

meet doris



MEALS
ON WHEELS

Driven by nutrition.



Doris Taylor 1901 – 1968

Founder, Meals on Wheels

The spirit of one extraordinary woman lives on today in the Meals on Wheels organisation she founded. Doris Taylor was born in 1901 in Norwood, South Australia. After a childhood accident, she lived most of her life confined to a wheelchair. Yet her spirit and determination knew no confines.



A VOICE FOR THE DISADVANTAGED.

While coping with her own disability, Doris became intensely aware of the plight of other disadvantaged people.

When she was in her twenties Australia was in the midst of the Depression. Doris looked for ways to help her community. She began by organising fundraising to buy clothes for children of the unemployed, and helped establish and promote a soup kitchen.

POLITICAL INFLUENCE.

Doris recognised that she could use political lobbying to bring about improvements in social services. So she became active in the Labor Party. She is credited with persuading Don Dunstan (later to become Premier of South Australia) to join the party and successfully managed his first election campaign.

A PRACTICAL WAY TO HELP.

Doris was particularly concerned about aged, housebound and disabled people. She thought that delivering a nutritious, hot midday meal would be a practical helping hand for all. Thanks to her tireless efforts, the first Meals on Wheels kitchen opened in Port Adelaide on August 9th, 1954.

THE SERVICE GREW AROUND A GROWING NEED.

From the first meals that were prepared by eleven volunteers for eight clients, the organisation has expanded to consist of 100 branches, 40 of which are kitchens and 10,000 volunteers across South Australia. With our ageing population, Doris Taylor's Meals on Wheels concept is more relevant to today's community than ever. The South Australian organisation has been used as a model of success for Meals on Wheels services in Australia and overseas.

AN INSPIRATION TO THE END.

In 1959 Doris Taylor was awarded an MBE for services to the community. She remained an active part of Meals on Wheels right up until her death in 1968. Today, Meals on Wheels delivers important nutrition to over 5,000 clients every weekday. Just as importantly, each delivery brings valuable social contact. The legacy of Doris Taylor continues to inspire the tremendous community spirit that drives Meals on Wheels forward.

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