

HISTORY OF THE *Queensland Ambulance*

Springsure

A public meeting was called by Mr LeFeuvre, the Chairperson of the Bauhinia Shire Council, as a response to a largely signed petition put forward by the ratepayers and residents of the district. This meeting took place in the morning of Friday, 20 May 1921.

At this meeting a Committee was formed to take the appropriate measures in establishing a QATB centre in Springsure. This Committee consisted of M.T. Burke, W. Fisher, R.C. Biddulph, D.J. Keating, W.A. Hoare, W.C. Tucker and H.J. Lewis.

Due to the mine at Mount Morgan closing down, there was not enough work to support the number of staff and vehicles already there. Approval was given by the State Executive to secure a vehicle and a bearer from Mount Morgan for employment at Springsure. This was on the condition that Springsure Committee pay the bearer's wages, and maintain the vehicle and return it when a vehicle was purchased by the Springsure QATB Committee.

On Thursday 16 June 1921, Superintendent Duffill and Senior Bearer E.C. Haswell of the Mount Morgan Centre and vehicle arrived in Springsure. Mr Jonathan Milliken placed his auction room at the disposal of the Brigade for temporary quarters.



First Superintendent E.C. Haswell

All this had taken place in less than four weeks from the time of the public meeting.

Applications were called for the position of Superintendent and Secretary of Springsure. The successful applicant was Acting Superintendent and Secretary E.C. (Chas) Haswell.

The first Springsure-owned vehicle was a 1921 Ford which cost £400 and was put into operation in September 1921.

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The first person to be attended to by the newly-formed Springsure QATB was a Master Ken Alchin, an eight-year-old, who had stubbed his right toe. The treatment took place at 11 a.m. on 18 June 1921. Three cases were attended that day.

Eventually the Committee secured the use of a building in Porphyry Street, previously used by the Bank of New South Wales. On 8 February 1923, the Committee decided to purchase a block of land at the corner of Eclipse and Porphyry Streets from Mr P.R. Milliken for £350.



First premises

A Ford Essex car was purchased sometime around September 1923, and put into service in December 1923. The plant then consisted of two cars.

In October 1927, a Hudson Super Six was purchased from Springsure Eclipse Motor Garage for £465. This vehicle was to replace the first car purchased (the Ford) in 1921. It is unknown how the Ford was disposed of. Also in October 1927, the new Ambulance Centre was opened at 3 p.m. on the 29th. It was insured for £1,300. The first meeting of the Committee in the new board room took place at 7.30 p.m. on 10 November 1927.

In March 1930, a letter was sent to the Bauhinia Shire Council requesting 'that an aeroplane landing strip be made so that the offer of £50 as a donation be accepted from Mr D.E. Donkin'. Subsequently, the Shire Council took the necessary action in having the airstrip built.

In June 1930, Mr G.H. Bomford (Committee member) was appointed as a delegate of the Springsure QATB in respect to the Royal Commission that had been appointed to enquire into certain matters in connection with Public Hospitals. He was to give evidence opposing any proposal to place the Ambulance under the control of Hospitals.

An electricity generator was purchased and during August/September of 1930, this was connected to the Centre along with several lights.

Fundraising was difficult during the Depression years and as a result, Superintendent Haswell took a voluntary reduction in his salary of 10 per cent on 12 November 1931. Full salary was returned to him on 12 September 1935.

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During April 1935, the Superintendent and a vehicle were sent to the official opening of the Injune/Springsure Road.



Centre building opened 1927

The Ford Essex was replaced by a Master Chevrolet that was purchased in December 1935 for £245. This new vehicle went into service in June 1936.

In December 1938, electric lights and a meter were installed at a cost of £1 12s 6d per point and £1 for the meter. The generator was no longer needed.

On 28 March 1942, a letter was sent by a Mr G. Golik of Emerald to the Springsure Committee requesting the establishment of an honorary centre. As a result of a public meeting held on Thursday 2 April 1942, an Honorary Centre was established at Emerald. In 1943 it was decided to raise the status of the Honorary Centre to that of Sub-Centre and on 3 September 1943, applications were invited for the position of Officer-in-Charge. Ambulance Officer J.J. Phillips of Mackay was the successful applicant and he commenced duty in his position in December 1943.

It was agreed at a meeting on 15 November 1944, that Emerald Sub-Centre would become a self-governing Centre and this was gazetted as such in December 1944. Applications were called for a Superintendent and Secretary at Emerald and Superintendent E.C. Haswell was the successful applicant. Superintendent Haswell resigned from Springsure on 8 March 1945. Senior Bearer Phillips, the former Officer-in-Charge at Emerald, was then appointed to Superintendent of the Millaa Millaa Centre.

At a meeting on 23 April 1945, William Ogston of Rockhampton was selected as the new Superintendent and Secretary of Springsure. He took up his position on 28 May 1945.

A visit by the new Executive Secretary, Mr F.W. Cash, took place on 2 July 1951. At that meeting it was first suggested by Mr Cash to employ a Driver/Bearer to assist with the relief of the Superintendent for holidays, days off, etc. At a meeting on 11 February 1952, it was resolved to hold in abeyance the decision to employ a Driver/ Bearer due to the economic climate at that time.

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Superintendent Ogston was appointed the official anaesthetist for Springsure Hospital in March/April 1953.

In July 1953, the employment of a Driver/Bearer was discussed, and again, due to limited finances, the matter was held over.

The first Life Member of the Springsure QATB was Mr J.W.S. Roebuck who, for 19 years, was the representative for the Springsure Committee on the State Executive Committee.

In 1967, Architect Mr E.A. Hegvold was contracted to draw up plans and specifications for a new Ambulance Centre, to be built with the existing Centre building and residence in perspective. A tender was accepted from I.F. Woollam and Son Pty Ltd to build the new Ambulance Centre at a cost of \$24,748.

Superintendent Ogston decided to retire on 18 April 1975. Driver/Bearer/Collector D.W. Trevor from Innisfail was the successful applicant and he commenced duties on Monday 14 April 1975. Dave Trevor still occupies the position of Superintendent/Secretary.

In 1979 applications were invited for the position of Ambulance Officer Collector and the appointee Mr P. Doherty commenced duty on 5 February.

Members

The Committee purchased a house in Springsure in 1984 to accommodate its second officer. Ambulance officer A.L. Mangan who assists the Superintendent has been in the employment of the Committee since August 1988.

Since the establishment of the service in Springsure the following people have filled the position of Chairperson of the Committee:

May – October 1921	H.J. Lewis
1921 – 1923	W.C. Tucker
1923 – 1929	W. Fisher
February – March 1930	Sgt J.J. Hanrahan
1930 – 1934	W.H.J. Thomson
1934 – 1952	W. Hoch
May – December 1952	J.D. Campbell
1952 – 1955	W.R. Pill
1955 – 1956	C.J. Fraser
1956 – 1959	A.S. Powe
1957 – 1961	R.C. McDonald
1961 – 1973	A.J. Foot
1973 – 1988	K.D. Rowlands
Present occupant Chairperson	B.D. Smith