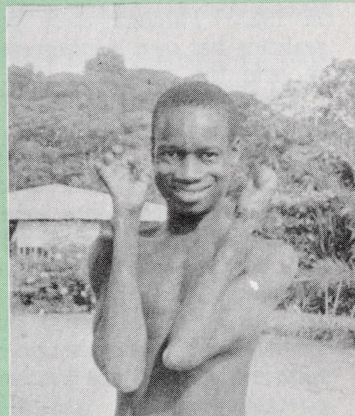


Men's and Boys' day at the clinic. Nurses Bonnie Roush and Lois Lemm



Steps to New Hope



Early treatment prevents disfigurement. Banny Joe came too late.

Sixty patients about to be dismissed—symptom free



house she occupied was to be her home also.

"Why, I have seen this house before," said the newcomer.

"Oh, that is impossible; how could you?" was the reply. Then Florence Steidel told of the dream she had had nine years previously.

"There is an attic in the house, isn't there?" she asked, and Miss Gollan, in great surprise, told her there was. The house, both inside and outside, was exactly as it had appeared in the dream, even to the woven mats on the walls upstairs. She knew she was just where God wanted her to be.

Florence Steidel had a burden on her heart for the sick, and was deeply moved by the plight of leprosy victims. She remembered her vision of the helpless ones to whom the Lord would send her and kept that vision before her. But for twelve years she worked in the Girls School. While there she treated all the sick who came to her back verandah.

Before going home on furlough in 1942, a Bible school student at Feloka, by the name of John Gwa, was married to a girl, named Martha, from the Girls School where Florence Steidel worked. These two young people were given a pastorate in the Sabo tribe where there was no other witness. They were to play an important part in Miss Steidel's future work.

Florence Steidel knew that leprosy (Hansen's disease) was regarded as the most hideous and loathsome of all diseases. As early as 1935 the idea had been born in her mind that she would like to build a town for these pitiful and unwanted souls who were without a ray of hope. Not until December, 1946, did Miss Steidel realize her God-given ambition, when Mr. and Mrs. Carl Hixenbaugh were sent to relieve her of her responsibilities in the Girls' School at Newaka.

#### THE BEGINNING OF NEW HOPE LEPROSY MISSION

About that time, by the direction of God, an old leper named Jacob Freeman, came and begged her to keep him at the mission station. She said, "Jacob, I have no place to keep you. I think you had better go back home until I get the first house built, then I will send for you."

"It is better for me that I die, Ma," he pleaded. "I can't walk back; I beg you to keep me!"

In a few days other leprosy victims came. Soon there were sixty-eight of them living in small brush houses made of palm branches.

After the heavy rains began, the brush houses proved uninhabitable. Moved by their plight Miss Steidel sought from the tribal chiefs a grant of land. They willingly offered her 350 acres for the purpose of building a brand new town in the forest. She appealed to the lepers themselves and they agreed to do the work. The task of cutting down jungle trees and digging out stumps was slow and arduous for they had only the most primitive tools. After the trees and stumps were removed the town was laid out.

On April 24, 1947, they were ready to build the first house. Building, however, was not an easy undertaking for not a single native