

## STRONG AND STABLE

### Mike Rankin retires with MBL in 'good shape'

As a "growing, stable business," MBL has secured its future and is strongly placed to advance, says retired Director Mike Rankin.

"I leave knowing the business is in a strong position and in good shape," says Mike, 60, who retired after a record 28 years on the MBL Board.

"We've been able to manage a growing, stable business as a Co-op where everything happens for the benefit of the membership."

Mike, pictured, who played a major role in "future proofing" MBL, particularly over the past decade, says he leaves with no unfinished business.

He says MBL is in good hands with a "terrific" management team under CEO Warren McLean and a "strong" Board under Chairman Bruce Carter.

"I would have found it hard to leave if there were (unresolved) issues. But because the management team is excellent and the Board is so strong, I leave with a sense of comfort," he says.

Mike has also retired from his Holco processing and wholesale business, handing the reins to David Culbert who has joined the MBL Board (*see story page 3*).

Beginning in 1989, Mike's 28 years on MBL's Board easily makes him the longest serving Director in the Co-op's 112 years.



*Continued page 4*

## MBL Christmas Trading Hours

Please note showroom counter sales and customer / members pick up will be closed early on the days detailed below.

These hours WILL NOT affect customer / members deliveries, however phone orders will be closed in line with these trading hours.

Country deliveries will be limited by regional transport timetables.

DATE	TRADING STATUS	TIME
Friday Dec 22	Early close	12noon
Monday Dec 25	CLOSED	CLOSED
Tuesday Dec 26	CLOSED	CLOSED
Friday Dec 29	Early close	1.30pm
Monday Jan 1	CLOSED	CLOSED

All other weekdays are normal trading hours

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# Sharp rise in Pink Butcher support

A total of 129 South Australian butcheries recently participated in the second Pink Butcher promotion, an increase of 62% on the inaugural year.

The strong SA response represented just over half of total national participation.

Pink Butcher went national for the first time in October, with 242 butcheries taking part across Australia.

The level of support delighted organisers AMIC and Breast Cancer Network Australia (BCNA) who say Pink Butcher will go from strength to strength.

"Money raised is still coming in to BCNA and we don't expect to know the total amount raised until mid-December," says AMIC's Paul Sandercock.

"In the initial promotion in October last year, 80 butcheries in SA raised just over \$36,000.

"With three times as many butcheries taking part across Australia, we naturally expect more will be raised this year.

"The first national Pink Butcher, which ran right through October and in some cases into November, went very well with excellent support from butcheries.

"The feedback has been very good, very positive.

"BCNA was delighted with the very generous support of butcheries from around the country.

"We're confident that Pink Butcher will continue to grow over the coming years and become a major national fundraiser for breast cancer support."

Paul says a number of excellent new ideas have been put forward to encourage donations.

"Seaford's Sam DiCiccio, who is on the organising committee, reports on customers coming up with different ideas for Pink Butcher," he says.



Sam DiCiccio says new ideas keep emerging to support Pink Butcher.

"These range from adding \$1kg to the price of mince to giveaways and raffles.

"Different ideas keep emerging, indicating that Pink Butcher will keep evolving over time."

Customers again gave solid support at Seaford Gourmet

Meats where Sam, a breast cancer survivor, launched the first version of Pink Butcher eight years ago.

Along with veteran Adelaide butcheries Rodney Sims and Wilson Lowe, Sam this year appeared in promotional Pink Butcher posters.

## MBL NEWS

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## AMIC vacates Adelaide office

AMIC says it's business as usual after moving out of its South Australian office on Greenhill Rd, Wayville.

The office was vacated on December 1, with AMIC SA's Executive Director Paul Sandercock now operating from a home office.

In a statement in its November newsletter, AMIC stated a recent national strategic decision to streamline the management of membership services across the various States would result in a change to AMIC offices around the country.

In December last year, the West Australian office was closed with the management of membership

services for WA transferred to the South Australian office.

A further step in this rationalising process saw the SA office close recently, on December 1, with the ongoing management for SA and WA operating from a home office environment, AMIC said.

AMIC said it will maintain and improve its charter of providing high levels of member services and ensuring that members continue to get value for their membership.

A suite of changes were being introduced including an improved and interactive website, a communications and public relations plan, and a greater use of social media.

A new staffing structure for retail, smallgoods and processing was evolving with the national structure to have a Northern Retail Manager and a Southern Retail Manager responsible for membership services across their respective States.

# David Culbert brings fresh eyes to Board

Since joining MBL's Board five months ago, David Culbert has been highly impressed as he explores the diverse operations of our modern, best-practice Co-operative.

The scale of operations, the efficiencies within the business and the measures put in place to secure MBL's future have impressed him.

"The opportunity (to replace Mike Rankin on the Board) came from out of the blue and I was honoured to be asked," says David, 54, Holco's National General Manager with assorted meat industry experience spanning 36 years.

"The learning curve is out of this world - there's so much to MBL, from merchandise sales through to the rendering plants.

"There's world-first technology applied at the plants; it's pretty amazing."

David was particularly interested to learn about the technology behind rendering plant odour containment because he has a long memory.

As a teenager starting out in the early 1980s, young David regularly delivered offal to MBL's old rendering plant - the so called "plant from hell" - at Wingfield.

"Working for Holbrook Meats, I had to deliver bone bins to the plant on Grand Junction Rd. It was not an enjoyable job; it was very smelly," he recalls.

"Sometimes, they'd leave the doors open and I'd get covered in escaping steam. I'd be smelly on the bus home, with people giving me funny looks."

The old plant has long gone. Wingfield now has three separate plants to satisfy

expanding market demands and odours have been successfully contained.

In welcoming our latest Director, CEO Warren McLean says David's first memories of MBL are a world away from today's modern Co-operative.

industries, working his way up through the ranks, and we welcome him aboard," he says.

Chairman Bruce Carter says, "I've known of David for years, and he has impressed us since joining the Board after his name was put forward by Mike Rankin

David entered the meat industry straight from school in 1981, joining Holbrook Meats which became Holco three years later.

His initial years were spent in boning rooms, and later at Holco he held several food service roles involving deliveries and sales to hotels and restaurants.

He made a point of learning as much as he could about different industry sectors, leading to diverse experience at Adelaide Cold Stores, Galipo Foods and Austral Meats.

"I was a young man who liked a challenge. Once I learnt something, I wanted to move on," he says.

David joined Metro Meat as a salesman in 1994, a year before Mike Rankin acquired Holco from Metro Meat.

He has worked at Holco ever since. After strengthening the food service operation with Trevor Cutting, he became Food Service Manager in 1997.

As the business expanded interstate, David was further promoted to become Holco's first National General Manager five years ago.

Of his appointment to the MBL Board, he says, "My experience under Mike, who knows everything about MBL, has put me in good stead.

"I'm enjoying seeing how another successful business is run and I've been able to share ideas.

"A business can't stand still or it will get overtaken. You need new ideas or you need to spread the risk over other areas.

"The increasing cost of energy, both electricity and gas, is a big challenge facing MBL."



**'There's world-first technology applied at MBL's plants; it's pretty amazing' - David Culbert**

Warren says David's vast experience will be valuable as MBL continues to evolve.

"David is well known around the butcher and meat wholesale

as his replacement.

"MBL is fortunate to have David join us. His impressive experience is backed by excellent people skills."

He was Chairman from 2008 to 2012, the most remarkable period of growth in MBL's history.

Warren says, "This was a critical period when MBL was transitioned from a cash rich but very out-dated business to the modern Co-operative it is today.

"Investment was made in a new Low Temperature rendering plant at Wingfield and the Keith plant was acquired. Both actions addressed threats to the business.

"There was also the purchase of the bigger facility at Athol Park after we had outgrown Kilburn.

"From 2008 to 2012, the Board approved total investment of \$15 million in necessary 'future proofing' measures."

Warren says that in his time as General Manager since 2008 and then CEO, Mike's ability of "get it" when a project or proposal was put up was extremely valuable.

"Sometimes he would just sit and listen but I knew that if he had something of concern, he would have spoken up, so I would take his silence as agreement," Warren says.

"During Mike's time in the chair, no project was knocked back - a measure of the Board's and Mike's ability to 'get it.'"

Bruce Carter says, "While nothing was knocked back, the Board applied due diligence and corporate governance.

"Mike has certainly played a very significant role on the expansion and future proofing of MBL, and we've remained faithful to the Co-operative model."

Never one to seek the limelight, Mike says he never aimed to be Chairman but accepted the role after John Heard resigned.

"I just steadied the ship after that tumultuous period. I was the most experienced Director and I got the Board functioning again," he says.

"I've always thought it an honour to be at MBL, in a serious role to provide benefits to the membership, including significant rebates over my 28 years.

"I'm proud of my time at MBL but it was definitely a two-way street. I was introduced to icons of the industry and I had the chance to learn from them.

"People like Norm Clayson and the Conroys immediately spring to mind, then there have been Bruce and Warren and the different Board members."

# STRONG AND STABLE

## Mike Rankin retires with MBL in 'good shape'



Norm Clayson asked Mike to join the Board. MBL's records show Mike's first Board meeting was on April 3, 1989.

"I don't remember dates; I've always been forward thinking and don't look back too much," Mike says.

"I know I've been on the Board for 28 years because my son Matt is 28 and he was born

a few days before my first Board meeting.

"I was only 32, bright eyed and bushy tailed. I told the Chairman, John Stevens, I'd have to leave early to see my wife Jeanette who was still in hospital with our new son.

"The Chairman really frowned at that idea! He was a hard man and I was scared of him, but I think I may have

> managed to go a little early.”

Mike says the modernisation of MBL has been essential for survival.

“Even in the 1990s, MBL was in the 1960s,” he says.

“It was steeped in history, it was an institution of the SA meat industry and a lot of people had been there a long time but as a business, it was stuck in the 1960s.

“MBL had to be modernised because as a business, you must stay relevant to your customers and to your industry.

“We were trying to modernise but we didn’t have the facilities (at Kilburn).

“We needed to take profits from by-products to improve the platform for merchandising because Members want good merchandising.

“By-products was the cash cow to modernise with a streamlined distribution centre at Athol Park.

“MBL has now been modernised and it has a great business platform – vibrant and dynamic, with a great management team.”

Mike, who has worked six days a week for decades, has stepped down from MBL and Holco because he says “it’s time for a new chapter” in his life.

“It’s the right time from a personal viewpoint,” he says.

“People call it retirement but I’m not accustomed to the word retirement. For me, it’s a re-set – time to do some personal things that I haven’t had time to do.”

He says he plans to travel, improve his fishing skills and spend more quality time with his family.

“When you commit yourself 110% to anything, there is a cost at the other end.



Mike Rankin had the honour of opening MBL’s new base at Athol Park in April, 2013, by a removing a traditional butcher’s apron to unveil a plaque.

Over the years, I’ve missed out on family functions and going to things,” he says.

“My family’s support for me has been essential; the support from Jeanette has been 110%.

“I enjoy business – the deals and the structural stuff in a philosophical way – and I’ll certainly miss it.”

Mike began his career in 1972 when he was engaged as an apprentice by none other than Bruce Carter who was the manager of Lazy Lamb at O’Halloran Hill.

Bruce recalls, “Mike was a fantastic lad – a studious apprentice with a lot of ability. He was smart and had natural ability with the knife.

“He was there to learn and keen to work the long hours. He was as he is now – a serious person, very astute and very polite.

“He lived near my home and I drove him to

and from work. I always knew he would have his own shop one day but he has done far better. He has had a tremendous career.”

In 1976, Mike purchased his first shop at age 18. He paid the substantial price, in 1976 terms, of \$2,200 to a butcher who was retiring.

“It was an historic shop at Dulwich, low on automation with sawdust on the floor and an old chopping block. It was a throw-back to the 1940s or 1950s,” he says.

“It was a one-man business and at the start I spent time painting and doing it up, wanting to modernise it.

“A friend taught me how to do a simple profit and loss statement. In my first week, I made \$297. I took out \$50 for weekly living expenses and banked the rest, so I was doing all right.

“I built up some funds for two and half years, then I got an offer to sell. It was too good to refuse, so I had to take it.”

Mike bought several other small shops, building their profitability with sheer hard work.

He acquired Turner’s shops which were renamed Springfield. There were 11 shops in Adelaide and two in Darwin.

In 1980, he started the company that went on to acquire Holco in 1995. Holco became the largest meat food service business in SA and the NT, and expansion followed into Queensland.

Holco’s turnover climbed to \$130 million,



Mike, pictured here in 2008, built Holco into a food service force.

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# From gourmet meats to pet treats Kellie powers ahead

Growing up in Cloncurry in the Queensland outback, Kellie Walduck raised pigs and was given early insights into making pork products.

“Dad had his own butcher shop in Cloncurry for many years and he’d help me process my pigs for consumption just by our family,” she says.

Fast forward some 15 years and Kellie is a nifty butcher herself but she’s far from home – she’s in Adelaide’s leafy eastern suburbs where she owns her own shop less than a year after completing her apprenticeship.

Kellie, 29, is carving a reputation as one of Adelaide’s best and brightest young butchers at St James Quality Cuts, Clapham.

“It’s working out as we expected. Everyone’s loving what we’re doing; we’re getting amazing feedback – sales are up by over 20%,” she says.

After finishing her apprentice-

ship at highly regarded Windsor Meats, she purchased the small Clapham shop from Bob Willoughby who had run it for 36 years and was well known for his sausage rolls.

While Kellie produces excellent meat products, she has also branched out from core butchery by developing a niche sideline with quality treats for pets.

She makes the all-natural pet treats from beef, chicken, kangaroo, lamb and pork trimmings at her home and sells them from several shops and from a smart trailer at markets.

Her Pawfect Pet Treats business, operated with her partner Christy Reece, is going great guns with dehydrated products made from assorted offal including chicken hearts

and necks, pig trotters, kangaroo ribs, beef and lamb liver.

The pet treats tick all the “feel good boxes,” promoted as being “100% real meat, all natural, premium quality, no nasties, 100% Australian made and owned.”

With her seven-day shop and the pet treat business on the side, there’s barely enough hours in the day for Kellie.

But she comes from hardy stock and with her initiative and creativity, good judges say she’s really going places.

Although her father was a butcher and she enjoyed helping him process her pigs, Kellie had no early plans to follow him into butchery.

She originally wanted to be a veterinary nurse but after finishing Years 11 and 12 at Townsville Grammar, she studied agriculture, horse breeding and



Kellie with butcher Rob Eslea and cook Kerry Stevenson.

➤ cattle breeding at Longreach Agricultural College.

She experimented at home with a smoker, dehydrating meat and offal at low temperatures and humidity. She recruited her dog Reggie as taste tester.

“Sam (Burt) helped me with the business side, working out costings and the rest,” she says.

“I started selling my pet treats at Windsor Meats and Marion markets, promoting them on Facebook and by email, and they sold very well.”

Kellie and Christy expanded to other outdoor markets, including Old Spot at Salisbury, after having an impressive trailer cum “mobile shop” built.

The bright red trailer, with signage, is towed to markets with doors opening out to showcase the pet treats on shelves.

“People shop with their eyes for their pets, too,” says Kellie of the stylish display.

Kellie purchased St James Quality Cuts when hearing it was for sale around the time she finished her apprenticeship.

“I was still at Windsor and if I stayed, it would have been hard to go up the ladder because there is such a good crew there, with many people having been there for a long time,” she says.

“I took a job at a cattle station to put my studies into place but Mum got sick so I went back to look after her in Cloncurry and I worked there in finance for a while,” Kellie says.

“In early 2014, I moved to Adelaide with my then partner. I wanted to do an apprenticeship and Bob Brill, from TAFE, told me to call Lou Zammit at Windsor.

“I showed Lou my resume and I started my apprenticeship with him the next day, in April 2014.

“Windsor runs at a very high standard and the bar is set high for learning.”

Sam Burt, now a co-owner with Lou of Windsor Meats, says Kellie was an excellent apprentice with abundant leadership qualities and drive.

Within six months of starting her apprenticeship, she had already launched Pawfect Pet Treats with six products initially.

“I looked at everything going into the waste bins and started experimenting with lamb and beef liver and chicken trim to make dried snacks for dogs,” Kellie says.



Signage on Kellie's trailer... ticking all the boxes for pet owners.



A display at Windsor Meats where the pet treats were launched.

“St James was a small shop in a good area and I thought it would be ideal for spreading my wings.

“Bob Willoughby had been there a long time and said he wanted a buyer who would

keep the business going with the bakery side as part of it.

“He said he interviewed seven or eight others but he said we were the only ones who asked the right questions and he agreed to sell to us.” ➤



Treats for Fido...Christy Reece with the trailer's eye-catching display at Old Spot market, Salisbury.

# Kellie powers ahead

➤ With Christy lending her general administrative expertise to the new venture, Kellie wisely sought advice from experienced butchers Lou Zammit, Trevor Hill, Wilson Lowe, Dave Armstrong and Paul Suleyman.

"I basically asked them if they thought I'd be crazy to take this on, but they were all very supportive and very helpful," Kellie says.

"Trevor and Wilson said I had drive, passion and determination, and buying the shop would challenge me after my apprenticeship.

"I went to Dave and Paul for financial advice, and Lou's basic advice was don't go making changes to the shop straight away.

"We haven't changed much but when we arrived we needed to change the layout of the shop.

"Staff are unchanged – butcher Rob Eslea has been here for 10 years and cook Kerry Stevenson

has been making the bakery lines for seven years."

Kerry's gourmet pies, sausage rolls and quiches have long attracted loyal customers. Her pie range includes chicken korma, beef & bacon, chicken & sweetcorn, chicken & vegetables, peppered steak and steak & mushroom.

"With so many butcher shops



*Kellie has retained St James Quality Cut's famous sausage rolls.*

around here, Bob needed a wider range and so he introduced the bakery side, using up all his own meat," Kellie says.

"We've kept bakery products because they are a selling point. People are loyal to those products, allowing us to keep a good customer base."

But while Kellie is retaining the

bakery side, she has beefed up the meat side to ensure the shop is primarily recognised as a butchery.

"Sales are up by over 20% since we took over. We've had good comments about our beef and lamb," she says.

"We're ageing our steaks for longer; people who never bought sirloin here are now buying it, telling us to keep doing whatever we're doing.

"One lady said our lamb chops melted in the mouth so she came back and bought a whole tray of them."

When MBL News visited, Kellie wasn't complaining when she mentioned she hadn't had a day off for six months, saying she had another busy six months ahead to be fully set up.

She enjoys the support of other butchers, knowing help is just around the corner should she need it.

"Dave calls to see how I'm going. The other day, he said he'd send a few butchers around for a few hours if I ever need help. I haven't needed help so far, but I really appreciate the moral support," she says.

"Bob Brill has helped out at this shop at Christmas for years and he's doing it again this year."

## STRONG AND STABLE Mike Rankin retires

From page 5

with 300 employees in Adelaide, Brisbane and Darwin.

In 2012, T&R Pastoral (now Thomas Foods International) acquired a 50% share in Holco, which has continued to operate independently.

Mike lavished praise on the Holco staff, saying he had been lucky to have had "a terrific group of dedicated, hard working people."

"It's the people here who have really grown the business. It's the right time for me to step

down because I'm stifling them," he says.

"We have a lot of good, long serving people who deserve the opportunity to advance. They've been here with me every day from 5am...

"I'm fulfilling my own needs (by retiring) but it's important to me to give people the chance to move to the next stage of their development.

"They have new ideas and they'll do things better... my stepping down is the right thing to do.

"Succession planning is so

important. At the end of the day, I've just been the custodian here.

"The transition will be seamless, with David Culbert taking over."

Across the overall meat industry, Mike believes opportunities abound for young people.

"For hard-working people with entrepreneurial spirit, there are opportunities everywhere, from buying butcher shops to creating new market segments and online development," he says.

"It's a very viable industry for young people to consider. Careers are here waiting for them.

"But there's no magic formula to success – it's all heads down and bums up."



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# The value of red meat

A new report has provided a clear insight into the value of the red meat industry to the Australian economy and community.

We are world leaders when it comes to exporting - and eating - red meat, says the report by Ernst & Young for the Red Meat Advisory Council (RMAC).

*The State of the Industry 2017* report, the first of its kind, estimates the red meat industry contributes \$18 billion to the national GDP and accounts for 405,000 direct and indirect jobs.

It says Australia was the largest exporter of beef in 2016, and the second largest exporter of sheepmeat, making it the third largest livestock exporter overall behind the US and Brazil.

What Australians don't export, we eat. We consume four times the average amount of beef and six times the amount of sheepmeat compared to the rest of the world.

The report, however, made no reference to national sales of cheaper chicken and pork surpassing beef and lamb in recent years.

MLA, which is owned by beef, lamb and goat producers, commissioned the Ernst & Young report at the request of the affiliated RMAC.

The report aims to give the red meat industry "ammunition" to lobby the Federal Government for "urgent reforms in food and farming policy."

RMAC chairman Don Mackay says the red

meat industry is an essential part of the Australian economy and culture.

"The report demonstrates for the first time the key role red meat plays in the Australian economic success story, from our plates, to our jobs and our businesses," he says.

"We have achieved turnover growth of 11%, contributed \$18 billion to Australian GDP, sustain 405,000 direct and indirect jobs, and feed 24 million Australians day in and day out."

The report says the value of Australian red meat and livestock exports increased by almost \$6 billion over the past five years, from \$9.2 billion in 2011-12 to \$15.1 billion in 2015-16.

It says goat meat, once a niche industry, has experienced a significant boom with Australia now a leading supplier of global goat meat.

Over 27,000 tonnes of goat meat was exported in 2016, with prices "increasing by

177%."

But Don Mackay says, "Inaction and conflict with government in the red meat industry is costing the Australian economy money and jobs.

"We've seen recent examples of our industry being damaged by attacks from crusading politicians who are more interested in making a name for themselves than protecting businesses and jobs.

"Getting trade and infrastructure right is critical in order to become an attractive place for global and Australian investors into the industry.

"Despite an incredibly challenging environment, we've seen 5% growth in businesses across the chain, there are more processing businesses now than four years ago, and we've seen a 48% rise in saleyard prices.

"Our success is Australia's success. The government can't be cavalier about our industry; we need urgent reforms."

## Lamb top at dinner parties

Nine of out 10 Australians rate lamb as the "perfect dinner party meal," according to Galaxy research commissioned by MLA.

Some 63% of those surveyed choose to cook lamb as a roast, with nearly 40% choosing slow cooking and 32% opting to barbecue.

Baby Boomers are more likely to simply

roast their lamb while Millennials are more likely to try different cooking methods like smoking, stir frying or using minced lamb.

Half of dinner party hosts surveyed use lamb in Italian dishes, 31% in Chinese dishes and 25% in Thai meals.

Almost half (49%) say lamb is easy to cook and 43% describe it is a versatile ingredient.

# HUNGRY FOR MORE

## Ryan rations tomahawks as his BBQ 'big gun'

Less is more when it comes to big, juicy tomahawk steaks, says Adelaide butcher and barbecue whiz Ryan Watson.

Ryan, 29, says tomahawks are seen as the "ultimate steak" by increasing numbers of younger men who follow the fiery US barbecue culture through TV, the internet and social media.

"They like to put on a show of cooking tomahawks on charcoal, taking the meat off the bone and sharing it out," he says.

"Tomahawks really sell themselves and I effectively use them as the flagship of our barbecue range."

But instead of having tomahawks readily available, Ryan orders them into the shop only spasmodically, usually every few weeks.

"If they're here all the time, they don't seem as special," says Ryan, who manages Bruce's Meat, Fairview Park, which recently attained the highest gold standard in AMIC's Awards for Excellence.

"Being so big, there's a real wow factor around them and they amaze people seeing them for the first time.

"People who know them and see them in the shop, think: 'They're back - I'd better buy while I can.'

"For some regulars, I simply send a photo on Facebook just to let them know tomahawks are back and they'd better be quick."

Ryan has another example of how rationing some products can spark demand.

"Chicken cordon bleu wasn't selling so we took it off for two weeks before returning it and it sold out on the first day back," he says.

But especially at this time of year, it's Ryan's barbecue offerings that are in hot demand.

"Beef is definitely our biggest seller here. Chicken used to be number one but people are getting back to steaks, mainly for the barbecue," he says.

Big ribeye steaks, T-bones and porterhouse are well showcased and popular, along with US-style pork spare ribs, some of which are marinated.



Ryan Watson... "there's a real wow factor around tomahawks."

A range of barbecue sauces and marinades dot the countertop, and 10kg bags of charcoal are sold.

"I understand the US barbecue culture of things like brisket and ribs over charcoal. It's quite popular in this area," Ryan says.

"It's mainly younger men, in their late 20s and 30s, who see it on the internet and on TV shows. They share through social media

and are confident with cooking.

"They don't mind paying for quality meat - a lot seem to buy it as a way of rewarding themselves at the end of the working week.

"The attitude is, 'I've had a hard week, I'm getting a good steak for the barbecue with a few beers to let off steam.'"

Ryan shares their passion for barbe-



➤ cuing and keeps up the latest trends so he can give the best advice.

As reported in the last MBL News, Ryan took over the running of the Fairview Park store early this year after owner Carly McLean moved to a new Bruce's Meat outlet at nearby St Agnes.

Both these stores, as well as Goodwood Quality Meats, attained the highest gold standard in this year's AMIC awards for retail shops.

Ryan worked with Carly for two years at Fairview Park before relishing the chance to manage the store.

"I'm enjoying the new role but I'm really just carrying on with the good practices that Carly put in place," he says.

"I've always been passionate about this industry. It's the passion that pushes you through the hard times."

Ryan did most of his training at three Springfield shops, mainly at Hollywood Plaza, Salisbury, before joining Bruce's Meat.

He says his career was hugely boosted by winning an MBL scholarship to study at TAFE.

"The MBL scholarship was for the Diploma in Meat Processing course which gave me an understanding of the whole paddock to plate process, he says."

"It was a big, big help to me."

"Joining Bruce's Meat and then winning the MBL scholarship were the best things to happen for me, setting up my career. I've learnt so much from people here.

"On my first day, I got a great insight into the culture here when I saw Trevor on the floor with his hand down a meat drain, cleaning it out.

"He was the boss, so I asked if I could do that for him. He said No - he was a worker here and we're all part of the team."

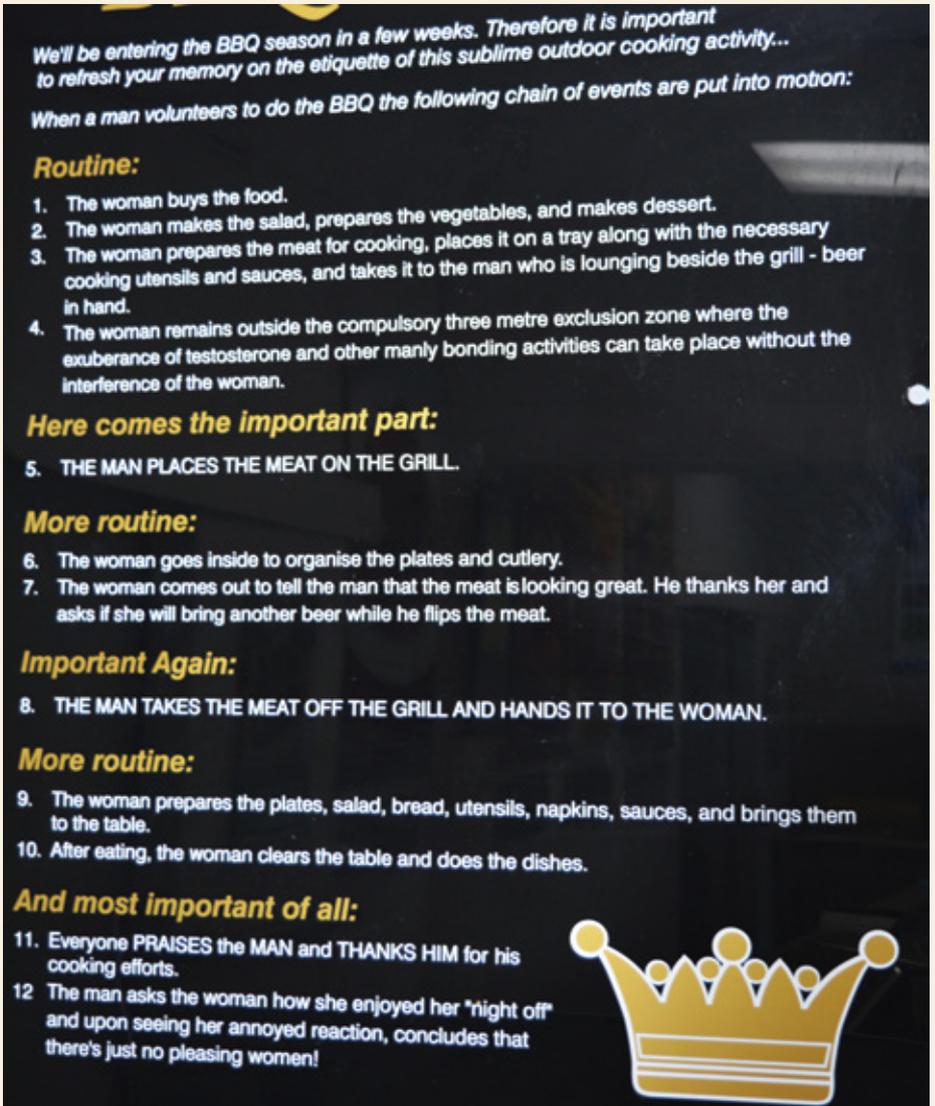
Ryan also paid tribute to leadership mentor Dean Evans who in recent times has conducted one-on-one sessions with Bruce's Meat staff.

"I had knowledge and passion as a butcher but lacked maturity. Dean gave me the tools to move forward and grow," he says.

"If I hadn't worked with Dean, I wouldn't be a manager now.

"You never stop learning. You can learn from the clean-up boy..."

# All things being equal, this says it all about manning the barbie



Political correctness has been rightly shown the door at Windsor Meats, where good old Aussie humour still holds sway.

The shop's semi-retired founder Lou Zammit had the sign made after he had a good laugh at the words which someone sent to him.

"It came in an email and Sam loved it so much, he just had to get a sign made for everyone to see," says the shop's co-owner Sam Burt.

"It's a good-size sign and a lot of customers take the time to read through it. They usually comment on how close it is to the truth.

"While most people enjoy it, we've had one or two who haven't liked it, thinking

it's not in good taste, but you can't please everyone as they found at Woolworths."

Sam was referring to the protests made about a light hearted sign in the meat section at Woolworths Glenelg in early November.

The sign, put up by Woolworths staff at the mince meat display, read: "What do you call a cow with no legs? Ground beef."

Incredibly, it led to a storm after a grumpy customer shared a photo on the supermarket's Facebook page and branded those responsible as a "disrespectful and insensitive bunch."

The post was shared more than 1,100 times and attracted more than 12,000 mixed comments.



Lana Harvey, of The Fresh Fish Place, with a Spencer Gulf hiramasa kingfish. Photo: Brand South Australia.

Port Lincoln's Lana Harvey knows a fresh fish when she sees one – it's all in the eyes, she says.

"You can tell by the look of their eyes, that's a pretty easy tell-tale sign," says the Wholesale Logistics Manager at The Fresh Fish Place, one of MBL's largest seafood Members.

Lana is a new seafood ambassador for I Choose SA, a promotional campaign by Brand South Australia.

Quality is a given where Lana works. Port Lincoln is Australia's seafood capital and home to the largest fishing fleet in the southern hemisphere.

When a diner in a high-end Sydney restaurant is sliding their fork through a King George whiting, it's possible that same fish was selected by Lana just 24 hours earlier.

Lana, who was born and raised in Port Lincoln, is responsible for selecting premium seafood for distribution across Australia.

She's the go-to woman for finding quality wild caught and farmed seafood, and selling it onto five star restaurants.

When a professional fisherman arrives at the Port Lincoln factory, Lana is ready to survey the quality of the catch.

"It's exciting when I see something good

## THE EYES HAVE IT!

come through the doors," she says.

"When it's quality, I'm straight on the phone and I can't wait to get it to destinations all over Australia. The quality speaks for itself and sells itself."

Owned by Craig McCathie, The Fresh Fish Place is Eyre Peninsula's largest seafood supplier, handling about 200 tonnes of seafood annually. It has 27 employees.

Species include deep sea flathead, southern garfish, King George whiting, Spencer Gulf hiramasa kingfish, queen snapper, gummy shark and bluefin tuna.

Other marine species include oysters from Coffin Bay, Franklin Harbour and Smokey Bay, Bass Strait scallops, Port Lincoln black mussels, Coffin Bay sand crabs, and southern calamari.

It's a battle to keep up with demand from hotels, restaurants, fish shops and supermarkets.

"Every fish that comes through the doors must meet strict sustainability criteria, including size limits," Lara says.

"When we are receiving fish we are required to check sizes and if it's undersized we are required to report it.

"For the commercial fishery, quotas also help with maintaining our sustainable fishing industry."

Lana says seafood quality is maintained from the moment the fish is hooked by the fisherman.

"From the moment the fish is caught to the moment it's cooked and ready to put on your plate, it must be kept at temperature - generally 5C or under is ideal," she says.

"We absolutely have some of the best seafood in the world and the way that it's managed is brilliant."

The Fresh Fish Place is also a factory direct seafood outlet and fish cafe, attracting 40,000 customers every year.

With 50% of the customers being visitors, the cafe is a popular spot to enjoy pan fried or battered fish shortly after it has been filleted on the production table.

Along with public tours of the factory, The Fresh Fish Place incorporates the Port Lincoln Seafood Cooking School which brings together the culinary profession and seafood marketers.

Story by Melissa Keogh,  
Brand South Australia.