

ABOUT COFFEE MEMORIAL

Coffee Memorial Blood Center was chartered as a nonprofit corporation in the State of Texas as the Potter County Memorial Blood Center on December 23, 1949, under the auspices of the Potter-Randall County Medical Society. The first unit of blood was collected from a donor, whose name has been lost to history, on February 8, 1950, in the office of T. P. Churchill, M.D. The first permanent site of the Blood Center was a building built and equipped by the Golding-Meadows Post of the Veterans of Foreign Wars adjacent to the Post on West Eighth Avenue. The cost of that five-room building was \$14,000 and was leased to the Blood Center for \$1.00 per year.

The National Institutes of Health, later superseded by the Food and Drug Administration in the regulation of blood banks, issued License #246 to the Blood Center on May 10, 1953. The Blood Center became an institutional member of the American Association of Blood Banks on December 10, 1956, and is inspected and accredited by that organization. In addition, the Blood Center is a charter member of the Council of Community Blood Centers (now America's Blood Centers) and is an institutional member of the South Central Association of Blood Banks.



James Robert Coffee

The Blood Center quickly outgrew the property provided by the Golding-Meadows Post, resulting in the purchase of land on Highway 66 and the subsequent construction of a new building that opened for donations on June 15, 1960. The entire project cost \$50,000.

In 1965, it became apparent that the name, Potter County Memorial Blood Center, was no longer appropriate as the Blood Center was expanding to provide blood products and services to Randall County and the rest of the Texas Panhandle. At that time, the name was changed to Coffee Memorial Blood Center in honor of James Robert Coffee, M.D. Dr. Coffee, an Amarillo native, was a brilliant young man with dreams of becoming a neurosurgeon. He

graduated from high school in 1943 at 15 and then completed two years of pre-medical coursework at the University of Chicago. At 17, he enrolled in the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine. After graduation, he began his internship at the University of Chicago Hospital when he was only 21. One day during that internship, he lost consciousness. Tests revealed he had been born with an extraordinarily thin intestinal wall. He had developed ulcerative colitis with massive hemorrhaging. The University of Chicago Blood Bank was able to keep him alive for three weeks but death was imminent. Dr. Coffee was a newlywed of four months and he died just one month before his 22nd birthday.

LOCATIONS *Past and Present*



1959-1984
2911 Amarillo Blvd.



1984-2007
1915 Coulter Dr.



2007-present
7500 Wallace Blvd.

In the 1940's, blood was not as readily available as it is today. Physicians in the Texas Panhandle had just begun to discuss the need for a local blood bank. Dr. Coffee's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Joe Coffee, were instrumental in the establishment of this blood center. His father, Joe F. Coffee, was one of the seven members of the founding board.

FROM ITS FIRST YEAR PRODUCTION OF APPROXIMATELY 500 TRANSFUSIBLE BLOOD COMPONENTS, COFFEE MEMORIAL BLOOD CENTER NOW PRODUCES MORE THAN 60,000 COMPONENTS, INSURING AVAILABILITY TO AREA PATIENTS UNDER ALL CIRCUMSTANCES.

As the use of blood transfusion grew, along with the use of specific blood component therapy, it became evident in the late 1970's, that the facility on Amarillo Boulevard was fast becoming inadequate. Plans were put in place to finance the construction of a new building that would carry the Blood Center into the 21st

Century. In December, 1983, the Amarillo Area Foundation donated the site of the facility at 1915 Coulter Drive, placing the Blood Center at the gateway to the Harrington Regional Medical Center. Ground was broken on May 17, 1984, with the first blood donation given by Jim Doche, the principal architect of the project, on February 4, 1985. The ceremonial ribbon was cut on February 20, 1985, by Mrs. Joe Coffee, wife of Joe F. Coffee. By this time, the cost of the fully equipped and furnished building had risen to \$750,000.

From its first year production of approximately 500 transfusable blood components, the Blood Center now produces more than 60,000 components annually, insuring availability to area patients under all circumstances. In 1994, an expansion and renovation project was completed which doubled the size of the facility and provided upgraded laboratories. The purpose of that project was to ensure that the Blood Center is positioned for the future as new technologies and new products emerge, allowing the Blood Center to continue providing state-of-the-art blood products and services to the Texas Panhandle.

Once again outgrowing its existing space, Coffee Memorial Blood Center moved to yet another facility in January of 2007. The current Coffee Memorial Blood Center is approximately 30,000 square feet and accommodates approximately 65 employees. It also includes unfinished shell space to provide for future expansions if needed. Coffee Memorial is the exclusive provider of blood products and services to the entire High Plains Region made up of 31 counties and 29 medical facilities in the Texas and Oklahoma Panhandles.

MISSION: Coffee Memorial Blood Center is dedicated to providing life-saving blood products and transfusion services to patients throughout the High Plains Region.

As a demonstration of our commitment to provide the safest possible products to the High Plains Region, we supply only leukocyte-reduced red blood cells to our hospitals.



Left to right: Nancye Coffee Allen (sister to the late James Robert Coffee) and her husband, Art Allen, along with our third CEO, Dr. James T. Rutledge, and our very first Executive Director, the late Florence Henderson, at Coffee Memorial's Grand Opening for our current building in 2007.

One hour of your time and one unit of your blood could BE THE REASON someone lives!