

# Collins Bigger Picture

## Finalist Scottish Butchers Shop of the Year 2009 & 2010

Stewart Collins butchers shop in Muirhead was always one of the smallest in the country and yet it did a wonderful trade. Maybe it was the comfort customers got by squeezing in and conversing as they waited their turn but there were nasty weather days when the queue that extended up the street wasn't such a cosy experience.

Now the shop has seen a remarkable transformation through what Stewart calls an extension. That term totally understates the difference that his staff and customers have enjoyed since re-opening on 31<sup>st</sup> July 2010. Stewart explained:-



"We had maximised our potential as we were and we couldn't do much more in the retail space that we had. So we felt that before trade started to drop off, we should do something about it."

The process started a good twelve months before the changes were implemented. Stewart described the process stating that in the design stage there was a lot that went to and fro between himself and designer Jackie Muir.

"I had an idea of how it should look but I didn't know how to get there. Peter Rae did most of the outside designs and Jackie did all the internal cosmetics with regard to the walnut finishes. Clark Watson of Watco supplied all the cabinets – Eurocryor."

The Bizerba scales purchased in 2009 were ideal for the new shop that has seen average sales up by 30%. The benefits of being better organised in an easier working environment has created greater productivity. Customers gain from more selection, more room to move around inside the shop and a wholly better shopping experience.





S Collins & Son, Quality Family Butchers was established in 1955 by the grandfather of the present day business.

The original Stewart Collins was succeeded by his son also called Stewart Collins and in 2009 by Stewart's sons Stewart & Fraser Collins.

Both brothers had worked in the shop in their youth but ventured out into the broader business world before choosing to return to Muirhead.

*Above: shop as it used to look*

After a short period back in the family butchers business following life at the West of Scotland College in Hamilton where he left with a degree in Accountancy, Stewart joined Lidl for 10 years. There he rose from Deputy Store Manager up to Auditor and Regional Sales Director. That journey took him from Clydebank to Head Office in Wimbledon before he returned to the butchery business in Muirhead.

The experience with Lidl was not planned but Stewart freely admits that he learned how to retail, the art of warehouse management and the subtleties of stock ordering.

Stewart returned to Muirhead with a much greater vision for the future. "The ability to see the bigger picture meant that there were big changes as soon as I came in. I improved the retail shop markedly; we sold more and increased turnover by having better displays and 100% availability at all times."





Not content with that Stewart has recently distributed via the Royal Mail 40,000 leaflets in the area around his shop making a very strong offer that really compels customers to make the effort to shop at the Muirhead butchers.

Firmly believing that the hallmark of each and every business is quality, S Collins & Son has always placed great importance on its sourcing.

Since 1979, first class cattle have been bought from Morgan's Farm of Glenboig. One of the criteria in family business is "buy the best" making it easier to sell, giving the saying "well bought, half sold" and so has resulted in the firm winning many awards.





And when it comes to quality and customer service, S Collins & Son at Muirhead is second to none. As well as top quality locally produced beef, pork, lamb and poultry, there's also cooked meat, pies and bakery goods all made on the premises.

With Stewart and his staff of 14, every customer can be sure of a friendly smile and some great advice.

