

Where is it now?

At Mangaorapa Station on Te Uri Road, Porangahau. Don Mouat's son Bill, has a special interest in preserving vehicles of his past, and in a disused aircraft hanger on the grounds, the International Ambulance joins other classic vehicles. It is hoped that one day they will be displayed in new premises, and open to the public.



From 1985 onwards, a structure was needed to keep the service crewed, filled with petrol, and available. Overseen by Mr John Galbraith, and Mr Mike Watson, this led to an association which boasts monthly meetings, interactive training with St John Ambulance Waipukurau, and a response that now links with the 111 System.

Mr Anthony "Bones" Langley.
Taken at his Waipukurau home
August '05 at the age of 85 yrs.



Many thanks for your valuable
information and great memory.

Mr Galbraith would however be the first to acknowledge that old habits do die hard, and the phone calls to the local ambulance staff are still received on occasion.

The Current Staff are;
John & Betty Galbraith
Richard Galbraith
Paul Cameron
Mike Watson
Marilyn Forrest
Elizabeth Symonds

A Special Thanks to Contributors:
Anthony Langley
Mike Watson
John Galbraith
Bill Mouat - Mangaorapa Station
Bryan Fletcher - St John Ambulance
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A HISTORY OF THE PORANGAHAU & DISTRICT AMBULANCE.



*Researched by Morgan Fletcher and her Dad,
Room 9
Waipukurau Primary School
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The Beginning.

In the late 1950's Porangahau was a thriving community which included a school of over 200 pupils. The population in the village was just over 60, and the outlying area had about 260 others. (*Census 1961*) It even had a Taxi service, and that is where our story begins.

Taxi driver Mr Neville Shearer, was also an active member of St John, trained in first aid, and who managed in his spare time, to pursue a high ranking position within the Napier Division.

Knowing of his background, and his ready access to transport, it was not uncommon for citizens to call Mr Shearer for his services in cases of emergencies. This became a regular thing, and that prompted Mr Shearer to call a committee together, for the purpose for acquiring a proper vehicle to serve the District as an Ambulance.

This Initial Committee consisted of the following people:

Don Mouat - President

Don Anderson - Secretary

Anthony Langley - Treasurer and future crew member ('59 - '81)

Tina Tipene - Waipawa Hospital Board - and future crew member

Violet Beattie - future crew member

Nancy Sidwell - future crew member

Neville Shearer - future crew member

Later a Mr Ian Hunter would play an integral part by becoming a long serving crew member throughout the early years.

Where did the money come from? - The Community backed the idea, and through fund raising and stock drives, a van was bought and fitted out with first aid equipment and one stretcher.

This was a Morris Commercial (*pictured on the front page*) in 1959.

No 111

If anyone needed an ambulance in those days, you just went and got it! Getting Volunteers was never easy, and throughout the first 25 years, it was crewed not by a structured roster, but by whoever needed it, and whoever had gotten to the ambulance shed first. You could imagine the surprise of those coming in second.

The other way it was crewed and despatched, was through local knowledge. After a while, a few of locals became identified as "ambulance drivers", and it would not be uncommon for these people to receive a

phone call at home requiring their immediate attention.

District nurses were also called upon to crew at times, as their clinic was situated in the village, and used by the Doctors for their weekly visits.

The Van (known for it's bad handling), would be seen at all of the local sports and community events, crewed by anyone who had the time, and commitment, and that always seemed to fall upon a chosen few.

There are memories of transporting injured Dannevirke rugby players to the Dannevirke Hospital as a courtesy, but later funding and direction dictated that all patients were to be seen by a Waipukurau G.P. (including Dr Girling-Butcher and Dr A. Quinn to name two), who would then admit them into the Waipukurau Hospital.

Donations were regularly received to cover running expenses, maybe from the sale of a cattle beast, and this accumulated over seven years to an amount that enabled the purchase of a "purpose built" ambulance in 1966.

This was procured by Garth Cassidy Transport Co, and was later housed along with the Fire Appliance, in the present Station.

The (1965) International AB110



This was Porangahau's Ambulance until 1998, when St John Ambulance Services (H.B.) agreed to take over their running expenses and vehicle replacement.

It had travelled 34,395 miles, and was replaced by a Bedford.

