



## Elizabeth Harford

### **The making of an Ambulance Service in Sydney from its inception to 1960**

This paper discusses the making of an Ambulance Service in Sydney from its inception to 1960 using actual examples of ambulance work. Today we take for granted that an ambulance will be available for those sick and injured that need urgent transport for medical treatment. Prior to 1895 in Sydney, the sick depended upon the beneficence of the community and police to assist them. Histories of the development or making of an ambulance service are sparse and those that are available have often focus on the evolution of ambulance vehicles and equipment. The application of advancing clinical knowledge will be explored together with changes in first aid and the modernisation of motor vehicles and resuscitation equipment. These examples will also highlight a collaborative response from 2 hospitals, surf clubs and racecourses to growing numbers of patients with increasingly complex and urgent needs. From the late 1920s, increasing numbers of motor vehicle crashes, delays in off-loading patients and lengthening times for accessing beds started to impact ambulance services. The evolution of resuscitative techniques in the pre-hospital setting are analysed. Sources accessed include newspaper accounts, St John's Ambulance and Central District Ambulance Annual Reports as well as some hospital records.