

# HISTORY OF THE Queensland Ambulance

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## Ayr

At a meeting of the QATB Executive held on 6 December 1912, the General Secretary gave the following report on his efforts to establish a QATB Service in Ayr.

*'At the request of some of the townspeople I paid a visit to Ayr, with the object of discovering what prospect there was of establishing a centre there. It appears that they have been endeavouring to raise funds sufficient to start a Hospital, but after collecting £200, some of the people are rather of the impression that the work is beyond their power at present. A meeting was to be called at the end of this month, when the whole question would be discussed. I left the matter of establishing an Ambulance Centre instead of a Hospital in the hands of the Chairman of the Provisional Hospital Committee, he seeming favourably impressed with the idea.'*

It was decided to leave the matter in the hands of the State President and General Secretary with power to act. Any further action by the then Executive Officers has not been recorded.

In February 1950 at a public meeting held at the Ayr Shire Council Chambers, it was evident that the townspeople were in favour of the formation of a QATB Centre at Ayr. Up until this time the district ambulance service had been operated and administered by the Ayr Hospital Board.

The public meeting appointed a Provisional Committee consisting of the following: B.S. Donovan (President), G. Blakow (Treasurer), A.S. Dunn, H. Pemple, S. Johnson, O.J. McIntyre and J. Short.

The Department of Health and Home Affairs subsequently directed that on 1 July 1951 the Ayr Hospital Board hand over the ambulance service to the QATB Provisional Committee as a going concern, including two vehicles.

The QATB Committee commenced operations from rented premises at the corner of Young and Graham Streets.

The first Superintendent was Mr A.M.L. Evans who had served the Ayr District as an Honorary Ambulance Officer for a period of 20 years and had been an employee of the Hospital Board for a period of six years.

Due to the untiring efforts of Superintendent Evans who carried on alone until September 1951, and the generous support of the public and business houses, collections were well up to expectations.

In December 1951, a new car, a converted Ford custom sedan, was purchased and made available to the neighbouring town of Home Hill when a Sub-Centre with Mr A. Elliott (formerly of the Townsville Centre) as Officer-in-Charge was opened.

This filled a long-felt need of the Home Hill residents who had relied previously on the service from Ayr. The Sub-Centre became a self-governing centre in April 1953. The present centre building in Queen Street, Ayr was officially opened on 14 April 1956 by Mr Hugh Millar MBE, President of the QATB State Executive Committee.

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Over the years many attempts were made by the residents of Giru to have an ambulance service established in that town. In 1972 an 'Investigation Committee' convened a public meeting to enlist support for the establishment of a Sub-Centre. From this meeting the Giru Ambulance Sub-Centre building and Equipment Fund Committee was formed. This body then set to work raising funds under a permit granted by the Minister for Health.

On 5 July 1983, the Haughton Sugar Company granted to the QATB a house and freehold title to the land upon which present ambulance premises at Giru are located.

The fundraising Committee contributed approximately \$40,000 towards the cost of converting the house into premises suitable for ambulance operations. The project also benefited from a bequest of the late J.A.A. Carey.

The contract price for the alterations and additions was \$111,470. The official opening of the Sub-Centre on 12 October 1985 was performed by Mr J.S. Stodart (President of the QATB State Council) and Mr J.G. Campbell (Assistant General Manager CSR Limited).

## **Staff**

Superintendent Adrian Evans retired in 1967 and was succeeded by his Deputy Superintendent Jim Moroney.

Other officers who have served in the position of Superintendent and Secretary at the Ayr Centre are:

**1968 – 1978** Ray Johnson

**1978 – 1986** Trevor Larcombe

**Present occupant** Superintendent John Klohs

## **Chairpersons**

Since the inception of the QATB Service in Ayr, the following people have filled the position of Chairperson of the Committee:

**1951 – 1952** M. Donovan

**1952 – 1955** W. Gamble

**1955 – 1964** F. Brock

**1964 – 1967** J. Statham

**1967 – 1970** L. Williams

**1970 – 1976** R. Saxby

**1976 – 1988** F. Gist

**Present occupant** Chairperson George Cumes



*Superintendent AMI Evans First Superintendent*