

# *HISTORY OF THE Queensland Ambulance*

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## *Cloncurry*

The first QATB service in the Cloncurry Shire was conducted in the town of Kuridala and was known as the Friezland Centre of the QATB. It was recorded in the minutes of the meeting of Brisbane Centre Committee on 23 October 1911:

‘The Secretary reported that a deputation from the Friezland Ambulance Committee had called on him and stated that it was desired to establish a QATB Honorary Centre attached to the Brisbane Centre. Some £50 had been subscribed and Mr W. Hoban who had been an Honorary Officer at Chillagoe was available to take charge. The value of the plant required would be approximately £25.

Authority was given to supply the plant it being assumed that this was only a preamble to Friezland becoming a self-governing Centre but if it remained an Honorary Centre the proper course would be for it to be attached to the nearest Branch Centre viz. Charters Towers’

Mr W. Hoban in 1917 became the first Superintendent of the Innisfail Centre. The Friezland Centre, situated in Smelter Street, Kuridala became an autonomous Centre in July 1915 and established an Honorary Centre at Selwyn in September of that year and another at Duchess in 1920.

The first Superintendent was Ambulance Officer W. Harding of the Brisbane Centre who commenced duty in December 1915.



*Centre building 1924*

During the 1926-27 financial year the Committee at Kuridala faced some problems. Superintendent Harding had resigned and the district was in depression following the closure of the Hampden

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Smelters. The Committee approached the QATB Committee at Cloncurry with a proposal that the Cloncurry Centre take over the assets and liabilities of the Kuridala service and continue an honorary service to the local residents.

This proposal was agreed to and Cloncurry opened an Honorary Centre at Kuridala with Honorary Bearer J.V. Skewas in charge.

In his report to the Executive Committee, the General Secretary Captain E.R.B. Pike stated that in September 1920 he had visited the Cloncurry district and he was hopeful that a Branch Centre would be established in Cloncurry in the near future.

The General Secretary again visited Cloncurry in June 1923 and subsequently the information imparted by him to the local residents lead to the establishment of an autonomous Centre.

Although the Centre was gazetted in 1923, QATB operations did not commence until 1924. The first Superintendent was Senior Bearer Jack Lisson of the Mount Morgan Centre who took up duty on 13 May 1924.

In the first annual report the Committee Chairperson, Mr James Bell, referred to the yeoman service performed by the Railway Ambulance prior to the establishment of QATB services in the town.

The Centre was situated in Sheaffe Street behind the Central Hotel.

The Provisional Committee in office for the first year of operations consisted of J. Bell, (Chairperson) L.W. Whitehouse (Hon Treasurer), R.C. Hensley, T. Woodhouse, H. Chandler, J. Gardiner, J. Carley, J. Williams and K. Magurie.

In 1942 Superintendent Lisson transferred to the Mount Isa Centre and Ambulance Officer Jack Hegarty of the Townsville Centre was appointed in his stead.

During the wet season roads to many of the outside districts became impassable. In 1925 the Committee placed an order for a Rail Motor Ambulance, in order to be able to give the very best of transport facilities to the outlying districts which were served by railway.

This rail car was sold in 1942 and was not replaced until 1956.

In 1930 Honorary Centres were opened at Quamby (Hon Bearer A.R. MacDonald in charge) and Dobbyn (Hon Bearer H. Benson in charge). In the following year a further Honorary Centre was opened at Kajabbi with Honorary Bearer N. MacDonald in charge.

The Honorary Centre at Julia Creek was converted to a Sub-Centre in 1937 and Mr H. Benson was appointed Officer-in-Charge. In 1938 Julia Creek became a self-governing Centre and Mr Benson was appointed Superintendent.

A new Centre building incorporating a residence for the Superintendent was built in 1957 in Scarr Street and opened by Mr Hugh Millar MBE (President of the State Executive) in September 1960. A second officer was added to the permanent staff in 1961.

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Since the inception of the service in Cloncurry the following officers have served in the position of Superintendent:

<b>1924 – 1942</b>	J.A. Lisson
<b>1942 – 1958</b>	J. Hegarty
<b>1958 – 1968</b>	W.J.A. Lamberton
<b>1968 – 1974</b>	C.T. Wheat
<b>1974 – 1979</b>	E. Pitman
<b>1979 – 1985</b>	R. Meyers
<b>1985 – 1988</b>	K. Anderson
<b>1988 – 1990</b>	P. Fox
<b>Present occupant</b>	
<b>Superintendent</b>	Ross Breckenridge

Those people who have occupied the position of Chairperson of the Committee are as follows:

J. Bell  
W. Long  
G.A. Alton  
W. Schwabe  
D.G. Christeson  
H. Grant  
R.P. Field  
G.R. Newly  
L.W. Whitehouse  
R. Katter  
T.S. Gibson