

HISTORY OF THE Queensland Ambulance

Gin Gin

In February 1951, a group of Gin Gin residents sought the approval of the QATB State Executive Committee for the establishment of an Ambulance Centre in the town. The Executive Committee decided that its President and General Secretary should visit Gin Gin as soon as possible.

At the August meeting of the Executive, the General Secretary reported on an interview with the Chairperson of a Provisional Ambulance Committee of Gin Gin. He also reported that a letter had been received seeking approval for a self-governing Centre, with its operational boundaries being those of the Shire of Perry and the Shire of Kolan. It was then decided that a recommendation be made to the Minister for Health for approval of a self-governing Centre, and that the matter of a loan to the Centre to assist with establishment costs be left in the hands of the Council of the Executive.

Ministerial approval was delayed pending a decision regarding boundaries between Gin Gin and the Miriam Vale Centre.

By Order in Council, the Gin Gin Centre was established in March 1952. The Committee comprised Councillor T.J. Campbell (Chairperson), J.W. Pender, W. Kricken, K.R. Grant, C.J. McCloskey, L.H.F. Rieck and L. Hopton. The first Superintendent appointed was Ambulance Officer T.W. Everton of the Bundaberg Centre.

Initially the Brigade operated from a house that had been made available rent-free. In January 1954, the Committee was able to negotiate a loan to purchase suitable premises in Mulgrave Street from Mr J. Chapman who had conducted a saddlery business in the section that later housed the ambulance cars. During the 1954-55 financial year, extensions to the Centre were carried out to provide additional garage accommodation and quarters for relieving staff.



Figure 1 First Committee

*Back Row: L. Hopton, C.J. McCloskey, L.H.F. Rieck, K. Grant
Front Row: J. Pender, T.J. Campbell, T.W. Everton (Superintendent)*

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In the period 1953-54, Mr E.A. Petterson was appointed as an Honorary Bearer.

Superintendent Tom Everton transferred to the Charters Towers Centre in 1961 and was replaced by Ambulance Officer Ray Newitt of Chinchilla.

In recognition of his outstanding service to the community over a long period, the Chairperson, Cr T.J. Campbell, was awarded an MBE (Member of the British Empire) by her Majesty the Queen in 1964. In 1967 acting on medical advice, Mr Campbell relinquished the position of Chairperson and Mr G.N. Walker was appointed in his stead.

In 1985, the Committee had plans prepared for the construction of the present Centre and Superintendent's residence. These new premises were officially opened on 9 August 1986 by the Honourable C.A. Wharton, Minister for Works and Housing.



Original Centre building

Superintendent S. Houghton who succeeded Superintendent Ray Newitt, when that officer transferred to the Warwick Centre in 1970, resigned in 1989. The next Superintendent was Mr Ron Davis who had been Officer-in-Charge of the Deception Bay Sub-Centre (Caboolture Centre).

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

T.J. (Tom) Campbell
G.N. (Digger) Walker
L.C. (Lyn) Batkines
R. (Royce) McCarthy
G.G. (Graeme) Claxton