

HISTORY OF THE *Queensland Ambulance*

Mount Garnet

In July 1921 the Superintendent of the Cairns Centre (Mr M.J. Hogan) visited 'the Garnet' in response to an invitation through the Secretary of the provisional Ambulance Committee, Mr G.J. Cox.

At a public meeting called for the purpose, Superintendent Hogan addressed those present upon the ways and means of forming a QATB Sub-Centre, and a unanimous vote went in favour. Applications were called by the Cairns Centre with the result that Ambulance Officer Robert W. Hughes of the Charters Towers Centre was appointed Officer-in-Charge with the rank of Deputy Superintendent. Mr Hughes commenced duty on 3 September 1921.

The service operated from Hospital buildings that had been placed at the disposal of the Ambulance Committee by the Government.

Due to the unsatisfactory state of the finances of the Sub-Centre, the Cairns Centre Committee decided to close down the service at Mount Garnet in September 1924.

In a letter dated 17 October 1930 the Committee of the Ravenshoe Sub-Centre (Atherton Centre) asked the Cairns Committee to transfer the Mount Garnet Sub-Centre to it, free of debt. In reply, the Cairns Committee pointed out that the Sub-Centre, at the date of closing down, was indebted to the Cairns Centre to the extent of £300 and that this had not been paid; therefore, the proposal could not be entertained. In 1931 the Atherton Committee made a similar request to the Cairns Committee but the request was again denied.

An ambulance centre for Irvinebank received Government gazettal in 1937 and an Honorary Officer was in charge. Residents of Mount Garnet benefited from this service.



Centre building

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At a meeting of the Council of the State Executive Committee held on 7 August 1941 the General Secretary reported:

'Approval having been given by the Department of Health and Home Affairs for the headquarters of the Ambulance to be moved from Irvinebank to Mount Garnet and the district to be served gazetted, a request had been received from the local Committee to support its application for a grant of land in the town of Mount Garnet. Satisfactory arrangements have now been made. Arrangements have been made with Tableland Tin Company to build on the company's lease at Mount Garnet suitable quarters for brigade purposes.'

At the next quarterly meeting of the Council of the Executive, members were advised that the building erected by Tableland Tin Company had been completed and was officially opened.

In February 1943, the General Secretary received a copy of an Order in Council, published in the Government Gazette altering the name of the Centre from the Irvinebank to Mount Garnet. Mr Jim Wilson, the Officer-in-Charge of the Irvinebank service, was the first Superintendent at Mount Garnet. He resigned in October 1943 and was replaced by Ambulance Officer Tom Chambers of Mount Morgan Centre. Superintendent Chambers resigned in 1952 to accept a position as Ambulance Officer at the Rockhampton Centre.

In its Annual Report for the financial year 1952-1953 the Committee stated that it had purchased a residence in Opal Street and that a section of the verandah would be enclosed for use as a casualty room. A garage was to be erected to house the ambulance car.

In 1959 the Committee sold these premises and, after acquiring land in Garnet Street, purchased a house situated at the Tinaroo Dam site and had it transported to Mount Garnet. This structure has received several alterations and additions over the intervening years and is still the headquarters for ambulance operations in the Mount Garnet district.

Since the resignation of Superintendent Chambers in 1952 the following officers have served in the position of Superintendent of the Mount Garnet Centre:

1989 – 1991	Henry Miles
1954 – 1957	Bill Wolstenholme
1957 – 1960	Jim Crawley
1960 – 1965	Norm Carson
1965 – 1968	Bert Toogood
1968 – 1972	Chas Fixter
1972 – 1975	Ralph Eagle
1975 – 1980	Brian Ellingsen
1980 – 1989	Gordon Green
1989 – 1991	Greg Skerman

Present occupant Superintendent Ian Scholl

Since the relocation of the Centre from Irvinebank to Mt. Garnet in 1941, the following people have filled the position of Chairperson of the Centre Committee:

1941 – 1945	G.B. Leinster
1945 – 1948	R.M. Jones

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1948 – 1949	E.J. Sandelin
1949 – 1955	C.T. Mealing
1955 – 1956	J. Armanasco
1956 – 1957	A.L. Harrison
1957 – 1978	E.G.R. Jenkin
1978 – 1980	F.W. Stralow
1980 – 1987	K.W. Marsh
1987 – 1990	G.G. Luxton
Present occupant Chairperson	Mr J. Girling