

## A brief history of *Pencarrow* at Tamahere

By Samuel G. Charlton

Pencarrow Rd, Tamahere resident

Early in 1866, John Martyn Jnr and William Lyn Martyn, recently arrived from Cornwall, purchased 2000 acres (809ha) of land from Capt William Steele, John Crawford, and Capt. Davis, who had purchased the land in the preceding year.



The Martyns' 2000 acres was comprised of the area bounded by the Waikato River to the West, and what are now Airport Rd, State Highway 1, and the southern leg of Pencarrow Road. The Martyns called their farm *Pencarrow*.

In May 1866 William built the first house and farm buildings at the foot of Bald Hill. One year later John Jnr moved one or two buildings (built in Hamilton) to the Western end of Pencarrow and established his farm operations there.

**1 William Martyn 1814 - 1887**

In early 1869 William's house burnt down and shortly after he built a new and larger house nearby (the house I live in now) and brought his new bride, Agnes Linton Young there. They were wed on July 22, 1869.



**2 William's house c 1889**

During this period the two brothers had a falling out (John writes in his journal that he "has been deceived") and in November *Pencarrow* was divided into two parcels, John Jnr taking the northern half (1000 acres), and William taking the southern (Bald Hill) half. The Martyns were by all accounts successful, establishing large grassed fields stocked with sheep, horses, and cattle and many hedgerows, orchards, gardens and trees, including many of the large oak trees still standing today.

In 1879 William built Bald Hill Road (now the north-south section of *Pencarrow* Road) and requested £5 from the Cambridge Road Board for these improvements.

Then, in either 1879 (according to the 1902 *Cyclopedia of NZ*) or 1881 (according to the February 10, 1881 *Waikato Argus*) William left for Western Australia and sold his half of the estate (1000 acres) to Herbert and Alfred Pearson. The Pearsons named their new estate *Golborne* and in 1888 leased the Western 480 acres to Ambrose, Alfred and Arthur Main.

The Pearsons eventually sold the Mains this parcel of land (which they called *Te Whanake*). The Pearsons leased the eastern 520 acres (containing the house built by William in 1869) to Alfred W. Gane in 1889.

In 1886, John Martyn Jnr sold his half of *Pencarrow* to Cornelius Day. John Martyn purchased nearby *Broadmeadows* and moved there. Day built a new homestead at *Pencarrow* in 1894. William Martyn died on 25 August 1887 in Perth, Australia and on 8 Sept 1888 John Jnr passed away at *Broadmeadows*.

In 1906 the Pearsons sold the remaining 520 acres of *Golborne* Estate to H. Elgood who on-sold it to Alfred Gane in 1907 (who was still in residence at the farm). Gane then sold to John Dingle in 1908.

At about this time (1914) Cornelius Day began subdividing his land at *Pencarrow*.



**3 William's house c 1924**

In 1916 the Dingles added a new wing to William's house and replaced the original Kauri shingle roof with an iron roof.

In 1925 John Dingle sold *Golborne* to Arthur Savill. When Arthur died in 1937 his will stipulated that 100 acres by the river and 100 acres at Brain Hill be sold to provide funds for his older children. The youngest son David continued to farm the homestead block until about 1994.



**4 William's house today (2011)**

We purchased "William's house" in 1997 and run sheep, horses, and cattle on our 21 acres.

The early European residents of Tamahere found an incredibly fertile pocket of land and enriched the land further through their labour and stewardship. Today we enjoy the fruits of their work in the form of productive farmland with premium soils, abundant birdlife, lovely parklands, and lifestyle blocks with verdant landscaping.

FOOTNOTE:

SAM CHARLTON LIVES AT 353 PENCARROW RD AND WAS PROMPTED TO WRITE THIS SHORT HISTORY BY DISCUSSIONS OVER THE SOUTHERN LINKS ROAD NETWORK PROPOSAL IN JUNE 2011, WHICH COULD IMPACT THE AREA.

HE WRITES; THIS BRIEF SKETCH IS INTENDED TO SUMMARISE SOME OF THE EVENTS AND PERSONALITIES OF EUROPEAN SETTLERS ASSOCIATED WITH TAMAHERE, PARTICULARLY THE AREA BOUNDED BY THE WAIKATO RIVER IN THE WEST, SH1 TO THE EAST, AIRPORT ROAD (SH21) TO THE NORTH AND THE SOUTHERN LEG OF PENCARROW ROAD (FORMERLY SAVILL RD) TO THE SOUTH.

REFERENCES INCLUDE THE 1902 CYCLOPEDIA OF NZ; THE 1975 *PLOUGH OF THE PAKEHA* BY ERIC BEER AND ALWYN GASCOIGNE, AND THE SELF-PUBLISHED BOOK ON TAMAHERE BY ALFRED MAIN.