

over 29 settlers were persuaded to take up land at £2.10s. per acre in the new settlement to be called Jamestown. However, only a hotel and seven or eight houses were built in the settlement, even though the land prices dropped to 10s. an acre.

Remains of Jamestown

We landed in the lovely horseshoe bay where once Jamestown stood. A hundred years have passed since the last dispirited pioneer gave up and left. A hundred years of luxuriant growth hides all but a mute pile of stones here and there, once a fireplace or chimney.

Great matais and rimus stand tall, and yet, somewhere among them, is the lost cemetery where some of the children of the settlers lie and some of their parents too, for there was no medical help here, and often near starvation, floods, and boating disasters dogged them in their isolation.

The gold in Big Bay up the coast soon petered out, boats had foundered on the vicious bar of the Hollyford River so often that the captains would not enter, but would only stand offshore, the promised road from Queenstown never eventuated, and at last only one family remained — the McKenzie family.

They, too, left Jamestown in 1879 and built their house a few miles away behind the sandhills at Martins Bay so that they would be nearer their only communication with the outside world, the 3-monthly steamer *Hinemoa*. The two McKenzie sons, Hugh and Malcolm, stayed on until the mid 1920s, when they sold out to Davy Gunn.

After Jamestown there followed a 2-hour walk to Martins Bay Lodge, first along the lake shore with its massive

driftwood logs and overhanging ancient kowhais on the edge of the coastal forest interspersed here and there with perching scented orchids cloying the air. Then on through a grove of tree ferns shrouded by tall kahikateas where fern-birds were heard and out to cleared grasslands (the last cattle died in 1978) and across a small grassed airstrip to Martins Bay lodge, where lunch was awaiting us.

We enjoyed delicious soup and hot bread, then piled into the jet-boat once more. We almost reached the mouth of the lower Hollyford, passing one or two whitebaiting cabins on the way and seeing a white heron, black shags, and paradise ducks.

After landing we started around the beach towards the seal colony. After a while the track disappeared and we bounded from boulder to boulder. Some of the party decided to give the seals a miss at this stage, but we carried on and were rewarded by meeting up with about 200 very tame mothers and pup seals and about four decidedly unfriendly bull seals, terribly overworked trying to protect their many females.

A wonderful meal, marvelous drying rooms for our wet gear, and comfortable beds ended the second day.

The third day

Day three brought a gusty southerly wind which blew away all the clouds and mist. By midday the sky was blue, the peaks all clear, and even the wind had dropped.

We climbed into the jet-boat once more and again bounded down the lower Hollyford, turning left near the mouth into a lagoon that runs the length of Martins Bay.

We were landed at the end and as we pushed through the flax bushes to the cleared land

beyond were reminded that it was around there in 1880 that little Alice McKenzie had what is believed to be the last sighting of a small moa. She tried unsuccessfully to noose its leg with flax.

An account of this is written in her book *Pioneers of Martins Bay*. The gum trees and huge macrocarpa which stood beside the McKenzie house still tower above, but the house itself was taken down some 15 years ago. The remains of the stockyard and the like are still there. We walked along the magnificent beach, white-capped peaks in the distance, and we could understand why this family remained in this wild and remote bay.

When we returned to the lodge our party had been joined by Judy's husband, who showed us slides of all the peaks that can be seen from the Little Homer Saddle. He also introduced us to the pilot who was to fly us out next day. Supper, and, of course, the manuka tea — a great pot of everyday tea with a branch of manuka sticking out of the lid. Exciting stuff for our tourists, but it tasted just like ordinary tea anyway.

Next morning we divided into two groups again. We were in the first group and boarded a little plane. The weather was perfect and we followed the beautiful coast, ablaze with southern rata flowers, right down to the entrance to Milford Sound, then flew up to the head of the sound, then on up to Sutherland Falls, further up — up — to Lake Quill, hanging high in the peaks and spilling over to make the second highest falls in the world. After two circles of the lake we went down to Milford Airport at journey's end.

The Hollyford experience was over, but never to be forgotten.

Photos by L. L. Maddever. ■