches funded wholly by one person, and certainly not of a building of the size of St Mary's.

It is the people who make up a church, without a doubt. St Mary's has been very fortunate to have loyal worshippers over the decades, who have also taken part in worship, supported the music, and looked after the fabric and maintenance, led by a succession of clergy. For many, over the preceding decades, the beautiful church of St Mary has been their spiritual home. We have read some of their memories. We have much to celebrate and be thankful for.

As we celebrate 120 years of worship at St Mary's, it is important that we never forget the context in which the settlement of Pokeno began. The quiet, fertile valley, home to generations of Maori, taking advantage of its plentiful resources, was to become the focus of Colonial oppression on a tragic scale. As we celebrate, we must remember the context in which our community grew, leaving local Maori nothing to celebrate.

We can now look to the future. In celebrating 120 years of worship, we give thanks for past endeavours. It now time to welcome new generations, as the Pokeno township expands, as they too respond to the chimes of the bells of St Mary's, ringing out over the Pokeno Valley. It was Harriet's dying wish that "everything shall continue as before." Though there have been changes, her legacy, the church of St Mary on the Hill, with its distinctive spire, continues to be the proclamation of the Gospel in the community. We give thanks to God for past generations and pray for those to come.



Appendix A. Parish Administritivia

‘From Pillar to Post’ - changing boundaries and status.

The ministry unit of Bombay-Pokeno may be one of the largest units in the Diocese by geographic area, but over the years its status has constantly changed. The full outline of the changing status of our worshipping centres is outlined in *‘The Little Church on the Hill’*, the story of the 150 years of St Peter’s Bombay. The following summarises the place of St Mary’s in the parish structure during its 120 year history.

- 1900 to 1915 Parish of Pokeno, with Bombay being a separate parish.
- 1915-1942 Parochial District of Bombay-Pokeno
- 1942 - 1955 Parish of Pukekohe (the Parochial District was absorbed into Pukekohe as a wartime response)
- 1959 - 1989 Parochial District Bombay-Pokeno
- 1989 - 2016 Parish of Bombay-Pokeno
- 2016 - Mission District of Bombay-Pokeno

Clergy who have served St Mary’s

1899 – 1904	Rev. H.B. Wingfield
1905	Rev. F.B. Dobson
1905 – 1907	Rev. J.L.A. Kyall
1908	Rev. P. Cleary
1908 – 1910	Rev. W.H. Edgell
1910 – 1912	Rev. Thomas Fisher
1912 – 1915	Rev. L. Foulkes
1915 – 1922	Rev. C.A. Vaughan
1923 – 1928	Rev. Hugh F. Baker
1928 – 1929	Rev. A. Grace
1929 – 1931	Rev. Harold Heaslip (relieving)
1931 – 1934	Rev. Hugh Salmon. Vicar of Bombay
1934 – 1935	Rev. R.A. McDonald
1935 – 1937	Rev. Harry Taylor
1937 – 1938	Rev. Hugh E. Baker
1938 – 1939	Captain D.C. Caswell, Church Army
1939 – 1941	Rev. W.G.H. Heerdegen
1942 – 1942	Rev. K.R.R. Small
1942 – 1951	Parochial District administered From Pukekohe (Revs. Prebble, Partridge, Drake)
1951 – 1954	Rev. P.A.T. Rynd
1955 – 1960	Rev. M.M. Mete
1960 - 1971	Rev. C.L. Wright
1971 - 1973	Rev. Bryan Drake
1973 - 1976	Rev. Ivan Smith
1975 - 1979	Rev. Peter Tanton (interim)
1976 - 1980	Rev. Richard Hancock

1981 - 1983	Rev. Frank Harrison
1983 - 1986	Rev. Chris Apthorp
1986 - 1989	Archdeacon Bob Hansen
1989 – 2001	Rev. Iris Temple
1994 – (6 months locum)--	Rev. Linda Braid
1997	Rev'd Linda Braid (locum for Rev'd Iris Temple)
2001	Rt Rev'd Bruce Moore (interim)
2002-2004	Rev'd Bob Newman (interim)
2004-2007	Rev'd Gayanne Frater
2008-2009	Rev'd Bruce Owen (interim)
2009-2015	Rev'd Kumar Anandanayagam
2016	Rev'd Bruce Owen (interim)
2016 to date	Rev'd Andrew Beyer

Non stipendiary Clergy:

1975-1979	Rev'd Peter Tanton
1994-1999	Rev'd Linda Braid
2002-2013	Rev'd Betty Keene
2015 to date	Rev'd Bruce Owen

Wardens from 2000

Vicar's Warden

Janet McRobbie	2000-2006
Sandra Hannaford	2006-2018
Marcia Anderson	2018-

People's Warden

Angela Morey	2000-2004
Llew Richards	2004-2006
Cherry Lyons	2006-2011
George trounce	2011-2020
John Otto	2020-

Average Sunday attendance at St Mary's

1981	19
1987	21
1992	20
1998	24
2003	17
2006	19
2008	21
2013	29
2017	31
2019	27

Appendix B. A Rebel in the Family

Explanation: This story is included here, not because of a direct link with St Mary's Church, but because it is an extraordinary tale in itself. Jasper Pyne is the half brother of Francis Pyne of Pokeno and his story highlights the conflict between the English, protestant landed gentry and the ordinary Catholic Irish tenant farmers. The story is all the more extraordinary in that Jasper Pyne comes from the landed gentry heritage but ending up a stalwart in support of the Irish tenant farmers, to his cost.

Jasper Douglas Pyne (1847-1888)

Jasper Douglas Pyne was born in 1847, the son of the Rev'd William Masters Pyne, Rector of Oxted, Surrey by his second wife, Marian, which makes him half-brother to Francis. Pyne was educated at Tonbridge School, Kent. Eventually he returned to his extended family roots in southern Ireland, inheriting Lisfinny Castle, near Tallow, Co. Waterford. This inheritance sounds rather grand but in fact the castle was a mere fortified tower which had been allowed to fall into ruin by previous owners. However, the grounds did provide a reasonable size residence.



Lisfinny Castle and house as it is today.

J D Pyne became a vocal advocate for the rights of Irish tenant farmers against the landed British gentry. At the age of 38, in 1885 he stood for Westminster Parliament in the General Election of that year under the banner of the Irish Parliamentary Party, winning 90% of the votes, enabling him to take his seat in the House of Commons.

In late 1887, Pyne had a warrant issued for his arrest as a result of his involvement in an anti-eviction protest supporting tenants who were under notice of eviction. In one of his speeches he referred to the police as *'armed assassins and murderers in uniform.'* He was charged under emergency legislation. He evaded arrest and therefore immediate imprisonment. Instead Pyne left the comfort of his house and retreated to the nearby castle tower.

The authorities were singularly unimpressed, but the protest caught popular attention far and wide. Pyne ensured that he was well stocked with food and set himself up with a winch and block and tackle so that friendly visitors could join him. He apparently amused himself by throwing rocks at the police.

On one occasion the people of nearby Tallow marched to the castle led by the town band to show their support. Large crowds came to Lisfinny day by day. One night he escaped, having managed to be smuggled through the police cordon unnoticed. In due course turned up in London to take his seat in the House of Commons, but was arrested on 10 February, 1888, being sentenced to three months imprisonment, which was later reduced to six weeks.

In November 1888 Pyne apparently 'fell' off a ferry boat between Holyhead and Dublin, presumed drowned. His body was never recovered, and neither were the precise details of his death ever proven. It remains a mystery to this day.



Pyne being lowered on his winch.

Whilst this story may not have a direct bearing on the story of St Mary's church, it does give us another fascinating insight into the wider Pyne family. It is all the more relevant as Francis Pyne was still in England at the time, and as a family member would no doubt have been fully aware of the unfolding drama.



Text sources:

Irish Times .com, 'An Irishman's Diary on a nationalist MP whose antics made him a celebrity.'
[Wikipedia.org/wiki//DouglasPyne](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Douglas_Pyne)

Illustrations:

Drawing: from Illustrated London News drawing now in Waterford Museum
Photo Avondhu Blackwater partnership website.

Appendix C. Thomas and Sarah Bates⁶²

As outlined in the story earlier Thomas Bates, together with his wife Sarah, accompanied Harriet Johnston and her adopted daughter Isabella on the *SS Tongariro* in 1890 on the voyage to New Zealand. The Bates lived in the village of Woodberry, Devon, where Harriet lived for at least ten years prior to her departure for New Zealand. It seems that Thomas may well have been her gardener there. Thomas was born Thomas William Bates at Enfield Chase, Essex in 1853, and married Isabella Sarah Carter in 1876. Isabella was born in Edgeware, Middlesex in 1848. The couple moved to Woodberry, Devon where they had six children by the time they left for New Zealand. Harriet Johnston paid for the family to travel to New Zealand, the Bates travelling Steerage, whilst Harriet and Isabella enjoyed the comforts of First Class!

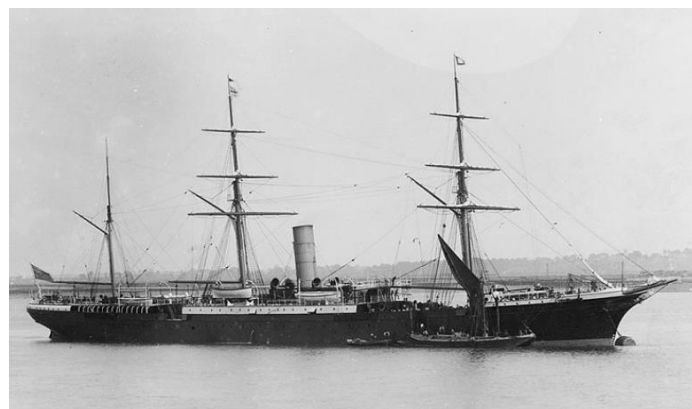


Thomas Bates.



Sarah Bates.

Thomas continued in the employ of Harriet Johnston and Francis Pyne for 26 years. During this time Thomas not only worked on *'The Springs'* property but was also for a time Warden at St Mary's. He was also the first bellringer for the church. On Harriet's death in 1916 the couple inherited £300 from her estate, not an insignificant amount at the time. Shortly after Thomas and Sarah joined part of their family farming in the Onewhero district where they lived for the remainder of their lives. Sarah died in 1930 at the age of 82 with Thomas living to the age of 90. The couple are buried at Pokeno Cemetery, not far from their benefactor Harriet Johnston. The family connection with St Mary's continues through their great granddaughter Marie Morrison with her involvement in the St Mary's choir.



SS Tongariro which carried The Bates family, Harriet Johnston and Isabella Pyne to New Zealand in 1890.⁶³

⁶² Photo acknowledgement to Marie Morrison for the photos of Thomas and Sarah Bates.

⁶³ Photo: Wikipedia, New Zealand Shipping Company