

HISTORY OF THE Queensland Ambulance

Gatton

On 23 February 1939 a public meeting was held in the School of Arts Laidley to discuss the serious financial position of the QATB Laidley Committee. At the meeting an assurance of support from the Gatton and Tarampa District was given and the need of extension of ambulance services in that area was indicated. Subsequently an Honorary Centre was established at Gatton with Honorary Bearer J. Larkin in charge.

Due to the increase in the number of patients being transported from the area, a Sub-Centre was opened on 8 June 1942 with Ambulance Officer Fred Gillam in charge. The service was operated from a residence at the corner of William and Crescent Streets, Gatton. In the knowledge that a self-governing Centre was to be established, the Laidley Committee closed the Sub-Centre in October 1943.

Gatton was gazetted as an independent Centre on 23 December 1943. A Provisional Committee, charged with carrying on the initial work of the new Centre, comprised Rev H. Capern, T.J. Ford, A.G.L. Gelhaar, P. Hickey, C.H. Jamieson, C. Viles and F.T. Milne. The first meeting of the Provisional Committee was held on 4 January 1944, when office bearers were elected: C.H. Jamieson (Chairperson and Representative on the State Executive Committee), F.T. Milne (Vice President), T.J. Ford (Honorary Treasurer) and C. Viles (Honorary Secretary).

The Committee was fortunate in securing the residence of the late Dr E. Dolman for the purpose of carrying on brigade work, at a rental of £1,10s per week. This residence, at the corner of North and East Streets, was large enough to provide accommodation for the Superintendent and his family, also an office and a casualty room and also ample room for the housing of brigade vehicles.

On 15 January 1944, 15 applications for the position of Superintendent were received and the Committee selected Ambulance Officer W. Reimers of Toowoomba Centre. Superintendent Reimers commenced duty at Gatton on 13 March 1944.

At its meeting on 18 April 1944, the Committee decided to accept the offer of Mr Fred Gillam to act as Honorary Bearer at Grantham. Mr Gillam resigned from the honorary staff in November 1944 when he left the district. He re-joined the Gatton staff as a permanent ambulance officer in 1953.

In 1945 the Committee purchased the premises it occupied for the sum of £750.

For some time the Committee had considered the appointment of a permanent officer to assist the Superintendent and in August 1946 Honorary Ambulance Officer Walter Harch of Laidley was appointed to the permanent staff of the Gatton Centre.



First Superintendent W. Reimers

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In 1974 the Committee disposed of its premises in East Street and erected new buildings in Spencer Street. The new Centre building was officially opened on 5 April 1975 by the Premier of Queensland the Honourable J. Bjelke-Petersen. The total complex including the Centre building, Superintendent's residence and garage/workshop cost in the vicinity of \$100,000.

Superintendent Reimers retired in 1966 and was succeeded by Superintendent K.J. Webster.

Other officers who have served in the positions of Superintendent and Secretary at Gatton Centre are:

1973 – 1979 M.C. McDonald

1979 – 1987 P.L. Moore

Present occupant Superintendent Gordon Schmierer

Since the establishment of the Centre the following people have filled the position of Chairperson:

1944 – 1946 C.H. Jamieson

1946 – 1967 E.A. Wessling

1967 – 1968 R.W. Hood

1968 – 1969 A.G. Fitzgerald

1969 – 1970 D.L. Kilah

1970 – 1976 A.R. Muller

1976 – 1988 D.T. Hood

Present occupant Chairperson Mr F.W. Thomas