



Riders stop over

Cyclists involved in Rotary Australia's Great Australian Bike Ride stopped over in Castlemaine last Thursday morning to enjoy morning tea at the Castlemaine Theatre Royal, kindly provided by the Castlemaine Rotary Club and catered for by David Stretch and his Theatre Royal team.

The riders were nearing the end of their six-month-long journey, day 202 of the 204 day ride, which began in Mornington on March 21 and saw up to 200 riders traverse all over Australia in a bid to raise important funds for, and awareness of, mental health research being supported by Australian Rotary Health. The riders aimed to spread Rotary's message about mental health and depression, to overcome the stigma surrounding mental illness and encourage people from all walks of life to get up and start getting active to enjoy a fuller,

fitter and happier life.

The riders were scheduled to travel on to Daylesford for lunch on Thursday before stopping over in Ballarat on Thursday evening, visiting Geelong Friday and then were set to make their way into Melbourne on Saturday, October 10 - 'World Mental Health Day' - where their six month long road trip was to end with a civic reception to celebrate the very special fund raising ride.

Among the riders to stop over in Castlemaine were four cyclists who had been on the 17,500 kilometre journey since it began in March - Tom Brown 70, Roberta Gordon 62, John Farrugia 62 and Gonny Rundell 58. The 'awesome foursome' raised around \$40,000 each and said that they had been joined by riders at the various capital cities and had made some wonderful friends and witnessed some beautiful scenery all

while spreading Rotary's important mental health message and raising funds for research.

Readers can learn more about their amazing journey and stories by visiting the Great Australian Bike Ride website at www.greataustralianbikeride.org.au

Each of the participants had their own personal reasons for taking up the challenge of the ride - many having suffered depression themselves or having family's members who have suffered from mental illness.

The cyclists said their journey would not have been possible if not for the outstanding kindness of Rotarians everywhere who have catered for and accommodated the riders for much of their journey.

A large team of volunteers and a huge number of sponsors contributed to make the fund raiser an outstanding success.



Ready to roll. Riders prepare to set off for Daylesford