

HISTORY OF THE Queensland Ambulance

Theodore

In 1922 the Department of Irrigation established a settlement at Theodore formerly known as Castle Creek. Although the General Secretary of the QATB State Executive discussed the provision of ambulance facilities with the Irrigation Commissioner, that Officer did not avail himself of the assistance of the QATB.

A car was purchased from subscriptions received from the construction workers and residents. The Commissioner arranged for the payment of an Ambulance Officer. This officer was Mr P. Knudsen who commenced duty on 23 March 1924.



Centre building

In 1928 the Mount Morgan QATB Committee was invited to attend a meeting in Theodore to discuss the establishment of a QATB service and subsequently an Honorary Centre was formed. This Honorary Centre was converted to a Sub-Centre in 1930 and Mr P. Knudsen was appointed Officer-in-Charge thus becoming a member of the permanent staff of the Mount Morgan Centre.

The Sub-Centre became an independent Centre in 1931 and Mr Knudsen was appointed Superintendent and Secretary. Superintendent Knudsen left the service in 1945 and his outstanding service prompted the Chairperson to include the following sentiments in the Committee Report for the 1945-46 financial year:

'The beginning of the year was marked by the departure of our late Superintendent Mr P. Knudsen, whose services to the Town and District during

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his twenty-one years with the Ambulance will remain a milestone in the settlement of Queensland first irrigation scheme. The generosity and unselfish service to this Centre of both Mr and Mrs Knudsen made their departure keenly felt by everyone, and in recognition of which we were pleased to add the late Superintendent's name to the list of life members.'

Superintendent Knudsen was succeeded by Ambulance Officer W.R. (Bill) Armesen of the Cairns Centre who transferred to the Millaa Millaa Centre in 1946.

The next Superintendent appointed was Ambulance Officer F.J. Leader of Toowoomba. Until the early 1960s the nearest hospital was situated at Cracow and most patients requiring further medical attention were transported to that place or to Hospitals at Biloela and Rockhampton. Although the first ambulance building was quite small, it had served the purpose for which it was intended until 1952 when the present building was constructed. The finance required to construct the building was dependent upon public support. A Ladies Auxiliary was formed in 1949 to assist with fundraising activities and past and present members of this Auxiliary are deserving of the highest praise for their efforts over the years.

Superintendent Fred Leader transferred to the Wowan Centre in 1950 and since that time the following officers have served in the positions of Superintendent and Secretary:

1950 – 1957	J. Hillhouse
1957 – 1962	V.L. McKenzie
1962 – 1968	R.T. Johnson
1968 – 1970	H. Lewington
1971 – 1972	K.J. McPherson
Present occupant Superintendent	Mr George Bryant

Since the establishment of the Centre the following people have held the position of Chairperson of the Committee:

A. Holmes	
H.C. Tucker	
J.C. Macmillan	
R.T. Ott	
H.W. Lange	
Present occupant Chairperson	Clarence Holmes since 1955