

A man who likes it hot

FEW people would want six barbecues but butcher Shane Mundy does, and he uses all of them. What's the point in spending days carving cuts of meat and making award-winning sausages if you don't have the right gear to cook them?

Mr Mundy has a barbecue for every occasion at his Tranmere home.

The one on the front veranda is for when the weather's bad, and the stainless-steel model in his back yard, he says, is a Rolls-Royce of barbecues that he bought a few years ago.

Three large gas bottles sit alongside the upmarket machine to ensure he is never caught short when cooking up a feast.

Also at home he has a Weber barbecue and a separate spit roast.

And then there are the two commercial barbecues he keeps at Hill Street Gourmet Meats, his West Hobart butchery. These Mr Mundy dusts off for larger social gatherings and big events such as the Taste of Tasmania.

"You can see I cook a bit on the barbecue," he says, grinning as he shows the pieces of his unlikely collection. "There's nothing like a nice piece of meat char-grilled on a hotplate."

Mr Mundy sees himself as living proof that barbecues are a healthy way to dine: he has shed 20kg in the past eight months and says he feels in better shape than ever.

"I was carrying a bit of weight and I had high blood pressure and I just thought, 'I've had enough, I've got to get fit'," he says.

So he hopped on the exercise bike — sometimes for as much as two hours a day — went road riding and running and started walking the family's five-year-old black Labrador, Charlie, for at least 6km a day. And the kilos fell away.

Now, at 45, he feels "fantastic", is off his blood pressure medication and is training to run a marathon.

Mr Mundy's previous poor health



Where the heart is

was also what brought him to his rendered two-storey Tranmere home, where he has lived for two years with Allison, his wife, and children Zach, 4, Keely, 10 and Tyson, 11.

"We moved here from Acton," he says. "We had built the house down at Acton and we loved it. We loved living on the land. But I had a bit of a health scare. The disc in my neck disintegrated and I was paralysed down my left arm."

By having an artificial disc fitted in his neck, he joined the ranks of only a handful of people who have been treated with this recent technological advance.

He has now regained movement on his left side, he says, but the seriousness of the incident made him rethink what was important in life.

"I decided that my health was the most important thing, and that I didn't need the land, and I didn't need to work quite so hard in the butcher shop either," he says.

"My wife found this place and we're glad we're here now. It's really low-maintenance, there's not a lot of garden and everything is close to us."

He now works most mornings in the shop, which he has run for 26 years, and keeps the afternoons for himself.

He still enjoys his hands-on role in the shop and, despite having an army of competent staff, he still makes all the sausages himself.

It is not that he doesn't trust his staff to do the job well; it is because he likes to know that everything is

Shane Mundy, past his health scare, is living life to the full, reports LINDA SMITH

done exactly the way he wants.

This need is evident in other aspects of his life, and no more so than in his garage.

Here stands his "total pride and joy": a 2002 HSV Clubsport Commodore, carefully wrapped in a protective cover.

The gleaming black car, fitted with plush red and black leather, has never been out in the rain, has rarely been dirty and, despite being six years old, has done a mere 3700km.

"Every boy has got to have a toy," Mr Mundy says as he gazes lovingly at the car.

He has a great passion for motorsport and declares the late Peter Brock a legend. He met his idol more than once and has car pictures signed by Brock (and some by Mark Skaife) and a collection of die-cast models.

His love of cars began when he got his first car, a Datsun 180B sss. "I got the Datsun and then I went to Ford, I think, because my father was a Ford driver.

"But then I discovered Holden and bought a Brock Commodore — and I haven't looked back.

"I'm a total motorsport head and I particularly love the Indy car racing. I've only missed three in the past 14 years and have a hat from every year I've been.

"When we went on our honeymoon 14 years ago, we went to the Gold Coast and for a few days I said 'See you later' to Allison and went off to the Indy."

Mr Mundy always dreamed of driving stock cars and once bought a fluoro-green VS Commodore, which he then prepared for racing. But then he injured his neck and so the racing never happened. "I was about to go in my first race when I hurt my neck and the doctor said 'No way', so I never got to live my

dream," he says. "I'm still disappointed about that, but I know that my health is more important."

He still gets to enjoy machines with engines but at a more leisurely pace. When he's not going for a Sunday drive in his Commodore, he likes to take his family out on the river in their boat and catch a few flathead.

He is also a bit of a daredevil: he has been bungee jumping, bungee rocketing and white-water rafting, and now he has his sights set on skydiving.

His other favourite pastime is shopping on eBay. As he sits on the cream couch in the lounge-room with his laptop on his knee, Mr Mundy says: "I love to surf the net, look at YouTube and find bargains on eBay".

He got the Dolce and Gabanna jeans he wears from eBay and wears a watch he bought from the US. Now he is eagerly awaiting delivery of a dual-suspension downhill mountain bike he has bought.

He also shops for cheap flights and accommodation.

As well as getting to the Indy regularly, Mr Mundy enjoys holidaying with his family.

The timber coffee table is loaded with books listing various destinations, and the family is just back from a South Pacific cruise, which they loved.

The cruise was a reward for Mundy's hard work at the Taste of Tasmania. It was the first time he had run a stall at the big event.

"It was the hardest week of my life," he says. "I was working 17-hour days, and it was just after Christmas, which is always a hectic time for butchers anyway."

"The cruise was a great way to wind down."

He liked it so much he's planning his next cruise. "We've been to

Hawaii, Fiji and Bali a few times, but cruising is just the best way for young families to travel because the kids are so well catered for. We went to New Caledonia, Vanuatu and Fiji."

The cruise was an eye-opener for Mr Mundy, who found himself treated as a celebrity.

Since he appeared on *Enough Rope with Andrew Denton* last year, people have recognised him in all sorts of places. "On the cruise, people were saying, 'Where do I know you from?' and then I'd tell them that I was on *Denton*."

"Mainlanders at the Taste of Tasmania were even asking to have their photos taken with me. It's strange but also nice."

Mr Mundy loves the chance to relax at home, particularly now that he lives by the water.

"When you wake up, the sun can be red or pink over the mountain; you can watch the cruise ships coming up the river. The view changes every day and I'll never get sick of that. I'd find it hard to move somewhere now that didn't have a view."

The other thing he loves about his home is the kitchen, a picture of gleaming stainless-steel appliances.

"I love cooking," he says. "I was actually going to be a chef before I became a butcher. But then I thought about it and decided I'd rather be a butcher."

"I didn't like the idea of working lots of nights and weekends. Now I cook in the butcher shop, so I get the best of both worlds anyway."

A French cookbook sits on a cookbook stand, and Mr Mundy says his favourite dishes are Italian and French. His speciality is a French pepper sauce.

Because the children keep him busy, he says he does not get as much chance to cook and entertain as he would like. But he can always cook up a good Aussie barbecue. There is no shortage of hotplates.