

HISTORY OF THE Queensland Ambulance

Murgon

Following representations from the Chamber of Commerce, the Brisbane Centre Committee established an Honorary Centre at Murgon on 16 June 1913. This Honorary Centre was in the charge of Honorary Bearer Mr W.H. Miers (Railway Stationmaster). Mr Miers had been in charge of the Honorary Centre at Lowood prior to his transfer to Murgon.

The following is an extract from the report of the General Secretary on his annual inspection of Centres in 1913:

'I visited Murgon on 22 October and was met by Honorary Bearer Miers. All plant and material was in good order and condition. It was suggested that a small piece of railway land close to the Stationmaster's house might be leased from the Department, and a small building suitable for the housing of the Litter erected. Provided funds are made available by the residents, I recommend that this be done. From appearances and information gleaned, I consider that this town is likely to grow, and that there is money in this town is evident.'

This QATB Honorary Centre functioned until 1918 when a branch of the Maryborough Ambulance Transport Brigade was established.

On the formation of the Maryborough Hospital Board the local ambulance service was absorbed. However, the ambulance services at Murgon and Kingaroy were not absorbed, and the local Committees decided to become a part of the QATB.

The first QATB Committee which was in office when the QATB Centre opened in September 1927 comprised: F.W. Caswell (Chairperson and Representative on the State Executive), C.F. Eisenmenger (Deputy Chairperson), C.T. Faunce (Hon Treasurer), G.B. Roberts, H.R. Orr, E. Holzwart, G.M. Douse, E.F. Voss and W.F. Draheim.

The staff consisted of Superintendent G.W.M. Ambrose who acted as Secretary and Collector, one Ambulance Officer (Mr J.W. Nutt) and three Honorary Officers. The plant consisted of one Dodge and one Rugby Car.



Left to Right: Bearer H Nutt and Superintendent G.W. Ambrose

HISTORY OF THE Queensland Ambulance

Superintendent Ambrose resigned in 1939 and Superintendent W.G. Nash of Pomona was appointed to the vacant position.

In 1951, a Sub-Committee was formed at Proston for the purpose of raising funds for the establishment of a Sub-Centre in that town. The Sub-Centre commenced operations in September 1951 with Mr E.L. Benson as Officer-in-Charge. On 1 November 1952, Proston became a self-governing Centre and Mr Benson was appointed Superintendent and Secretary.

Superintendent Bill Nash retired on 31 March 1959 and Superintendent Jack Patrick of the Proston Centre was appointed in his stead.

In 1959, the Committee launched an appeal for funds to erect new premises. The Murgon Centenary Committee made the erection of a new Ambulance Centre its project for the Centenary Year. Many residents and organisations also pledged their support. On the afternoon of Saturday, 14 April 1962, the new Centre was officially opened by the Acting President of the QATB State Executive (Mr J.A. Turner) in the presence of some 400 residents of Murgon and district and Ambulance committee members and staffs of neighbouring Centres.



Early premises

At the end of the year 1964, Superintendent Patrick resigned to take up the position of Superintendent at Bundaberg. Superintendent Hugh Wilson of the Biggenden Centre was appointed to fill the vacancy.

In 1964, after 30 years of valuable service (25 of which were spent as Chairperson) Mr P.S. (Percy) Cobb resigned from the Committee because of his failing health. He was replaced by Mr J. Sorensen.

At a ceremony on 10 June 1971, Mrs Kathleen O'Neil was presented with the Brigade's 30 Year Service Bar. Mrs O'Neil resigned from the Committee after 31 years and 9 months' service and was replaced by her son Richard.



Mr J. Sorensen (Chairperson) presenting Mrs K. O'Neil with a 30yr service bar

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Superintendent Wilson retired in 1981 and the present Superintendent, Mr Keith Smith was appointed to the vacant position.

Successive Ambulance Committees in Murgon have been presided over by the following Chairpersons:

1924 – 1928 and 1931 – 1935	F.W. Caswell
1928 – 1931	C.F. Eisenmenger
1935 – 1937	G.H. Dowse
1937 – 1939	E. Holzwart
1939 – 1964	P.S. Cobb
1964 – 1974	J. Sorensen
Present occupant Chairperson	Mr G.W. Roberts