MEALS ON WHEELS

South Australia

2025/2026 Branch Report



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.

Ardrossan

The Ardrossan Branch continues to enjoy steady numbers, with 14 customers and 50 volunteers. Volunteer vacancies are generally filled quickly, reflecting the strong level of support within the local community.

Meals continue to be supplied by Walara Ardrossan Seaview Nursing Home, formerly Ardrossan Community Hospital, and we value the ongoing support of the kitchen team.

Our volunteers usually collect a key to access the branch rooms, where delivery boxes and other equipment are stored, from the Ardrossan Information Centre. We are grateful to the Information Centre staff for their assistance, as well as the local Post Office team, who help by delivering rosters to volunteers who don't have access to email.

In September, Jeanne Alderman and Wendy King represented the branch at the 2025 Meals on Wheels SA Volunteer Conference. It was a valuable opportunity to meet volunteers from other branches, share experiences and compare notes about the work we do.

At the end of May, most of our volunteers came together for a luncheon at the Brew and Bite Hotel in Maitland to celebrate 70 years of Meals on Wheels. The occasion also provided an opportunity to recognise our volunteers through the presentation of service awards and enjoy some well-deserved time together.

Barossa Valley

The Barossa Valley branch has continued to see growth in both hot meal deliveries and its fortnightly frozen meal service, with frozen meals now making up around 40% of the branch's annual deliveries. We also welcomed new volunteers to help with frozen meal deliveries across the Williamstown and Lyndoch areas, strengthening our ability to meet this growing demand.

When Barossa Village's hot meal delivery service ended at short notice on 1 July 2025, the branch responded quickly to support customers through the transition. Customers were able to move across to either our hot or frozen meal services, helping to ensure they continued to have access to regular meals with minimal disruption.

Refresher training was completed by 120 of our 150 active volunteers across two sessions. These were held alongside the Annual Volunteer Award event in October 2025 and at a dedicated session in May 2026, providing a useful opportunity for volunteers to refresh their knowledge and connect with each other.

We continue to enjoy a strong working relationship with Lutheran Homes Barossa's Tanunda kitchen, which receives, stores, heats and packs our Cook Chill meals. The branch also has a dedicated room for volunteers to store and prepare frozen meals ahead of the fortnightly delivery rounds, helping to keep this growing part of the service running smoothly.

Blackwood

This year, the Blackwood branch proudly celebrated its 34th birthday. Throughout the year, we also held a number of events, beginning with our AGM and Awards Ceremony in November. At this event, Jenny Byrne was recognised for 30 years of dedicated service, while Margaret Arnold and Cheryl Gray were recognised for an outstanding 35 years. We also farewelled Anneke Jeffriess after 22 years of commitment to the branch and thank her sincerely for her many years of valued contribution.

In March, we held our annual Birthday BBQ, which was attended by almost 50 volunteers. We also celebrated Volunteers Day with a delicious homemade soup lunch at the branch. Nearly 40 volunteers attended and enjoyed a wonderful variety of soups, all superbly organised by our hardworking Social Committee. We are extremely grateful to the committee for the time and effort they put into planning and delivering so many successful events throughout the year.

The Social Committee once again prepared thoughtfully curated hampers for our customers, which were warmly received and greatly appreciated. Each hamper included a calendar, hand cream, socks and a piece of Lions Christmas cake.

A heartfelt thank you to all of our wonderful volunteers for the commitment and care you continue to show our customers. Your willingness to go above and beyond is greatly appreciated and helps make the Blackwood branch such a strong part of the community.

Brighton

The Brighton branch has faced some challenges with volunteer numbers this year, with seven kitchen volunteers retiring. This has placed additional pressure and stress on our daily kitchen team, who continue to work hard to keep everything running and ensure meals are prepared and sent out on time.

We currently have 203 active customers, including 12 who recently transferred to our frozen meal service from Marion Council. The branch sends out approximately 628 meals each week, including fresh, frozen and special meals, although numbers naturally fluctuate on a regular basis.

Our kitchen team deserves special recognition for their tireless efforts, particularly while working with limited volunteer resources. We also appreciate the ongoing support of Branch Support Officer Shannon Chappell, who has been a stalwart since joining Meals on Wheels and is always willing to lend a hand wherever needed.

In October 2025, we held our Annual Awards Luncheon at the Morphett Arms Hotel. A number of service awards were presented, and volunteers enjoyed a delicious three-course meal together. It was a lovely opportunity to recognise the contribution of our volunteers and enjoy some well-deserved time together.

Burnside

The past 12 months have been another rewarding year for the Burnside branch. Our dedicated volunteers have continued to provide regular meal deliveries and friendly visits to people in our local community, with every delivery offering more than just a meal. It is also an opportunity to have a chat, check in with our customers and help them stay connected.

Throughout the year, our volunteers have worked together to maintain a reliable and caring service, and we are very proud of the commitment and generosity they continue to show. Their willingness to give their time and support others is a wonderful reflection of the community spirit within the Burnside branch.

Thank you to all our customers, volunteers and supporters for their ongoing encouragement. We look forward to another year of working together and supporting our local community.

Burra

The Burra branch has had a quiet but successful year, with a reliable team of volunteers ensuring our service continues to run smoothly. We have sufficient volunteers to cover our deliveries, with most volunteers only needing to deliver around once a month.

We welcomed several new customers during the year, although we also farewelled a few. One of those farewells was particularly poignant, as we said goodbye to a customer who had previously volunteered with Meals on Wheels for many years before becoming a customer.

Our meals are supplied by the Hilton Cook Chill Facility fortnightly and heated by our volunteers before delivery. Three of our customers receive frozen meals each week.

Two have busy social lives and appreciate the flexibility of not needing to be home at a particular time, while another lives around 30 kilometres away and collects his meals when he comes into town to shop. Our remaining customers receive between three and five meals each week.

We held our AGM in September, followed by a luncheon for our volunteers.

At Christmas, all volunteers and customers received a small voucher for the local supermarket, which was a simple but appreciated way of acknowledging the contribution of our volunteers and showing our customers they were being thought of.

One ongoing challenge has been our freezer. Although it is only three years old, it has unfortunately broken down around September/October every year since it was purchased. While this has become a frustratingly familiar occurrence, our volunteers continue to work through the issue to ensure our customers receive the meals they rely on.

Campbelltown

The Campbelltown branch continues to provide a busy and valued service to our community, delivering an average of 534 hot meals and 159 frozen meals each week. We currently have 196 active customers, with a further 40 customers temporarily on hold for a range of reasons, including hospital stays, illness or being away.

New customers continue to join the service regularly, but may be short term if they find the service doesn't suit their needs. As a result, customer numbers can fluctuate throughout the year.

Volunteer numbers have reduced to 74, with ageing and health issues contributing to the decline. This has left us short of volunteers across administration, the kitchen and delivery, putting additional pressure on the team. We are grateful to those who continue to step in and help where they can.

A special thank you goes to volunteer Heather Ings, who organised our Christmas dinner at the Alma Tavern, attended by 25 volunteers. Service awards were also presented throughout the Christmas period, with each volunteer recognised on their rostered day alongside the other volunteers working that day.

At Christmas, our customers received placemats and Christmas cards, a simple gesture that was warmly appreciated.

The branch also made an important improvement to the kitchen ahead of the SA Health audit. Following the suggestion of Brenton Dawkins, Branch Food Safety Coordinator, the existing splashback was replaced with stainless steel. The volunteers were very happy with the result, which has made the kitchen easier to maintain and keep clean.

Charles Sturt

Once again, the kitchen has had a very busy year. Like many branches, we continue to face the ongoing challenge of maintaining enough volunteers, but our team continues to pull together to keep things running.

At the end of January, the committee decided to establish a social club for the benefit of our hardworking volunteers.

Since then, the committee has held two successful fundraising events, both of which raised a very pleasing amount. We would also like to thank the non-committee members who generously gave their time to help with these events. Their support was greatly appreciated.

The funds raised will be used for the benefit of our volunteers, including the Christmas meal and awards night, as well as other functions throughout the year.

As usual at this time of year, a number of our kitchen staff, drivers and deliverers head north on their annual pilgrimage in search of warmer climates. Those who remain at the kitchen are always willing to take on extra shifts to ensure the meals continue to go out the door.

Once again, we have farewelled some long-serving members of our team due to illness and retirement. They are greatly missed, and we extend our very best wishes to them as they move into the next chapter.

Christies Beach

Another year has passed, with our valued volunteers continuing to prepare and deliver fresh, hot meals to our customers. On our busiest days, almost 300 fresh meals are delivered, in addition to our frozen meals. We currently have approximately 430 customers who continue to value and appreciate the service provided by our team.

In October, we held a Volunteer Lunch for around 80 volunteers, with Julie Bonnici, General Manager Service Operations, joining us to present the awards. It was a great opportunity to recognise the commitment of our volunteers and thank them for a job well done.

Earlier in the year, one of our volunteers of more than 50 years, Kay Wickes, was recognised by the City of Onkaparinga for her outstanding contribution to volunteering. Our Treasurer, Peter Whiting, was also recognised with an OAM for his incredible contribution to Meals on Wheels and the wider community. Both achievements are a wonderful reflection of the commitment and generosity of people within our branch.

Looking ahead, plans are underway for a long-awaited extension to the branch in 2027. The improvements will include additional fridge and freezer space, which will be a welcome addition and an exciting step forward for the branch.

Clare

Clare branch celebrated its 55th birthday last August with an enjoyable afternoon tea attended by 60 current and former volunteers. It was a lovely opportunity to reflect on the branch's history and catch up with people who have been part of its journey over the years.

Our popular Volunteer "Thank You" Dinner and Awards Presentation was held at the Clare Bowling Club in October.

A delicious meal and relaxed atmosphere made it a great opportunity for volunteers to get to know others across the branch while celebrating their contribution.

At Christmas, our customers received thoughtful hampers which included a meal voucher for a local hotel or café, a large-print calendar, soap bags containing a cake of soap made by our Treasurer, hand wash donated by Woolworths, and a portion of Lions Christmas cake kindly donated by the Clare Lions group. The hampers were warmly appreciated by our customers.

During National Volunteers Week, we held an afternoon tea to celebrate volunteering and give our volunteers the opportunity to know just how much their contribution is valued by the branch, our customers and the wider community.

We currently have 61 volunteers, with meals delivered to 24 customers and a further five customers receiving frozen meals.

Copper Coast

On Australia Day this year, the Copper Coast branch was honoured to receive the Community Organisation of the Year Award. Mayor Roslyn Talbot presented the award at the Australia Day breakfast at the Wallaroo Town Hall. This was a significant recognition for the branch and was greatly appreciated by volunteers from Kadina, Wallaroo and Moonta.

Compliments continue to come through regarding the quality and prompt delivery of meals, which is always pleasing to hear. Our traditional presentation lunch was once again a highlight, with a large number of volunteers receiving certificates and badges in recognition of their service. The event provides an important opportunity for volunteers from Kadina, Wallaroo and Moonta to come together, share their experiences and celebrate the contribution of their fellow volunteers. Our traditional afternoon tea at the Wallaroo Community Sports Centre was also well attended.

To our committee members and volunteers across Kadina, Wallaroo and Moonta, thank you for your ongoing support, commitment and enthusiasm. Your contribution is greatly valued and continues to underpin the service we provide to our community.

We also acknowledge the cheerful assistance of our Regional Branch Support Officer, Joanne Cameron. Jo continues to provide valuable guidance and support across all aspects of our operations, and we are very grateful for her contribution throughout the year.

Cowell

The 2025/26 year has come and gone, and the Cowell branch is pleased to report another successful year, supported by the outstanding continued commitment of its dedicated volunteers.

During the year, a number of new volunteers joined the team, providing some healthy renewal for the branch.

A core group of more than 40 volunteers is a real credit to the local community and demonstrates Cowell's strong culture of community self-help.

Customer numbers have increased compared with previous years, but this growth has been comfortably managed with the much-valued partnership of the Cowell Hospital kitchen staff. Their support continues to be an important part of the local service.

The 2025 Christmas dinner at the Commercial Hotel was very well attended and provided a great opportunity to come together and celebrate the people who make Meals on Wheels happen at a local level. The branch appreciates the ongoing support from Central Office in making this important get-together possible. Congratulations to Coral Wiseman and Louise Klingberg, who received their very well-deserved 40-year service awards at the dinner - an outstanding achievement.

A big thank you to all committee members, office holders and volunteers for their support throughout the year. Their contribution is valued, and the branch looks forward to continuing to support the local community in the year ahead.

Crystal Brook

Crystal Brook branch celebrated its 55th birthday this year, combining the occasion with our Awardees Day. The CWA kindly catered the lunch, making it a wonderful opportunity to celebrate the branch's history and recognise the dedication of its volunteers. A special congratulations goes to Mrs Pat Worden, who has reached an incredible 55 years as a volunteer deliverer. Many other volunteers have also reached impressive milestones, with 20, 25 and 30 years of service being recognised. All deliverers received a box of chocolates as a small thank you for their ongoing contribution.

In May, volunteers came together for a lunch at the Crystal Brook Golf Club. It was a chance to enjoy some time together and acknowledge the dedication of those who continue to willingly fill the roster and support the branch.

Customer numbers have fluctuated throughout the year, ranging from 8 to 12, with volunteers continuing to provide a friendly and reliable service to those in the local community.

Cummins

The Cummins branch held its Annual General Meeting in October 2025, with all committee positions successfully filled. Attendees enjoyed morning tea together and celebrated seven volunteers reaching service milestones: Leanne Jericho for 20 years; Claire Holman and Rodney Nagle for 15 years; Cheryl Osman for 10 years; and Tammy Dunbar, Liz Mickan and Lisa Richardson for 5 years. Guest speaker Jodi Mickan, a local resident who recently completed the Kokoda Trail, also shared her experiences with those attending.

In March 2026, the branch celebrated its 50th anniversary with a luncheon at the Cummins Hotel, attended by 48 past and present volunteers and supporters. The occasion included placemats featuring a history of the branch, along with a display of photographs and newspaper cuttings. Two committee members also visited the Cummins Hospital to present the kitchen staff with a Certificate of Appreciation, recognising the nutritious meals they have prepared for the branch over the past 50 years.

The branch currently supports approximately 20 customers, with the assistance of 63 rostered volunteers and 7 emergency volunteers. Through the social fund, the branch has also been able to support a number of local organisations, including the Cummins Trishaw, Hospital and Miroma Hostel.

At Christmas, each customer receives a Christmas cake kindly provided by the local Lions Club. In recent years, new customers have also received a handmade placemat as part of their Christmas delivery, adding a personal touch to the occasion.

Edwardstown

The Edwardstown branch began the financial year with the installation of a Street Library outside the kitchen. It has been great to see locals making use of it, both borrowing and donating books, and we are fortunate to have no shortage of reading material.

At the end of November, volunteers came together at the Avoca Hotel for an end-of-year function, combining the Christmas celebration with the annual awards presentation. Those attending enjoyed a lovely two-course lunch. MoWSA Board Member Justina Gardiner attended on behalf of Central Office and the Board, speaking to the group as well as taking the time to chat with each individual volunteer. It was a great opportunity to meet her and spend time together.

Three volunteers also attended parts of the National Conference held in Adelaide, taking the opportunity to learn from the presenters and share experiences with volunteers from interstate.

This year, we would particularly like to acknowledge the Edwardstown Rotary Club, which has provided a driver to our kitchen every Thursday for an incredible 65 years. A significant number of Rotarians have contributed over this time, and their long-standing support is very much appreciated.

Enfield

The Enfield branch has experienced a number of volunteer retirements over the past year, making it increasingly challenging to cover driving, delivery and kitchen duties. Fortunately, our dedicated volunteers have continued to step in and fill the gaps where needed, while Central Office is also working to help recruit new volunteers for the branch.

In November 2025, we held a successful sausage sizzle at Bunnings Kilburn, raising a net $1,370. This was a fantastic result and has already allowed us to purchase some items for next year's customer Christmas hampers, including lovely velour lap rugs purchased for just $6 from Choice Discount Store (formerly Cheap as Chips).

Our Christmas lunch was again held at the RSL Kilburn, providing volunteers with an enjoyable and relaxed opportunity to come together and celebrate the year.

The branch has also benefited from several equipment upgrades, including new fridges to replace the three-door unit, new freezers to replace a large and ageing freezer, and a replacement mixer.

Unfortunately, the gas hot water service also had to be replaced following vandalism, which resulted in the kitchen being out of action for three days. Despite these challenges, the branch continues to adapt and keep things moving.

Gawler

The Gawler branch held its Christmas event at Fasta Pasta, managed by the daughter of one of our kitchen volunteers. It was a great opportunity for volunteers to come together, enjoy a meal and celebrate the year, with service awards also presented on the day.

There has been some turnover among kitchen volunteers during the year, but the team has continued to work together to ensure meals are prepared and delivered on schedule. The branch currently delivers approximately 365 hot meals and 104 frozen meals each week with the support of 63 volunteers.

Our volunteers are a wonderful, reliable and committed group. There are currently no permanent vacancies, although new volunteers are always welcome to join the team in an emergency capacity with a view to join the permanent roster as opportunities arise.

The branch continues to be well supported by Branch Support Officers Kirrily Banks and Stephen Whaley, along with Branch Coordinator Bill Russell.

The Gawler team are a pleasure to work with, and the commitment and contribution of our volunteers is greatly appreciated. There are, of course, a few Port Power supporters among them, but we won't dwell on that!

Gilbert Valley

The Gilbert Valley branch held its AGM and Luncheon in August for committee members, volunteer drivers and life members, with the event catered by the Auburn Bowls Club. Service milestones were also recognised, with certificates and badges presented to volunteers celebrating their years of service. A special congratulations goes to Maxine Allen, Mary Byrne and Kay Lambert, who each reached an incredible 40 years of service.

Customer numbers have varied throughout the year, with the branch currently providing four fresh meal deliveries in Riverton and two fortnightly frozen deliveries to customers in Rhynie and Auburn.

The branch has approximately 90 volunteers on its monthly roster, providing a strong base of support for the service. Volunteers came together for a Christmas luncheon at the Riverton Bowling Club in December, which was enjoyed by all who attended. Christmas hampers and gifts were also delivered to customers.

The branch met with Regional Branch Support Officer Jo Cameron during the year to work through some issues with hospital-prepared meals. As a result, homemade soups are now provided with all meals instead of packet soup with frozen deliveries, and the branch is also looking at expanding meal choice for customers. The face-to-face support has been greatly appreciated, with Jo providing prompt assistance whenever issues arise.

Glenelg

The Glenelg team continues to take pride in the meals they prepare each day and in the service they provide to the community.

As with many branches, recruiting kitchen volunteers remains a challenge, with many of our existing volunteers generously taking on extra days to cover leave and other absences. Their flexibility and willingness to help are greatly appreciated.

We are fortunate to have a great Branch Support Officer, Shannon Chappell, who is always helpful, informative and supportive, and a pleasure to work with.

Early in the year, the branch also needed a new Delivery Coordinator. Dean stepped into the role, bringing a range of work experience, including people management. He has reduced the roster rotation from monthly to fortnightly and introduced text messaging as the preferred way of communicating with delivery teams, which has worked extremely well.

Over the past year, we have also welcomed two deliverers with intellectual disabilities, who have been supported by their carers. It has been wonderful to provide them with an opportunity to genuinely contribute to a meaningful community service while also supporting their personal development.

Our mid-year lunch was another successful event. For the second year, we held it as a more informal 'not sit down' event, allowing volunteers to move around, catch up with familiar faces and enjoy each other's company.

Looking ahead, 2027 will mark the 50th anniversary of our Glenelg kitchen, which will be a wonderful milestone to celebrate.

Hallett Cove

In 2025/26, our team of 66 dedicated volunteers provided meals and friendly support to 127 customers across the community.

After more than 25 years of volunteering, Kaye August stepped down from her roles as Volunteer Coordinator and Kitchen Supervisor in January 2026.

Kaye left a huge hole at the branch, having provided invaluable leadership, support and commitment across both roles for so many years.

In February, we were pleased to welcome Ange Clissold as our new Volunteer Coordinator. After successfully ruffling a few feathers along the way, Ange has settled in extremely well and is managing the volunteer rosters with ease. She is also working to re-establish the branch committee and a social committee, with the aim of creating more opportunities for volunteers to get together and enjoy some social activities.

In the week before Christmas, our ever-popular Father Christmas, volunteer Andy Redden, once again made a surprise visit to customers, bringing plenty of smiles along the way.

Our Christmas lunch for volunteers was held at the Hallett Cove Hotel. Despite the sweltering 36-degree day, it was well attended and thoroughly deserved and enjoyed by everyone.

Happy Valley

Another successful year has been completed at Happy Valley, with the main challenge continuing to be the need for more volunteers to help keep the kitchen running efficiently. The branch has been fortunate to welcome some excellent new volunteers during the year.

Meals continue to be delivered to our many customers in an efficient and good-natured manner. A dedicated core group of volunteers regularly goes above and beyond what would normally be expected of them, stepping in to cover absences, vacancies and additional kitchen requirements. Their flexibility and commitment are greatly appreciated.

Across our eight runs, we deliver an average of 190 to 200 meals each day, with frozen meal numbers increasing.

The branch celebrated a number of volunteer service milestones during the year.

One volunteer reached 25 years of service, while another reached 15 years and qualified for Life Membership. A further 17 volunteers celebrated one year of service, four reached five years and five reached 10 years. Congratulations and thanks to all our volunteers for their current and future service.

We also thank our Branch Support Officers, Shannon Chappell and Irene Zitis, for their assistance throughout the year, and our Branch Coordinators, Michele and Tina, for their generous and ongoing commitment to the branch.

There were plenty of opportunities to come together socially, with two barbecues attracting more than 60 volunteers and partners each, as well as our Christmas lunch, which was attended by around 100 volunteers and partners.

At Christmas, all customers received an engraved pen, a small notebook and a small fruit cake as a gesture of appreciation.

Thank you also to our committee for their efforts throughout the year in supporting the smooth running of both the kitchen and our social activities.

The branch looks forward to continuing to provide an important service to the community throughout 2026/27.

Henley & Grange

On 18 March 2026, the Henley & Grange branch celebrated its 65th anniversary, marking an important milestone in the branch's long history of supporting the local community. A luncheon was held in November at La Vita Ristorante, attended by 70 volunteers, where certificates and awards recognising service milestones were presented. Eight volunteers reached five years of service and six reached 10 years, with Yvonne Corbyn recognised for 15 years, Peter Hendy and Sue Quinn for 20 years, and Ron Kneebone for an outstanding 45 years of service.

The Rotary Club of Henley Beach has also supported the branch for 60 years by providing a volunteer to assist with meal deliveries each week. This long-standing support is greatly appreciated.

The branch currently provides around 420 fresh cooked meals each week, down from more than 550 at the beginning of the year. This has been partly offset by approximately 100 frozen choice meals being provided each week. Around 550 frozen meals were also delivered to customers to cover the Christmas and New Year shutdown period. At Christmas, customers received a small hamper containing a calendar and an individual Lions cake, while cards are also provided throughout the year to celebrate customers' milestone birthdays.

Volunteers are rightly proud of the branch's 65 years of service to the community, providing both nourishing meals and a friendly connection to those who need them.

A special thank you goes to all volunteers, particularly the Branch Coordinators and their assistants who put in many hours to ensure the smooth running of the branch. We also extend our thanks to Branch Support Officer Kyle Wood for his ongoing assistance and support.

Hindmarsh

The Hindmarsh volunteers continue to enjoy their time at the branch despite the challenges they have faced throughout the year. They are a dedicated team who have celebrated some significant milestones, with one volunteer reaching 40 years of service and another 30 years. These achievements are a wonderful reflection of their dedication to the branch and how deeply they care for their community. A combined function was held earlier in the year to recognise these milestones and celebrate the Hindmarsh branch's 70th anniversary.

The kitchen has also seen a change in the balance between hot and frozen meals, with a number of customers now receiving bulk frozen meal deliveries from the Hilton Cook Chill Facility. The branch averages approximately 110 frozen meals each week, representing around one-third of its total meal numbers. A dedicated team of volunteers oversees these deliveries, while a number of customers continue to collect their meals from the kitchen. The branch is pleased to be able to offer these options and support customers in whatever way works best for them.

The branch went several months without a Branch Coordinator. During this period, a number of changes were made to help maintain the service and reduce pressure on volunteers. The kitchen transitioned from fresh cook to cook chill, while one delivery route was also transferred to the Prospect branch. These changes have helped ease the workload for the current volunteer team while ensuring customers continue to receive their meals.

The volunteers are excited to welcome Tracey Preiss as the new Branch Coordinator and look forward to working with her as the branch moves towards returning to full service.

The branch extends its immense gratitude to Branch Support Officer Kyle Wood for his support and guidance throughout this period of transition.

Jamestown

Last year, the Jamestown branch celebrated its 55th birthday alongside Volunteers Week with a special luncheon. There was plenty of conversation and laughter around the tables as volunteers enjoyed the opportunity to come together. One of the Jamestown branch founding members Joan Box had the honour of cutting the birthday cake, which was shared by everyone.

At Christmas, customers received a Lions Christmas cake accompanied by a handmade card, which was warmly appreciated.

The committee continues to meet every three months for a cuppa and a chat, providing an opportunity to keep in touch and discuss the branch.

Thanks to the support of our local hospital staff, the branch currently delivers around 50 meals each week to 15 customers, along with two frozen meals. With 38 volunteers and a further 20 emergency volunteers, the branch is very grateful for their ongoing support.

Kapunda Eudunda

Meals on Wheels continues to play an important role in the Kapunda and Eudunda communities, helping customers remain independent and living in their own homes.

Volunteer support has remained consistently strong throughout the year. The ongoing dedication of our volunteer delivery team, and their willingness to support the service when needed, is greatly valued.

Customer numbers have declined over the past 12 months, with a number of customers moving into care, while others who were receiving meals while recovering from illness have now returned to managing their own meals. Despite this change, the branch continues to provide a valued service to those who need it.

The branch continues to receive hot, three-course meals from the Kapunda Hospital kitchen, whose ongoing support remains essential to the service. Customers in both Kapunda and Eudunda also continue to receive frozen meals.

Throughout the year, several social gatherings were held for volunteers and customers. These occasions provided an opportunity to recognise the dedication of our volunteers, present service awards and strengthen the connections that are such an important part of the local community.

McLaren Vale

It has been another positive year for McLaren Vale, with volunteers continuing to deliver meals, build connections and support customers and the wider community.

Our amazing volunteers continue to support one another with flexibility, generosity and joy. The relationships they build with customers and each other are invaluable, and it has been particularly pleasing to see new volunteers embrace this same spirit.

The Driver's Fund has continued to give back to the local community, supporting shared lunches and morning teas, as well as contributing more than $3,500 to local community projects.

Under the Head Chef Matt's leadership, the McLaren Vale and Districts War Memorial Hospital kitchen continues to provide appetising and nutritious meals. New menus, customer feedback and careful consideration of varied needs are helping the team continue to improve the meal service.

A sincere thank you goes to our outstanding committee members for their time, dedication and care throughout the year.

As Coretta Scott King said, "The greatness of a community is most accurately measured by the compassionate actions of its members." Our volunteers demonstrate this through their everyday actions, and their compassion is greatly appreciated.

Minlaton

The past year has seen a decline in both customer and volunteer numbers. Customer numbers reached a high of nine during the year but have since fallen to two. The branch currently has nine volunteers, supported by two emergency volunteers, with two of our dedicated deliverers now in their nineties.

With a small volunteer team, some deliverers are stepping up to complete two, and occasionally three, deliveries each week. Their dedication is greatly appreciated, particularly as customers value not only the daily meal but also the friendly conversation and connection that comes with each weekday delivery.

At the end of last year, volunteers enjoyed a Christmas lunch together at the local café, providing a welcome opportunity to catch up and celebrate the year.

In June, the branch welcomed Jo Cameron, Regional Branch Support Manager, who provided an update on the latest Meals on Wheels news and presented service awards, including one recognising 30 years of service.

Over the past year, the branch delivered 885 hot meals, continuing to provide an important service and connection to those in the local community who need it.

Modbury

Since Stephen Jennison took on the role of Branch Coordinator in April 2026, he has been warmly welcomed by the Modbury volunteer team. In his words, there have been no flaming torches or pitchforks so far, which is hopefully a good sign!

While there may not have been any particularly extraordinary achievements to report over the past few months, there is plenty to celebrate in the everyday work of the branch. Volunteers turn up, support one another, share a laugh and bring their positive energy into the homes they visit before returning to do it all again on their next shift.

Conversations with customers, both over the phone and in person, have reinforced just how much this means to them. Customers regularly share how much they enjoy the meals, look forward to seeing their volunteers and appreciate the difference that a visit can make to their day.

As Stephen puts it, "Honestly, I really do believe I couldn't ask for better volunteers."

Morgan

Morgan is a small branch situated on the Murray River, between the Riverland region to the east towards Mildura and the Murraylands to the south towards the Coorong.

This year marked 45 years of working in partnership with Cadell Training Centre, whose support continues to be an important part of the service. One of the cooks at Cadell has supported the branch for 15 years, which is a wonderful commitment.

The branch continues to operate its own vehicle and has even developed its own little tradition, with the Chair funding Schmackos to hand out to customers' dogs. Affectionately known as "Treats on Wheels", it is a small gesture that brings plenty of joy to both customers and their four-legged companions.

There is also a more poignant side to the work at Morgan. Customers can often be lonely or unwell, and volunteers are frequently told that they are the people customers speak to most. These regular visits provide much more than a meal - they offer companionship, connection and a friendly face.

Every member of the Morgan team considers the work they do worthwhile, and their contribution to the community is deeply valued.

Mount Barker

The Mount Barker branch continues to grow alongside the local population, with around 160 active customers this year. Across six delivery rounds, the branch provides an average of 565 meals each week. A big thank you goes to our 110 dedicated volunteers for another great year of supporting our customers and community.

At Christmas, customers received a thoughtfully prepared gift featuring a handmade quilted Christmas placemat, kindly donated by a quilting group from Adelaide, along with a small torch and a piece of Lions Christmas cake. These were rolled in cellophane to create a bonbon and accompanied by a handmade card from local primary school children. The gifts were warmly appreciated by customers.

Service awards were celebrated at the Christmas lunch in late November at Auchendarroch House, attended by 60 volunteers.

Congratulations to all award recipients, with particular recognition to Ann Duell for an outstanding 50 years of service, David Abbott and Kerry Miller for 20 years, and Pam Jennings on becoming a Life Member.

Mount Gambier

Located near the slopes of the volcano that last erupted more than 5,000 years ago, the Mount Gambier branch has been proudly serving the community since 1964. During that time, volunteers have delivered more than 1.4 million meals.

Our long-serving volunteers were celebrated at a well-attended AGM dinner in August at Blue Lake Golf Club, with more than 100 people coming together for the occasion. Volunteers Week was also marked with another enjoyable lunch at the Western Tavern, while the volunteer Christmas BBQ was held in the beautiful surrounds of Valley Lake, with an unexpected visit from Santa Claus!

The branch is also proud of its black and gold Meals on Wheels polo shirts, subsidised by the Social Committee. The shirts have proven popular with volunteers and are a great way to show their connection to the service.

A special thank you goes to our wonderful and capable Branch Coordinator, Taylah Tranter, for her ongoing support. We also acknowledge former Branch Support Officer Peter Paues, who oversaw much-needed renovations to the branch premises as well as updates to the honour boards prior to his shift to Branch Operations Manager.

Above all, the branch extends its sincere thanks to its indispensable team of hardworking volunteers, whose dedication continues to keep the service running and supporting the local community.

Murray Bridge

The Murray Bridge branch has successfully completed 56 years of delivering meals to the local community. This milestone would not be possible without our wonderful volunteers, who bring a smile and a kind word to customers with every delivery.

As a hospital-based branch, the team sincerely thanks the Murray Bridge Soldiers Memorial Hospital kitchen for preparing and cooking the meals for our customers. The Hospital Maintenance Department also deserves recognition for their assistance with fixing trolleys, repairing potholes and taking care of other minor repairs around the branch.

The AGM & Awards and Christmas Afternoon Tea provided two opportunities for volunteers to come together during the year. Both events were held at the Murray Bridge Greyhound Racing Club, with approximately 50–60 volunteers attending each. Branch Support Officer Jason Webb joined the celebrations, where service awards ranging from one to 30 years were presented to 25 volunteers.

The branch also continued its annual fundraiser selling Rotary Calendars, while the Lions Club of Murray Bridge kindly donated individually wrapped Lions Christmas cakes for customers at Christmas. These thoughtful gifts were warmly appreciated.

A sincere thank you goes to all our wonderful committee members and volunteers for their ongoing dedication and contribution to the Murray Bridge branch.

Norwood

While the Norwood branch officially reached its 70th birthday in March, the milestone was celebrated in November 2025 with a special lunch at a local hotel. The occasion was made even more memorable by a birthday cake lovingly prepared by volunteer Jackie Kitschke.

CEO Sharyn Broer joined the celebrations and presented service awards to a number of volunteers, including 30-year awards to Margaret Noble and Gawa Abrahams. Burnside Lions member Barry Taylor also attended and announced a wonderful 70th birthday gift from Burnside Lions - a cake for every customer and volunteer to help celebrate this significant milestone.

A heartfelt thank you goes to all our volunteers, who continue to ensure customers receive their ordered meals and that the service keeps running smoothly.

The branch also appreciates the support provided by Branch Support Officer Jason Webb, along with all Meals on Wheels staff who assist the kitchen in so many different ways throughout the year.

Onkaparinga Valley

The Onkaparinga Valley branch continues to provide meals to customers across the Hills area, with customer numbers increasing, particularly among those receiving frozen meals.

Both customers and volunteers have welcomed the new three-month menu, which has reduced the workload for office volunteers and helped streamline the delivery process. The branch is also interested to see whether the new system will result in a reduction in food wastage.

A successful volunteer appreciation lunch was held at the Lobethal Hotel, providing an opportunity to thank our dedicated volunteers and recognise their service milestones.

At Christmas, all customers received a voucher, made possible through generous donations from the Rotary Club of Onkaparinga, Lions Club of Onkaparinga Incorporated and Klose's Foodland. These gifts were greatly appreciated, particularly by those for whom it may have been their only Christmas gift.

The branch farewelled Mrs Debbie James after 16 years of dedicated service, including many years as Kitchen Coordinator and, more recently, as a delivery volunteer. Debbie's commitment to Meals on Wheels and the local community, including her twice-weekly service, has been greatly valued.

Thank you to all our volunteers who continue to keep the service running, and a special thank you to those who have recently called time on their Meals on Wheels volunteering. Their contribution has been appreciated by customers, the branch and Meals on Wheels SA.

Peterborough

Peterborough marked Volunteers Week 2026 with a luncheon at The Railway Hotel, which was very well attended and enjoyed by all. Special guest Joanne Cameron, Regional Branch Support Partner, joined the volunteers for lunch and took the opportunity of having a captive audience to deliver the five-yearly refresher training.

Volunteer numbers declined slightly during 2025/26 due to several resignations and leaves of absence. This was partly offset by welcoming two new and very enthusiastic volunteers to the team, bringing some welcome fresh energy to the branch.

Sadly, the branch also mourned the loss of two long-term customers during the year. In a close-knit community such as Peterborough, connections run deep, and the passing of customers - many of whom we have known for a lifetime - is deeply felt.

The branch Christmas function was held at the Railway Hotel on 12 December. A good number of volunteers attended the luncheon, with plenty of good food, conversation and Christmas cheer making it a very enjoyable occasion.

Playford

It has been another challenging year for the Playford branch, with the dedication and teamwork of our volunteers helping to overcome and manage the challenges along the way.

Customer numbers have increased slightly, from 216 to 222, while our volunteer team has remained relatively strong with 51 dedicated members.

The branch also farewelled Branch Coordinator Mark Allen following his retirement and warmly welcomed Lalaine Castro into the role. Lalaine has settled in well and is already becoming a valued part of the Playford team.

Port Adelaide Osborne

The Port Adelaide Osborne branch has enjoyed another positive and rewarding year, with volunteers continuing to demonstrate their commitment and enthusiasm in supporting Meals on Wheels SA and the local community.

In June, Branch Coordinator Hayley Stuart organised a volunteer lunch at the Birkenhead Tavern. Approximately 50 volunteers attended, making it a wonderful opportunity to come together, enjoy each other's company and recognise the valuable contribution they make throughout the year.

The branch also celebrated a special milestone for Volunteer Coordinator Gerry Gherardin, who turned 80 years old in July. A morning tea was held to mark the occasion, providing an opportunity for volunteers and friends to celebrate Gerry and acknowledge his many years of dedication and service to the branch.

The Christmas lunch was organised by dedicated volunteer Bozena, who works tirelessly to make the occasion special for everyone. She also seeks donations from fellow volunteers and local businesses for the lunch door prizes, with her generosity, enthusiasm and commitment greatly appreciated.

The Port Adelaide Osborne branch is fortunate to have such a committed and friendly group of volunteers. Their willingness to support one another, contribute to the work of the branch and come together socially continues to make it a strong and welcoming community.

Thank you to all our volunteers for their ongoing dedication and support, and we look forward to another successful year ahead.

Port Augusta

The 2025–26 year has been one of administrative consolidation for the Port Augusta branch. We have been fortunate to retain our core group of office volunteers from the previous year, although we currently do not have a designated Secretary or Customer Services Officer. As a result, administrative responsibilities are being shared across the existing office team, who continue to work together to keep things running smoothly.

Delivery rounds are being covered, although there are occasions when only one volunteer driver is available for a round. The commitment and flexibility of the volunteer team is greatly appreciated in ensuring customers continue to receive their meals.

Despite another organisation providing a similar service in the town, customer numbers have remained stable and have increased slightly during the year. As a hospital-based branch, we continue to enjoy a good relationship with Port Augusta Hospital, which supplies our meals.

Our team may be small, but their dedication is strong, and together they continue to do their best to Keep the Wheels Turning.

Port Pirie

The year has passed quickly and has been filled with community spirit, thoughtful gestures and generous volunteer support.

Around 60 volunteers attended the Christmas and Awards luncheon at the Ports Football Club in November, where service awards were presented in recognition of the commitment and dedication of our volunteers.

National Volunteers Week was celebrated in May with an informal gathering over scones and coffee. Approximately 50 volunteers dropped in throughout the day to catch up and be thanked for their contribution. The kitchen volunteers also helped Kitchen Coordinator Cherie prepare the scones, making light work for the committee.

The branch also marked Anzac Day and Easter with thoughtful gestures for customers. On Anzac Day, each customer received a card with a poppy attached, kindly donated by the RSL Club. At Easter, customers received a hot cross bun with a card attached, generously donated by Woolworths.

With the year already well underway, the committee is looking forward to the Christmas Awards luncheon and is working to make it a meaningful celebration of the contribution made by our volunteers.

A sincere thank you goes to everyone who works in the kitchen and delivers meals to our customers each day. Special recognition goes to those who readily step in at short notice when someone is unwell or unable to attend. Their flexibility and willingness to help are invaluable in keeping the service running smoothly.

Prospect

The New Year brought a new challenge for the Prospect branch when we took over part of the Central Business District route from Hindmarsh.

This added 24 new customers and introduced the team to a different demographic, with many customers living in high-rise buildings and boarding houses, along with narrower streets and more limited parking than in our usual catchment area.

The committee extends its thanks to the volunteers who have taken on additional delivery days to help manage the increased workload. A special thank you goes to Michael Carey, who transferred to Prospect from Hindmarsh after driving this route two to three days a week for several years. His knowledge of the customers and the shortcuts around the area has been invaluable as our volunteers have become familiar with the new Route 5.

Community service was also recognised this year when Rosey Currie, Customer Services and Volunteer Coordinator, was named Prospect Council's 2026 Citizen of the Year. This is a very well-deserved acknowledgement of Rosey's continued support of our customers and volunteers.

The branch was also honoured to be nominated for Walkerville Council's 2026 Volunteer of the Year award. Prospect provides meals to customers across the Walkerville, Medindie and Gilberton areas, making the recognition particularly meaningful.

The new three-month menus appear to have been well embraced by customers, who continue to add, remove and change their menu choices just as they did under the previous system.

Customer and volunteer numbers continue to fluctuate, and the committee sincerely thanks the volunteers who have stepped up to fill roster shortfalls resulting from increased customer numbers and volunteer retirements. Their flexibility and willingness to help continue to make a real difference.

Renmark

The Renmark branch has had another busy and productive year, with customer numbers remaining steady at around 350 meals per week.

Fundraising has been a key focus, with a large Easter raffle helping to raise funds towards the Christmas hampers. Berri Bunnings generously donated a new wheelbarrow for this year's Christmas raffle, which the branch has already begun preparing.

Renmark and Berri volunteers came together for a joint Christmas lunch, where service awards ranging from one to 50 years were presented. These milestones are a wonderful reflection of the dedication and longevity of the volunteer teams.

The branch also had several opportunities to connect with the wider community. In February, Renmark was invited to participate in the annual Ageing, Wellness and Diversity Expo, where there was considerable interest in Meals on Wheels, including our menus and services.

Branch Coordinator Ruth Sikorski was invited to join the local ABC breakfast program in May to talk about Meals on Wheels and the important role the service plays in the community. The branch also featured in the local newspaper as part of the "World's Best Scone" campaign, with volunteers interviewed and photographed alongside their recipe.

A local council video promoting volunteering across the community has also helped raise awareness of volunteering opportunities and has already resulted in several new volunteers.

The Renmark team continues to be proud of the service they provide and the difference they make in their community every day.

Salisbury

2025 brought a number of challenges for the Salisbury branch, including changes to Salisbury Council's community grant criteria, which meant the branch was no longer eligible for funding. We sincerely thank Salisbury Council for its generous support over previous years.

Despite this change, the branch continued to find creative ways to support its customers. With more than 300 Christmas gifts to prepare, volunteer Di Bessell and the S.A. Quilters worked throughout the year to produce more than 300 beautiful quilted placemats. These were accompanied by handmade Christmas cards from Cards for Seniors and an engraved pen featuring the branch name and phone number, purchased with funds from the volunteers' social club. The gifts were warmly received and greatly appreciated by customers.

The branch's 60th anniversary was celebrated in April, and at the Christmas Awards Lunch in December, volunteers received an engraved pen commemorating the milestone.

Special acknowledgement goes to the 2025 service award recipients: Heather Antic and Robert Handke, who each reached 15 years of service, and the late Judy Cooke, who reached 25 years. With assistance from Central Office, Judy was presented with her 25-year service badge and certificate before her passing in September. She was delighted to receive the recognition and proudly displayed them in her room.

The branch also enjoyed some hands-on community spirit, with a group of volunteers coming together for a garden working bee to brighten up the branch. A big thank you goes to Gerry and Allan Enthoven for supplying the plants and morning tea. The team looks forward to Spring and seeing the new flowers complement the existing roses.

A heartfelt thank you goes to all of Team Salisbury, particularly those who regularly step in at short notice to fill vacancies in the kitchen and on deliveries.

The branch also farewelled Ros Andrews, Program Support Manager and Kevin Cunningham, Branch Support Manager after many years of support and wishes them both a very happy retirement.

New volunteers are always welcome to join Team Salisbury!

Stansbury

Following a decline in customer numbers in the previous year, the Stansbury branch was pleased to see greater awareness of the Meals on Wheels service after a strong local media presence. This has helped to highlight the support available within the community.

As the branch delivers frozen meals, customers receive their allocated meals once a week. The number of meals delivered has varied throughout the year as customer needs have changed, as has the number of customers. Many people require the service for shorter periods while recovering from illness or other circumstances before returning to managing their own meals.

While the meals are important, the personal contact remains a valued part of the service. As a small community, customers and volunteers are often already familiar with one another, making deliveries an opportunity for a friendly chat and connection.

What the future holds for the branch remains to be seen, but Stansbury is fortunate to have a strong branch committee and an excellent Customer Service Coordinator providing a solid foundation for the year ahead.

Strathalbyn

It was a milestone year for the Strathalbyn branch as it celebrated 50 years of service to the local community. As part of the celebrations, a morning tea was held for three of the branch's original members. It was a wonderful opportunity to hear stories from the early days, including memories of delivering meals straight from the boot of a car.

These original members were also invited to the branch's Christmas lunch in November at the Robin Hood Hotel, allowing the celebrations to continue. The Christmas lunch was attended by 42 volunteers, with Board President Kevin Reid joining the celebrations and presenting the service awards. His short address was warmly received by the group.

At the end of 2025, the committee chose to do something a little different for customers at Christmas, arranging for a meal for each customer to be paid for during the final week of service rather than purchasing gifts. The gesture was greatly appreciated by customers and volunteers alike.

Another highlight was seeing Maxine Bowman, one of the branch's original volunteers, receive her 50-year service award at the Awardee Afternoon in Adelaide. Maxine continues to be part of the roster and shares a wealth of local knowledge during delivery rounds - working alongside her is quite literally a history lesson.

Volunteer numbers continue to fluctuate, with 59 volunteers currently supporting the branch. Word of mouth remains the most successful way of attracting new volunteers, and the team continues to welcome new faces to the roster.

Tumby Bay

Tumby Bay continues to be well supported by a dedicated team of 83 volunteers, who deliver meals cooked in the Tumby Bay Hospital kitchen from Monday to Friday, including public holidays except Christmas Day and Good Friday.

The branch hosted the 2025 Volunteering Roadshow during the year, with General Manager Service Operations Julie Bonnici travelling from Adelaide to present service awards and conduct refresher training for the volunteers in attendance. It was a valuable opportunity to recognise the dedication of volunteers while also keeping everyone up to date.

In August, the branch marked National Meals on Wheels Day with a special luncheon for customers, prepared and served by Year 10 students from Tumby Bay School. This was a lovely opportunity for the wider community to come together and celebrate the importance of the service.

Christmas was also a time for connection, with gift bags prepared and delivered to customers. Volunteers also enjoyed their own Christmas lunch, providing an opportunity to relax, enjoy each other's company and celebrate another year of supporting the Tumby Bay community.

Two Wells

It has been a very active and memorable year for the Two Wells branch. The branch continues to operate from the meeting room at the Two Wells Community Centre, delivering frozen meals each Friday morning to 19 customers across Two Wells, Lewiston, Mallala and Buckland Park, with a dedicated team of 18 volunteers.

Regular meetings throughout the year have provided a great opportunity for volunteers to catch up socially, discuss a variety of topics and work through any issues that arise. While there are thankfully not many problems to solve, the meetings are always an enjoyable chance to spend time together.

The branch farewelled a few long-standing customers and friends who moved into residential care during the year. While it is sad not to see them each week, it is reassuring to know they are now receiving the care they need.

The branch also welcomed new volunteer Evelyn, who brings an impressive record of community service, having been named Adelaide Plains Council Citizen of the Year and receiving Life Membership of the Two Wells CWA.

Three volunteers - Ann, David and Pamela - attended the Meals on Wheels Volunteer Conference in September and found it an interesting and worthwhile experience. The AGM was held at the Two Wells Tavern in December, with all office bearers re-elected.

The branch also had a little excitement in February when the freezer broke down, causing some initial chaos. The Community Centre kindly provided temporary freezer space, while Cook Chill Logistics and Admin Coordinator Paul Whitmarsh arranged for meals to be sent immediately from the Hilton Cook Chill Facility so that the Friday deliveries could still go ahead. The freezer was soon repaired and normal service resumed.

A particularly special milestone came in April, when the branch discovered that its first meeting and opening took place in 1986. To celebrate 40 years of service, a luncheon was held at Gawler River Brewing in June. Special guest Kay Carpenter (nee Launer), who volunteered with the branch 40 years ago, joined the celebrations, along with Ros Andrews, Program Support Manager from Central Office. Ros was also farewelled as she prepared to retire from Meals on Wheels after many years of supporting the branch.

The anniversary provided an opportunity to remember some of the original members, including Bet Williams, Fay Lamont, Audrey Hart and Stan Pethick, who have since passed away. A special mention goes to Helen Gameau, who has been with the Two Wells branch for the entire 40 years.

Helen will be recognised with her 40-year service award at the Awardee Afternoon in Adelaide in November.

Service awards were also presented to Di and Kevin, Rosa and Rocky, and David for five years of service, while Maria was recognised for 15 years.

Christmas deliveries were another highlight, with hampers provided to all customers.

A heartfelt thank you goes to all the volunteers for the amazing work they do. Special appreciation goes to Ann for organising meetings and keeping things on track, David for his willingness to run around and help wherever needed, and Rosa for managing customers and their meals each week. Their combined efforts make a tremendous difference to the smooth running of the branch.

Waikerie

It has been another busy year for the Waikerie branch, with the continued support of a dedicated volunteer team.

Several key members of the branch were absent at times due to health issues, and it was heartwarming to see other volunteers step up to help fill the gaps. Their willingness to take on additional responsibilities has been greatly appreciated and has helped ensure the service continued smoothly.

Customer numbers have remained steady, with many positive comments received about the meals and menu.

The volunteer Christmas lunch was well received, with the President of Waikerie Rotary presenting the service awards. This was particularly fitting given Rotary's long-standing connection with the branch, having built the kitchen for the local community nearly 60 years ago. A special congratulations goes to long-serving volunteer Sue Andrew, who was recognised with her 40-year service award.

Customers received Christmas hampers, while frozen meals were provided as needed over holidays and long weekends.

The branch would always welcome more volunteers to strengthen the team and share the workload. With the same community spirit that Doris Taylor brought when she established Meals on Wheels in Waikerie, the branch continues to provide an important service to the local community.

Warradale

Warradale branch continues to provide high-quality fresh hot meals to its customers, with 280 active customers supported throughout the year. The branch has also enjoyed many special moments celebrating milestone birthdays with customers, with Treasurer Peter Burford continuing the lovely tradition of providing each customer with a personalised birthday card each year.

Volunteer Coordinator Mary Smith continues to work hard to attract additional volunteers, particularly for the kitchen, driving and meal delivery. Special thanks go to Branch Support Officer Shannon Chappell for his commitment throughout the year, and to Branch Coordinator Angie Holberry for her hard work and dedication.

The branch administration team, kitchen volunteers, drivers, deliverers and committee continue to work as a well-unified team, providing a strong foundation for the service and keeping the needs of customers at the heart of what they do.

In recent months, Warradale has also taken on approximately 60 customers who were previously receiving meals through a Marion Council program. This has significantly increased the branch's customer base and brought a new group of customers into the Warradale community.

Whyalla

Meals on Wheels Whyalla is now in its 68th year of providing an important service to the local community.

While the branch does not currently have a full committee, it continues to run smoothly with the support of Volunteer Coordinators Barb Murray and Wendy Patterson, Chair Allan Lipschinski, and new office volunteers Deb Drobnjak and Lyn Braid, who have joined the team to provide additional support.

Customer numbers have reduced during the year, while volunteer numbers remain strong. The branch is fortunate to have a dedicated group of volunteers who ensure customers receive their meals each day and are always willing to step up and take on additional rounds when others are unavailable.

The annual awards lunch is still to be held, with several special milestones to be recognised: Norma Matters for 45 years, Niranjala Abayasekara for 30 years, Maxene Matthews for 20 years, and Brian and Lorraine Daniels for 15 years of service.

This year has also brought a significant change with the introduction of the customer database on computer. While this has meant changes to familiar ways of working, volunteers have embraced the challenge with a positive attitude and a willingness to learn. Special thanks go to Regional Branch Support Officer Jo Cameron, who has provided invaluable assistance throughout the implementation, helping volunteers learn the new system and patiently answering all their questions.

A sincere thank you goes to everyone who has contributed their time and support throughout the year and continues to keep Meals on Wheels Whyalla moving forward.

Yankalilla

Twelve months ago, the Yankalilla branch was smugly looking at an almost full roster. Today, there are 14 vacant positions, although encouragingly, seven or eight may soon be filled by newly recruited volunteers.

The vacancies have largely been the result of age and ill health catching up with some of the branch's long-term volunteers. In the past two months alone, volunteers with 5, 9, 13, 20 and 21 years of service have retired due to declining health. Their contributions over many years have been greatly valued and they will be missed.

The branch also experienced the sudden and tragic loss of Craig Harris, who passed away following a stroke and heart attack. Craig brought an infectious enthusiasm to everything he did and his passing was a tremendous shock to the branch. As a member of the Branch Operations and Services Committee and the Work, Health and Safety Committee, Craig also contributed his energy and commitment beyond Yankalilla, and his service will be remembered.

There was some welcome support for the branch's administration early in the year when a new volunteer expressed an interest in taking on office duties. She now spends six to eight hours each week in the office, as well as completing two kitchen shifts on the roster, providing valuable assistance and allowing the Branch Coordinator to share the workload.

The branch's community spirit was also on display when, for the second time, Lyn Karran organised the popular Meals on Wheels float for the Normanville New Year's Eve pageant, with the help of several other volunteers. Lyn appears to have successfully created a new branch tradition.

While the current roster presents a challenge, there are positive signs for the future. The strong interest shown by members in taking on committee positions for the coming year is an encouraging indication of the health and commitment of the branch.

A sincere thank you goes to all Yankalilla volunteers for the time, care and service they continue to provide to their community.

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.

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