



Great Australian  
**Bike Ride**  
*Together on the road for mental health*



[www.greataustralianbikeride.org.au](http://www.greataustralianbikeride.org.au)

**21 September 2009**

**WHAT: JANE LOMAX-SMITH, MINISTER FOR MENTAL HEALTH, WELCOMES THE GREAT AUSTRALIAN BIKE RIDE (GABR) TO ADELAIDE**

**WHO:** The epic GABR - **17,800 kilometres** around Australia for mental health research and awareness- arrives in Adelaide on Thursday to complete Stage 8 of the 9-stage ride.

**The riders set out from Melbourne in March**, circumnavigated **Tasmania** and travelled through **Victoria, NSW, QLD, NT, WA & SA**. While most riders are cycling a stage or two, **four are riding the entire way!** Queenslanders **Roberta Gordon, 62** and **Tom Brown, 70**, and Victorians, **Gonny Rundell, 58** and **John Farrugia 61**, have notched up over **15,000 kilometres**.

**Tom Brown** was waylaid for medical reasons when the Ride reached Perth. 16 days later he got back on his bike and **cycled alone to rejoin the Ride in Kalgoorlie**. **"I had to catch up so I took the direct route from Perth to Kalgoorlie rather than the longer GABR route along the coast"** he explained. South Australian Rotarians will turn out in force to welcome Tom and the rest of the Ride team to Adelaide.

**WHY:** The Ride is raising funds for mental health research and addressing the **stigma and myths associated with mental illness**.

- After experiencing the stigma of having a depressive illness, former NSW Leader of the Opposition and mental health advocate **John Brogden**, said he would have preferred "a diagnosis of cancer, as having that disease is socially acceptable. Unfortunately compassion for people with a physical illness is generally not extended to people with a mental illness" he said.
- **One in five Australians had a mental illness in 2007** and almost **one in two** (or 7.3 million) **people have experienced a mental illness at some point in their lives**. (Australian Bureau of Statistics, Australian Social Trends, March 2009)
- The **World Health Organisation** estimates that by **2020 depression** will be one of the world's greatest health problems.

**WHERE: Torrens Parade Ground – BBQ LUNCH for Riders & Media-12pm**

**WHEN: 1.30 pm Thursday 24 September Welcome Jane Lomax-Smith**  
-ends-

**To meet the Ride call Ride Director Geoff Kennedy: 0400 335 759**  
**Riders are available for media interviews and photos**

Details: **Gerardine Grace - Media & Communications**

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