



South  
Australia

# BRANCH REPORT

2023 - 2024



## **Please note that names and years for Service Awards in the current calendar year are listed in the Annual Report of Meals on Wheels SA.**

### **Barossa Valley**

Our hot meal delivery service continues to be supported by our dedicated volunteers. We are blessed with sufficient volunteers for them to only be required to deliver every three to four weeks. The fortnightly frozen delivery run is growing in popularity and while it may seem the wellbeing check and social connection would be less, our Customer Service Officers maintain contact with these customers each fortnight to check on their requirements and menu choices.

We have now extended the frozen meal deliveries to the Southern Barossa Region – including the towns of Williamstown and Lyndoch. This area of the Barossa and Adelaide Hills has previously never had access to a Meals on Wheels service, and the number of referrals is growing. To support the extended delivery a recruitment drive for volunteers from those areas resulted in four very welcome recruits who are also very good spokespeople for the service.

### **Beachport**

We, the members of the Beachport branch, are thrilled to celebrate 7 years of dedicated service and a successful year of operation. Our customer base has adjusted from 5 last year to 2 currently, as many have transitioned to Residential Aged Care. This year, we proudly delivered a total of 558 meals, including 176 to Southend.

Our team of 30 regular volunteers continues to be a cornerstone of our success. Looking ahead, our goals for the next 12 months include actively promoting our service in the community and expanding the number of people we reach.

### **Berri and Renmark**

The Renmark and Berri branches have enjoyed a busy and productive year – our volunteers are a happy group who all enjoy working together.

We had a very successful Christmas lunch for both branches, and awards were presented to many of the volunteers upon reaching major milestones. The Renmark and Berri hotels supplied the venues for these celebrations and were very kind to keep the costs low for a full 3 course Christmas lunch.

Renmark branch provides hot meals for up to 70 customers daily, and approximately 20 customers who have frozen meals weekly.

The Berri branch has approximately 20 customers daily and these hot meals are supplied by the Berri Hospital.

All of our customers were presented with gifts at Easter as well as a lovely Christmas hamper with a large variety of goodies donated by many local businesses.

A big thank you to our Branch Support Officer Stephen Whaley for all of his help during the year. We also thank Brad Phillips for any and all repairs and problems that were dealt with quickly and efficiently to keep all equipment running smoothly.

A huge thank you to all of the volunteers for their support and commitment – we couldn't do what we do without them.

### **Blackwood**

This year the Blackwood branch celebrated its 32nd birthday. We held a number of events across the year, starting with our Annual General Meeting and awards ceremony where we were able to thank the many volunteers that enable our branch to function so well. In March we held our birthday BBQ on a beautiful day outside on our lawns that was very well attended and enjoyed. We again celebrated National Volunteers Day with an amazing homemade soup lunch at our branch, superbly organised by our incredible Social Committee. We are grateful for their efforts in planning all of our successful events this year.

We are thrilled to share that former Volunteer Coordinator, Anneke Jeffriess was recently awarded a Boothby Volunteer Service Award. This award reflects the incredible contribution that Anneke has made for more than 17 years and we are very grateful that she continues to volunteer at our branch.

This year we delivered 13,936 hot meals along with 2,900 frozen meals across our four routes. Our customers appreciated the Easter eggs and Christmas hampers that we also supplied.

Thank you to all of our wonderful volunteers for always going above and beyond.

## Brighton

Volunteer numbers are steadily rising, particularly for deliveries, which is a great sign of increasing support. While kitchen volunteer numbers remain steady, we're actively working to address challenges on days when volunteer numbers are tight.

Currently, we have 136 dedicated active volunteers. We understand that numbers may fluctuate seasonally due to holidays and sickness, and we are grateful for the commitment of those who continue to contribute their time and effort.

The branch sends out on average 968 meals per week to 216 customers, with numbers increasing quite quickly in recent times.

We held our annual awards function at the Morphett Arms Hotel in October, with a full turnout. Our volunteer staff worked tirelessly getting the Christmas and Easter frozen orders out, and a big thank you must go to Dot, Tricia and Kirsty for their efforts. We also greatly appreciate our Volunteer Coordinator Karen May, assisted by John Binding for the extra effort they are putting into their roles as Volunteer Coordinators. They have also been a great help in the kitchen with dishing up meals.

We would like to welcome Sandy Petrie to the role of Branch Coordinator. She joined us in March this year from Central Office. It is good to have a permanent member of staff around the branch!

All of our volunteers deserve a huge thank you for their tireless effort as they are our most valuable assets.

## Burnside

The past year has been one of growth and community strength for the Burnside branch. We have continued to deliver not just meals, but also companionship and support to our customers, ensuring their wellbeing and quality of life.

Our success is deeply rooted in the dedication of our volunteers. This year, we have a total of 143 volunteers who have contributed their time and effort to our cause. Among them we are proud to recognize two volunteers who have achieved 30 years service; three volunteers who have achieved 20 years service and ten volunteers who have achieved their 15 year life membership. Their sustained commitment is a testament to their dedication and the strong community bonds we foster.

This year we welcomed 26 new volunteers into our fold. Their fresh energy and enthusiasm have been invaluable in helping us expand our reach and enhance our services.

Currently we are serving 145 customers. Our customers consistently express their appreciation for the meals and companionship they receive. Feedback highlights how our service has positively impacted their lives, providing not only nourishment but also vital social interaction. Meals on Wheels Burnside is more than just a meal delivery service. It is a community where volunteers and customers support and uplift each other.

We are grateful for the unwavering support of our volunteers, the trust of our customers, and the generosity of our donors. Together, we continue to make a profound difference in the lives of our customers.

## Burra

Burra branch held our Annual General Meeting followed by a volunteer lunch in September, which was attended by over half of our volunteers.

At Christmas, we were able to deliver hampers to our customers. A local lady has donated homemade Christmas cakes to be added to customer hampers for many years.

We recently decided we could accommodate some more customers, so we advertised through our local post office's advertising mail service, aiming at both new customers and future volunteers. We mentioned that a doctor's certificate was not necessary - within ten days we had eight new customers. All were eligible however had not wanted to ask the doctor for a referral. A fantastic result!

## Campbelltown

We'd like to extend a heartfelt thank you to all our incredible volunteers at the Campbelltown branch. Your dedication and hard work are truly what keeps our branch thriving.

Recently, we've seen a reduction in our volunteer numbers, primarily due to retirements, health issues, and life changes like travel or family commitments. Alongside this, our customer numbers have also experienced a slight decrease, but the branch remains as bustling as ever.

This year, we welcomed a new Branch Coordinator and embraced several changes within the branch. As they say, a change is as good as a holiday, and these updates are sure to bring fresh perspectives and renewed energy.

During the holiday season, our customers were delighted with the placemats and biscuits we gave them. It was a wonderful way to show our appreciation. Our volunteers also enjoyed a well-deserved celebration at the Highlander Hotel, marking another successful year of hard work. Thank you all for your continued support and dedication!

## Ceduna

Ceduna Branch currently has 48 volunteers delivering meals to 9 customers. We have a 6 week rotation which is great for planning holidays and other events.

Our annual Award's Day was celebrated with a lunch and the volunteers due to receive their badges for years of service are celebrated on this day. We can always expect a good turn out.

## Charles Sturt

We are incredibly grateful for everything our volunteers do each day; their dedication is essential to our ability to serve our customers. While it can be a bit challenging, especially during the winter months when some of our volunteers head to warmer destinations, we always look forward to their return and appreciate their enthusiasm when they're back.

One of the things we're most proud of at the branch is how our volunteers are always willing to step up and take on extra shifts when needed. Their commitment and care for our customers truly make them special.

We've seen a steady increase in our customer numbers throughout the year and have received wonderful feedback since introducing our frozen choices. We're excited to see this positive trend continue!

We had many service awards to give out this year:

5 Years: Karyn Higgins & Michael Long

10 Years: Lee Sullivan, Jimmy Turner & Leonila "Onnie" Sansome

15 Years: Cindy Down, Ian Kinnane & Michael Stone

A special thanks goes to Jim and Grace Giles, who have now been volunteering at the branch for 26 years, including their work on the committee.

## Christies Beach

Another year passes as our great team of volunteers enhance the lives of many people in our community.

With around 150 kitchen and delivery volunteers serving out approximately 260 fresh meals daily (with additional frozen meals) our great team work together to receive great results.

Many volunteers go above and beyond and they are being recognised by our newly introduced Volunteer of the Month award, generously supported by our sponsor KFC. Three volunteers were also recognised for their outstanding contributions in the Annual Southern Suburbs Volunteer Service Awards – congratulations to Colleen Guerin, Jenny Southall and Dave Rogers.

In October we held our annual volunteer lunch at the Woodcroft Hotel which was attended by over 60 volunteers. Two volunteers gained 15 year life membership service badges and were applauded by all. Our stalwart Doris Crain is still volunteering for us with in excess of 50 years service. An astonishing record!

The branch would like to thank all the volunteers who dedicate their time and energy to enforce the Meals on Wheels motto of Great Food, Great People!

## Clare

This year has been a rewarding one for our branch. We've consistently held five meetings annually and while customer numbers fluctuate, we are certainly kept busy.

This year, name badges were purchased for all volunteers to wear when delivering meals and attending branch events.

Our thank you dinner for volunteers and service awards presentation night was attended by Member for Frome Penny Pratt MP, who stressed the importance of volunteering before presenting our branch awards. All who received an award were later sent a "Congratulations on your Achievement" letter from Penny which was a kind gesture on her behalf.

Christmas hampers were packed and delivered to all customers by committee members - we are very grateful to Clare Woolworths for the numerous goodies they donated.

Congratulations to long-term volunteer, Glenda Swavley, who was recognised by Clare & Gilbert Valleys Council, for the extensive volunteering she does in our community.

An afternoon tea was held to celebrate the 70th birthday of Meals on Wheels SA. Volunteers and kitchen staff from the local hospital enjoyed the delicious afternoon tea provided by Clare Bowling Club. We were pleased to welcome CEO, Sharyn Broer who told of the plans for celebrations this year and of the initiative for businesses to subsidise meals for Meals on Wheels customers on August 9th. It was wonderful to hear Cochrane's Transport will be covering the cost of meals for our customers.

## Copper Triangle

The recent introduction of revised food-safety training has been embraced by all members of the Copper Triangle Branch and provided an opportunity to refresh our knowledge. This has been particularly useful for the kitchen staff at Moonta. Compliments continue to filter back in relation to the quality and prompt delivery of meals, which is pleasing feedback.

Our volunteers were again treated to two social events throughout the year including our traditional presentation lunch where a large number of volunteers were presented with certificates and badges in recognition of service. This event is an important opportunity for volunteers from Kadina, Wallaroo and Moonta to come together and share their experiences and to acknowledge the service of others. The recent 'afternoon tea' at the Wallaroo Community Sports Centre was also well attended.

To our committee members and volunteers at Kadina, Wallaroo and Moonta, again a big thank you for your support and commitment throughout the year.

We again acknowledge the cheerful assistance provided to us throughout the year by our Regional Support Officer, Joanne Cameron. Jo continues to provide valuable guidance and support in all aspects of our operations.

## Crystal Brook

In November, the Crystal Brook branch hosted a delightful end-of-year morning tea that brought together customers and volunteers, featuring a special presentation of service awards.

Although we've seen a decrease in customer numbers due to many transitioning into care, our new, younger volunteers have been thriving in their roles, enjoying the opportunity to deliver services and engage in meaningful conversations with our customers.

We celebrated Volunteers Month in May with a catered roast lunch at the RSL rooms, honouring and appreciating our dedicated volunteers.

## Edwardstown

We were delighted to host Meals on Wheels President, Mr Kevin Reid, at our end of year celebrations and presentation of awards.

In April, the Governor General, His Excellency, The Honourable David Hurley and Her Excellency, Mrs Linda Hurley visited our branch. Their friendly and interested approach was evident during food preparation and serving as well as on delivery. We enjoyed a song chorus or two with Mrs Hurley while we shared morning tea.

Our Volunteer Coordinator, Colin Trenouth has joined the Branch Operations and Services (BOS) Advisory Committee and his experience, understanding and skills will make him a valued member.

Our branch received a community grant from the City of Marion. We now have a safer entry path wide enough for mobility aids, and also an updated front garden, ready for spring.

## Enfield

We held a sausage sizzle in November 2023 at Bunnings Kilburn which contributed a good amount for the customers Christmas hampers. Woolworths at Northpark also contributed a \$100 voucher – we thank them for their donation.

We have sadly lost a couple of long term stalwarts at the branch this year – Max Smith, our Volunteer and Customer Services Coordinator who has been an integral part of the branch for more than 17 years, and Garry Rice, retired Treasurer and Cook of the Day who worked 5 days a week until his retirement. They are both greatly missed.

Our new Volunteer and Customer Services Coordinator, Alan Spark has stepped up to the plate and is doing a great job.

We are grateful to all of the volunteers who have put their hand up throughout the year to take on the occasional extra shift to cover those who are unable to make it on the day. We appreciate the extra time you have taken to help out!

## Gilbert Valley

In July we had a wonderful Annual General Meeting and luncheon, highlighted by an interesting and enlightening presentation from our guest speaker, General Manager Service Operations, Julie Bonnici. Although we're experiencing a decrease in customers this year, we are actively navigating a competitive landscape with other meal services in the area offering similar pricing.

We proudly delivered 671 hot meals and 225 frozen meals this financial year. While customer numbers fluctuate, we've maintained a consistent delivery schedule, including weekly services in our three feeder towns.

Our dedicated team of about 90 volunteers from Auburn, Saddleworth, and Riverton keeps our operations running smoothly with a monthly roster. We also enjoyed a festive Christmas luncheon at the Riverton Hotel and provided Christmas hampers and gifts to our customers.

As we celebrate 50 years of Gilbert Valley Meals on Wheels, we're looking forward to a special luncheon and Annual General Meeting in August. We are endeavouring to enhance our summer menu with the addition of salads and are working with Riverton Hospital to explore homemade soup options, though staffing challenges have caused some delays.

## Hallett Cove

It has been another busy and successful year for our team at Hallett Cove. While we generally have three routes travelling north to Seacliff Park and south to Morphett Vale, on occasion due to high customer numbers we will put on a fourth round. This is staffed with Kaye as driver and Trevor as deliverer, after finishing their stint in the kitchen. This is to ensure that customers receive their meals in a timely manner. Our thanks to Kaye and Trevor for their extra assistance!

Our volunteers are a happy bunch and show real concern for the wellbeing of the customers we service. We were thankful to have Jacob join us as an enterprising 18-year-old who wanted to volunteer, using his TAFE obtained IT skills for work experience and who has now obtained a full-time IT position with a well-respected law firm – we wish him all the best.

The deliveries in the week before Christmas were very special, as not only did the customers receive a goody bag made up of donated items, they also had a visit from Father Christmas, AKA Andy. The volunteers celebrated Christmas with a lunch in the carpark and the same Father Christmas dropped in to wish us all a Merry Christmas.

This year we said goodbye to some of our volunteers as they entered retirement – we thank Tony McCleane, Judy Burns, Bob Joyce, Lisa Standen and Natasha Dart for their years of service.

## Happy Valley

We have successfully navigated 2023 – 2024 with no major issues.

Happy Valley has delivered to our many customers in an efficient and good natured manner. Due to an increase in customers we have added another round primarily with existing volunteers plus some excellent new recruits, taking us to 7 rounds. Our average daily meal numbers have increased from an average of 170 per day in 2022/23 to 204 per day in the month of June 2024.

We have been fortunate to have had a core group of volunteers who have gone beyond what would normally be expected of them. We had two volunteers complete 15 years' service and qualify for life membership during the year, 12 completed one year of service, five completed five years' service, five 10 years' service, two 20 years' service, two 25 years' service, two 35 years' service and one 40 years.

Thanks also must go to Brenton Dawkins and Irene Zitis, our Branch Support Officers for their help during the year.

Socially we held two barbecues each attended by over 60 volunteers and partners as well as our Christmas lunch which was attended by about 100 volunteers and partners. All customers were given a Christmas cake which was packed, funded and delivered by our volunteers for Christmas.

Thanks go to our committee for their efforts during the year to enable both the smooth functioning of the kitchen and social events. We look forward to continue providing a service to our community in 2024/25.

## Henley and Grange

We've had a fantastic year, thanks to the dedication of our hardworking volunteers and committee members. Their efforts have allowed us to continue what we do best - providing our customers with a delicious three-course meal every day.

Our customer base and meals per week are slightly up from 2022/2023. We have approximately 165 customers, and average 670 hot meals, 65 frozen meals and 50 special meals per week. We also distributed 480 frozen meals over the Christmas period, as well as 150 Lions Cake Christmas hampers and cards to our appreciative customers.

We currently have 135 dedicated active volunteers, with 15 new volunteers starting from the beginning of 2024.

## Meals on Wheels SA

As with all branches we have had a number of volunteers on holidays over the last few months, but other volunteers have had no hesitation stepping in to do extra days to deliver the meals and help in the kitchen.

During November we held our annual Christmas Dinner and Awards presentations at the Bartley Hotel in West Lakes, which was well attended by 75 volunteers and guests. Thanks to the local businesses who donated gifts and vouchers for door prizes for our volunteers.

Congratulations and thank you to Christine Hemmerling who achieved 25 years of service, and Brenda Anderson, Joseph Hewitt and Colleen Pickard who all achieved 20 years of service. We appreciate your dedication to Meals on Wheels over so many years.

Thank you to all of our magnificent volunteers, as well as the assistance received from Hilton, particularly our Branch Support Officer, Kyle Wood.

### **Hindmarsh**

Another year of successfully serving our community with nourishing meals – cooked and delivered by our core group of volunteers.

A number of our volunteers have retired or moved on to other stages of life this year, leading to a need for new volunteer recruitment. We would like to extend a big “thank you” to our current group of volunteers who continue to go well and beyond the expectations of our branch.

A volunteer service award luncheon was held in May 2024 to celebrate various years of service completed by some of our volunteers and this was well attended. Our annual Christmas dinner was deferred but we look forward to holding one in November.

The branch committee members meet every three months and continue to work together to commit to the smooth functioning of the branch. All customers were gifted with Christmas and Easter gifts put together by some of our volunteers which were well received.

We continue to acknowledge customer birthdays by providing them some happiness in the form of a card. All cards are written by Sheila Jordine – a special thanks to her.

Heartfelt thanks to all of our office, kitchen, drivers and deliverers (past and present) and Rotary volunteers to whom we are indebted. Our gratitude also to our Branch Coordinator and Branch Support Officers for their guidance and support.

### **Kapunda Eudunda**

Meals on Wheels is making a meaningful difference in the lives of many, especially the elderly in Kapunda and Eudunda. Although we’ve faced occasional volunteer shortages throughout the year, we’re fortunate to have dedicated volunteers stepping up to fill in and ensure our service remains seamless.

We are deeply grateful for our volunteers who consistently give their best and uphold the timely service our customers appreciate. This year, we hosted several social events, including an afternoon tea where we proudly presented our volunteer service awards.

Our customer base has naturally fluctuated over the year. Currently, we serve 14 customers with daily meals prepared by the Kapunda Hospital Kitchen and 5 customers who enjoy frozen meals from the Meals on Wheels Hilton Facility. While we don’t have any current customers in Eudunda, we’re always ready to deliver there when needed.

We warmly welcome new volunteers and committee members and look forward to continuing our vital service to the community.

### **McLaren Vale**

Another successful year for McLaren Vale Meals on Wheels thanks to the ongoing dedication, care and energy given by our amazing volunteers.

Our adaptive volunteers have ensured that meals are delivered (over 700 last month) despite our volunteer numbers varying greatly due to health challenges, travel and other commitments. Volunteers willingly agree to do extra deliveries at short notice, and we so appreciate their assistance.



Our events held this year really allowed people to catch up, meet new volunteers and get to know each other a little better. Once again the volunteers from the Bowling Club created an amazing selection of goodies with more than enough for us to take to some of our volunteers who were unable to attend in person.

We again recognise the amazing job our committee members do to make our service work effectively and the flexible team from the kitchen which keep it all running.

The following really reflects what our branch believes and where their energy derives from:

"How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world."- Anne Frank

Thank you for helping to improve our world.

## **Meadows**

A busy year for our branch, with many new customers coming on board, making our round lengthy and long. Our customers are most appreciative of our service!

Our volunteer team has seen some changes recently. We deeply miss our Chairperson, Raelene, who faced her battle with cancer with incredible courage and grace. Additionally, we've had some volunteers retire due to health reasons, which has placed extra demands on our dedicated, long-serving team.

However, we've had productive and encouraging discussions with our Branch Support Officer, Jason Webb and General Manager Service Operations, Julie Bonnici about the future of our branch.

Despite fluctuations in customer numbers, currently around 70 meals are sent out each week. We're pleased to have a reliable partnership with the Meals on Wheels Hilton kitchen facility, which now supplies all our frozen meals, including those for special diets.

We enjoyed a pleasant Christmas Dinner together and delivered Easter goodies and Christmas hampers to our customers.

## **Millicent**

In the last 12 months our branch have been actively canvassing for volunteers to work in the office. This has been very successful with 7 new volunteers coming on board to support our existing administration helpers. This now gives us a healthy roster of volunteers, which means our office is still covered even in time of holidays or illness.

We are also fortunate to have enough drivers and deliverers to enable us to have two rounds daily, servicing approximately 25-30 customers.

Our district has had Meals on Wheels operating in the area for 54 years. In all this time the meals have been cooked by our local hospital kitchen, and we are extremely grateful for this.

We are very fortunate to have a great team of volunteers and our local hospital kitchen who continue to support our community.

## **Minlaton**

Minlaton is a close knit band of 16 volunteers, who generally only meet for our Annual General Meeting in November. Our meals continue to be provided by the Melaleuca Aged Care Facility and are enjoyed by our 6 customers.

Recently, a morning tea was held at which several volunteers received awards to celebrate their years of service.

We are looking forward to our Christmas Lunch, which is to be held in November.

## **Mitcham**

To commemorate the upcoming 70 year anniversary of Meals on Wheels we were privileged to have Channel 7 film a News Flashback Report which showed how Meals on Wheels has proved to be vital for many South Australians over the years.

## Meals on Wheels SA

Featuring old footage from how we began from humble beginnings in 1954 at Port Adelaide founded by Doris Taylor, and starring John Stribley who was on our Branch Committee for 20 years and is now getting his meals delivered by us, as well as Judy Stone, a volunteer for over 40 years. Judy told 7 News how for some people we are their only contact during the day and how important a friendly chat and smile can be.

Our branch is delivering approximately 700 hot meals - as well as 110 frozen meals - per week and we continue to develop and streamline our processes. This includes an emphasis on health and safety both in the kitchen and making sure that deliverers are very careful to supply the correct meals, especially to our customers with any allergies or special meal requirements. We have developed a system using a highlighted ALERT on the customer list, which we are pleased to say is working very well.

We often have customers and their relatives comment on the peace of mind they feel with the follow up phone call that they or their relatives receive if they do not answer the door for any reason when their meal is delivered. They have expressed how they feel safer that someone is checking up on them to see if they are ok.

As with any organisation, our volunteer and customer numbers have experienced some natural fluctuations due to ageing, with some volunteers retiring or moving on and long-term customers transitioning into aged care or passing away. Notably, we have recently bid farewell to Silke Danner, our Volunteer Coordinator for over six years, and Steve Jenkins, our Head Chef. We are deeply grateful for their dedicated service. However, we are pleased to report that we continue to attract new customers and volunteers, which has helped maintain a steady balance throughout the year.

On a positive note, Andrew Cameron has stepped into the role of Branch Coordinator. His diverse skill set has been invaluable this past year, particularly in overseeing kitchen operations, ensuring compliance with health standards, and spearheading new green initiatives to reduce plastic waste and protect the environment.

Thank you Andrew for ensuring everything runs smoothly.

We are also looking to start a new tradition by implementing a lunch for all volunteers to celebrate at the end of the year, so all in all its been a year of progressive changes implemented to reflect the new health and safety requirements and improve procedures that are already in place.

A big thanks to all our staff and volunteers for the work you put in!

## Modbury

Time has just seemed to fly by but it has seen big changes for the Modbury branch - introducing a Branch Coordinator, new kitchen production sheets and new driver/deliver sheets, along with a few new procedures in administration and the kitchen. With these changes came some challenges however, we have worked through these and as a team our branch has grown.

Throughout the year we have seen a few of our valued volunteers retire. One of our long standing, committed volunteers who retired this year also celebrated their 50 years of service. The perfect achievement and time to retire! We celebrated this huge achievement with coffee and cake along with a visit from a member of the Tea Tree Gully Council.

Our customer base is increasing. We are not too far off from having to introduce an eighth round!

We would like to extend a big thank you to all of our committed volunteers at the branch - you all do such an amazing job. We also send our thanks to the Branch Support Officers for their ongoing support.

## Mount Gambier

There's a buzz of activity and new faces at the branch here in Mount Gambier. We have welcomed a new Kitchen Coordinator, Michelle Coad and we also have a brand new Branch Coordinator, Taylah Tranter. Taylah comes to us with 10 years' experience as a chef at just 26 years old.

We have seen an increase in both volunteer and customer numbers this year. We currently have 165 volunteers across our branch and our customer numbers have increased this year to 209, most of whom are having fresh hot meals daily. We would like to make a special mention to our volunteers Ella and Lyn who have achieved an amazing milestone of 40 years of service this year.

Our heartfelt gratitude goes out to all of our amazing volunteers – and a special thanks to Rose, who works tirelessly as our Delivery Coordinator.

## **Murray Bridge**

Our branch has achieved 54 years of meal deliveries this year, thanks to our wonderful volunteers. We also achieved a major milestone of 1 million meals delivered! In total, we have delivered 13,091 hot meals and 245 frozen meals for the year.

We currently have 120 volunteers, although we are always on the hunt for more! Meals are delivered to approximately 70 customers per day over 5 routes, with volunteers travelling an average of 65km.

We held both our Annual General Meeting and awards afternoon tea in August and the Christmas afternoon tea in December at the Murray Bridge Greyhound Club – it was a great venue and the food and atmosphere was enjoyed by the many volunteers who attended.

Notable moments this year include local Federal Member for Barker, Tony Pasin MP accompanying volunteers on a meal delivery to celebrate National Meals on Wheels Day, and Customer Services Coordinator and Treasurer, Sandra Walding being named Rural City of Murray Bridge's Citizen of the Year for 2024 on Australia Day. A well deserved recognition.

We thank Committee member Maureen Klau raising \$340.00 for the branch through Rotary calendar sales and the Lions Club of Murray Bridge for donating their delicious Christmas cakes for the past 19 years.

Our thanks to the Murray Bridge Soldiers' Memorial Hospital for their wonderful meal preparation, and the Hospital Maintenance Department for trolley repairs, electrical equipment tagging/testing, upgrading signage, fixing potholes etc.

Thank you again to all of our volunteers - particularly the committee members for all that they do for our Murray Bridge branch.

## **Naracoorte**

Another year has come and gone, and our customer numbers have remained steady, with some transitioning out and new ones joining us. We said goodbye to our valued Branch Support Officer, Sue who will be missed.

This year, every customer received a festive Christmas cake and a box of chocolates as a holiday treat.

In May, we hosted a delightful morning tea for our volunteers at the local RSL Bowling Club, celebrating their hard work and dedication.

We look forward to continuing to serve our local community with the same commitment and enthusiasm in the coming year.

## **Norwood**

At Christmas our customers were given a small gift along with a Christmas card made by students from Pulteney Grammar School. We also held a Christmas lunch for the volunteers in late November at a local hotel.

At Easter time we decided for the first time to give something other than food to customers. We had coasters made with the name and phone number of our kitchen and a little car delivering motif – a delightful and useful thing to have!

## **Peterborough**

This year was a busy one for the Peterborough branch.

In September, the branch fielded a team at the Hospital Auxiliary Quiz Night. Our team came a close runner-up in the quiz and took out first prize in a competition to build the tallest free-standing spaghetti tower. Also in September, committee members participated in the inaugural 'Chat and Connect' Volunteer Drive in a bid to attract new volunteers.

Thanks to all our volunteers with a special mention to those who have taken on extra deliveries as many volunteers have been travelling to make up for lost time over the last few years.

Special thanks also to our Branch Support Officer, Jason Webb as well as the other staff who have supported us over the year.

### **Onkaparinga Valley**

The Onkaparinga Valley branch continue to supply meals to our customers in Woodside, Lobethal, Balhannah, Lenswood, Gumeracha and surrounding areas. The numbers are increasing especially for those who are supplied with frozen meals. However, it is not only the meals that we provide but also the daily contact which enriches the lives of our customers.

We held a very successful lunch at the Balhannah Hotel for our wonderful volunteers. This was a small way to show our appreciation to our dedicated volunteers. It was a special day as we celebrated 45 years of service with Mrs Kay Joyce, an original volunteer of the Onkaparinga Valley branch cutting our beautiful cake.

At Christmas time we presented all of our customers with a basket of goodies. This was made possible through the generous donations from local businesses, various clubs and members of our community. Everyone was very appreciative of this gift.

The branch also participated in the annual Christmas pageant held in Woodside. The decorated vintage truck highlighted and promoted the organisation to many hundreds of spectators – we use any opportunity we can to attract more volunteers!

In December, we welcomed Meals on Wheels President, Mr Kevin Reid to our branch committee meeting. Afterwards, Mr Reid accompanied volunteers on a meal delivery run and then joined us for our annual Christmas lunch at The Railway Hotel.

Volunteers and life members came together again in May for a mid-year lunch to celebrate Volunteers Week and to mark Meals on Wheels SA's 70th birthday.

We are very much looking forward to 2025 – our 50th year of delivering meals in Peterborough.

### **Playford**

We have overcome many challenges during the year which is a testament to the commitment of our volunteers. Again, we have been able to provide a good level of service to our customers, who appreciate our efforts.

We have had fluctuations in customer numbers during the year, decreasing from 240 to 219. Our volunteer numbers have decreased from 58 to 55 during the last year.

Our Branch Support Officer, Stephen Whaley has provided excellent support and guidance throughout the year.

### **Port Lincoln**

Port Lincoln branch have had an increase in customers recently, now delivering to 101 customers and an average of 300 meals per week. Over the year, we have delivered a total of 14,023 hot meals and 831 frozen meals.

At Christmas we were delighted to provide our customers with small Christmas puddings and iced Christmas cakes.

Our Christmas party was held at the Northern Hotel with an attendance of 33 volunteers. We sadly said goodbye to Irma Jensen after nearly 51 years of service, although retirement is well deserved after such outstanding service!

Thank you to the Port Lincoln Hospital service staff and to our 56 dedicated volunteers for another wonderful year.

## Prospect

At Prospect branch, like all branches, we've experienced a flow of customers as new ones join and others transition out.

The committee was pleased to welcome new volunteers over the past year and they have become valuable members of our team. We are thankful for our volunteers who are always willing to pick up an extra kitchen duty or delivery day thus enabling us to meet our customers' needs.

Our combined awards presentation and Christmas luncheon was again well attended, with 60% of our volunteers present. Our sausage sizzle for Volunteers Week also proved very popular, and we were blessed with fine weather. During another special outing a group of volunteers enjoyed a tour of Parliament House with our guide, Member for Adelaide Lucy Hood MP, who also volunteers regularly on a Friday. These activities enable volunteers from kitchen staff and the delivery teams to meet and form friendships.

We look forward to meeting any challenges the coming year may bring, and overcoming them as a team!

## Port Adelaide Osborne

Port Adelaide Osborne went through a period of change this year with numerous new volunteers and a new Branch Coordinator enabling us to have a full roster of volunteers for the kitchen, deliveries and in the office every day.

We celebrated a 25 year service milestone for Pam Fidock which also served as her farewell as she entered into retirement. We also had Judith Hunter, who had recently retired after volunteering for 55 years, make the King's Birthday Honours List for 2024.

## Salisbury

We begin our report by honouring Judy Oates, who dedicated 15 years as Chair of Salisbury and contributed to numerous Central Office committees. Although she retired at our last Annual General Meeting, her unexpected passing on September 6th was a profound loss. Judy's memory and the impact she made will always be cherished by everyone who had the privilege of knowing her.

The past 12 months has been very busy, with Salisbury branch delivering meals to 340 customers. We deliver on average 850 hot meals a week and 170 frozen meals. Thanks to our volunteers, committee and staff for rising to the challenge!

We have been lucky to welcome a number of new volunteers to our team this year, taking our total volunteer number to 100.

In the lead up to Christmas we delivered close to 1,500 frozen meals. Christmas hampers were also delivered to our customers, thanks to a community grant from The City of Salisbury. These included handmade placemats donated by the Salisbury Stitches group and several of our volunteers. The Christmas cards by school students were warmly received.

Christmas lunch was well attended by 80 volunteers and guests, with Kim Oates, Judy's daughter, handing out the Salisbury years of service awards.

A number of door prizes, donated by businesses and individuals were handed out, which included all volunteers in the draw, to acknowledge everybody's contribution to the branch.

## Stansbury

This past year at our branch has been steady, with a manageable number of customers and our weekly delivery of frozen meals running smoothly. Although we continue to encounter some of the same challenges as before, we're focused on maintaining high-quality service and addressing the issue of meal variety as best we can.

We are grateful for our dedicated deliverers who consistently step up throughout the year, especially during colder months when some volunteers are away. Our Volunteer Coordinator's careful scheduling plays a key role in keeping things organised.

A big thank you to our committee members for their ongoing efforts to ensure everything runs smoothly. Our Customer Services Coordinator excels in liaising with both customers and deliverers, and our Chair has taken on the crucial task of managing meal variety and stock control, navigating these challenges with dedication.

### **Stirling**

Stirling has had a great year, with customer numbers remaining steady and volunteer engagement consistently strong. We are always enthusiastic about welcoming new volunteers to join our team.

We are especially grateful for the support from the Stirling Op Shop and Stirling Markets. Their generous contributions enabled us to provide delightful gifts to our customers for Christmas and Easter.

A heartfelt thank you goes to our Branch Support Officer, Peter Paues, and our Branch Coordinator, Garry Webster, for their exceptional support throughout the year.

### **Tumby Bay**

Tumby Bay branch delivered 6,395 meals this financial year, making it 256,534 meals delivered since inception. Our public holiday hot meal delivery is going well and is much appreciated.

Once again the hospitality students at the local school hosted a lunch for our customers as part of their course and the interaction of diverse age groups was great to see.

We hosted a Christmas in July lunch for our volunteers which was sponsored by our local Foodland Community Chest donation and it was greatly enjoyed by all, and a Christmas lunch later in the year when we presented the service awards.

Once again we had to search for new office space, but thanks to the generosity of our local pharmacy, we now have a secure site.

We are lucky to have some new volunteers on board to replace those leaving us, and customer numbers have fluctuated somewhat over the last few months but we are still going strong.

### **Two Wells**

Two Wells branch has had an interesting year, but it has all been a great adventure.

We purchased a new big glass two door freezer, which has been wonderful. We also had a problem with the power being turned off and losing all our meals, but we overcame that challenge.

The Two Wells branch exclusively delivers frozen meals, which are given to our customers in Two Wells, Lewiston, Mallala and Korunye every Friday morning. It works well and all our customers are always happy to see us. We now have 15 volunteers, with 4 couples working together.

Although we've seen a few customers move on, we've also welcomed many new ones, keeping our numbers steady.

We've addressed some meal-related issues, and after a productive meeting at our new "office" at Bella Mia Cafe in Two Wells, we're confident that most of these challenges have been resolved.

We held our Annual General Meeting in November at the Community Centre's meeting room where our freezer is housed. At Christmas we were again able to give our wonderful customers a Christmas Hamper – with Maria Pellizzari once again making her special Christmas cakes for each customer. It was also filled with a lot of other goodies, packed by Christobel Crabb and Bec O'Brien. Adelaide Plains Council offered the volunteers coffee vouchers, and special thanks to our Secretary Ann Stodart for organising our coffee morning at Bella Mia.

In February, we held a meeting to welcome a new volunteer, and though circumstances meant we couldn't continue as planned, we were grateful for the opportunity to reconnect with one of our very special volunteers who, unfortunately, passed away unexpectedly just two days later. We cherish the time we had with her and are thankful for the chance to have caught up during that meeting.

In March we all ventured to the Lord Lyndoch Hotel for a very enjoyable social gathering. We have a few volunteers that have achieved a milestone service record; Lorraine Goss, Helen Gameau, Judi Frost, Pamela Duncan and David Stodart. Thank you to these long serving volunteers, as well as all of our volunteers who do a fantastic job. We would like to especially thank Ann Stodart, Rosa Settimio and Judi Frost who work together to make the Two Wells Branch run smoothly.

Particular mention must go to Maria and Denis Pellizzari who were Citizens of the Year for the Adelaide Plains Council and then went on to represent South Australia – what an incredible achievement for two very special Meals on Wheels volunteers and members of the community.

## **Victor Harbor**

Another year has flown by at Victor Harbor, and while we've faced some challenges, we've also seen remarkable growth and resilience.

At the start of the year, we said farewell to two of our valued volunteers due to health concerns. Their presence is greatly missed, both as friends and dedicated team members. Our Branch Coordinator, Jill, also had to step down for health reasons, and we welcomed Guni as her replacement in mid-January.

Despite experiencing a rise in customer numbers and a decrease in volunteers, the Victor Harbor team continues to provide top-notch service to our customers. Our volunteers are truly going above and beyond to ensure everything runs smoothly.

Additionally, our volunteers have introduced a new morale-boosting initiative called "Liquid Therapy," a monthly peer support gathering that has been a great success.

## **Waikerie**

Waikerie has been bustling with activity, managing a varying number of customers and a recent decrease in the number of cooks. We've seen some retirements and relocations among our cooks, but we've also made strides by attracting a few new team members through local media coverage. As we anticipate more retirements, we're excited to welcome additional volunteers to join our team.

We celebrated the festive season with a successful Christmas lunch at the local club, and our customers were touched by the felt poppies made by a volunteer for ANZAC Day. The hampers we provided at Christmas were also greatly appreciated.

We are incredibly proud of the exceptional work our volunteers do to support our customers and the community. Their dedication truly makes a difference.

## **Warradale**

The Warradale branch continues in delivering high-quality, fresh hot meals to 200 satisfied customers. Under the leadership of our dedicated Volunteer Coordinators, led by Mary Smith, we're actively seeking additional support in both the kitchen and as drivers and deliverers.

Our kitchen renovation is nearing completion, bringing exciting enhancements that will provide our volunteers with the reliable equipment they need for their daily tasks.

In alignment with Meals on Wheels guidelines, we will shift our focus from providing our customers with food gifts for Father's Day, Mother's Day, and Easter to instead creating substantial, user-friendly Christmas packages for their homes, generously supported by our Social Club Account.

Our branch administration, kitchen volunteers, drivers, deliverers, and committee are all working together seamlessly, united in our commitment to enhancing the well-being of our customers.



Meals on Wheels extends heartfelt thanks to the organisations and individuals whose generous donations and support have sustained us throughout the year.

A special thank you to our dedicated volunteers for their invaluable contributions in the kitchen, on deliveries, in the office, and through our social support and new initiatives.  
Your generosity and hard work are deeply appreciated.

**Meals on Wheels (SA) Inc.**

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