



Hatzfelthaven Rural Health Centre, Papua New Guinea, c. 1964.

Photo courtesy of Russell Kennelly.

# Hatzfelthaven Rural Health Centre, Papua New Guinea

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## MILTON HOOK

Milton Hook, Ed.D. (Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan, the United States). Hook retired in 1997 as a minister in the Greater Sydney Conference, Australia. An Australian by birth Hook has served the Church as a teacher at the elementary, academy and college levels, a missionary in Papua New Guinea, and as a local church pastor. In retirement he is a conjoint senior lecturer at Avondale College of Higher Education. He has authored *Flames Over Battle Creek*, *Avondale: Experiment on the Dora*, *Desmond Ford: Reformist Theologian, Gospel Revivalist* the *Seventh-day Adventist Heritage Series*, and many magazine articles. He is married to Noeleen and has two sons and three grandchildren.

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The Hatzfelthaven Rural Health Centre operated between 1953 and 1979. Its primary mission was to care for individuals suffering leprosy in Papua New Guinea.

## Adoption

Before 1953, the administration of the Mandated Territory of New Guinea established a treatment center for lepers near Bogia on the north coast of the island of New Guinea. It was a facility of 100 beds, but lacked adequate staff to care for the patients. The success demonstrated the Coral Sea Union Mission (CSUM) with the establishment of a similar enterprise in the highlands at Togoba prompted government officials to offer the facility to the Seventh-day Adventist mission in 1953 on the understanding that the government would continue to provide free medical supplies. The mission provided the nursing staff and care for the on-going treatment of the lepers.<sup>1</sup>

## A Trouble-Free Project

Throughout its operation, the Hatzfelthaven Rural Health Centre medical staff were always trained nurses, graduates of the Sydney Sanitarium, who fulfilled the roles of nursing director and assistant nurses. A maintenance supervisor completed the team. Allan Page-Dhu was the initial director. He was assisted by his wife, Mona, and New Zealanders Linda McClintock and Mary Neil. First reports indicated the patients were appreciative of the attention given to them and some responded by joining the worship services<sup>2</sup>

Before long bed capacity was increased to 250 patients<sup>3</sup> and by 1960, at the peak of its operation, the facility accommodated 400. Lawrence Naughton succeeded Page-Dhu as director in 1959. Other nurses in the early years were Joyce Adams, Valerie Butterick,<sup>4</sup> Bob Wood, Margaret Knight, Lynne Gibbons,<sup>5</sup> Florence Burgher, Billie McCullum, and Ruth Steel.<sup>6</sup>

The program was highly successful. The number of patients who entered remission or who could be discharged from the colony to self-medicate or continue as out-patients enabled reduction of the bed capacity to 300 by 1964. At the same time, a new medical officer, Russell Kennelly, succeeded Naughton. Judith Newman, Louvaine Phillips, and Betty Sewell were also added to the nursing staff,<sup>7</sup> followed by Hazel Jakes and Ruth Lang.<sup>8</sup> In 1968, Ramon Tenorio began a term as medical officer. He was assisted by his wife, Patricia, and nurses Valmae Dunn, Linette Lock, and Jessie Murdock.<sup>9</sup>

By 1970, there was a further reduction to 150 beds. Alan Stiles took charge of the colony with assistant nurses Gaylene Cobb, Olwyn Ward,<sup>10</sup> and Doreen Carruthers.<sup>11</sup> This team, functioning under the new name Hatzfeldhaven Hansenide Hospital, remained with the institution until its closure in 1975.

The facility expanded its range of services to encompass more members of the community as the Hatzfeldhaven Rural Health Centre, directed by Peter Tutua for four more years, 1976 through 1979. He was assisted by nurses

Eileen Pupu, Betty and Robert Sambole,<sup>12</sup> Dulcie Horoma, Esther Kangai, Paul Kiupasingan,<sup>13</sup> and Lucie Masivau.<sup>14</sup>

## Assessment

The Hatzfeldhaven Rural Health Centre was operated by a long line of dedicated nurses who applied themselves to individuals who were usually long-term patients and often stigmatized. For as long as there were sufferers of leprosy to be treated, the institution remained a functioning unit, maintaining the agreement made with the government to improve the lives of the lepers.

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### SOURCES

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*Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook*. Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1954-1979.

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### NOTES

1. "Hatzfeldhaven Hansenside Colony," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1954), 302.
2. H. W[ard] Nolan, "Actualities and Dreams, Part ."*Australasian Record and Advent World Survey*, September 19, 1955, 6-7.
3. "Hatzfeldhaven Hansenside Colony," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1956), 255-256.
4. "Hatzfeldhaven Hansenside Colony," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1958), 266.
5. "Hatzfeldhaven Hansenside Colony," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1960), 286.
6. "Hatzfeldhaven Hansenside Colony," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1962), 305.
7. "Hatzfeldhaven Hansenside Colony," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1964), 350.
8. "Hatzfeldhaven Hansenside Colony," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1965/1966), 360.
9. "Hatzfeldhaven Hansenside Colony," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1968), 371.
10. "Hatzfeldhaven Hansenside Colony," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1970), 393.

11. "Hatzfeldhaven Hansenside Hospital," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1972), 376-377.
  12. "Hatzfeldhaven Rural Health Centre," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1976), 410-411.
  13. "Hatzfeldhaven Rural Health Centre," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1978), 428.
  14. "Hatzfeldhaven Rural Health Centre," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1979), 438.
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