



# Riding around the country

by **Holly Freitag**

IF THE thought of peddling 200m down the road makes you feel sore and tired, spare a thought for the cyclists who are riding the 17,800 kilometre trip around the country as part of the Great Australian Bike Ride.

The event started in Melbourne in March and was organised by the Australian Rotary Health fund to raise awareness and support of mental illness and its mental health research programs.

The cyclists arrived in Mandurah on Sunday before continuing their journey to Bunbury on Monday morning.

Mandurah deputy mayor Darren

Lee and council officer Graeme Davies joined the riders for the 90km trip to Australind.

The group, along with support staff vehicles, set off from McDonalds Mandurah around 9am and reached their destination by noon, averaging 30km/h.

They were farewelled by Mandurah Mayor Paddi Creevey.

Four cyclists and four support staff, averaging 130km per day, will complete the entire ride around Australia.

Queenslanders Tom Brown, 70, and Roberta Gordon, 62, and Victorians Gonny Rundell, 58, and John Farrugia, 61, have ridden

more than 11,000km so far and still have two months of cycling ahead of them before they finish in Melbourne in October.

More than 100 cyclists entered one or more stages of the nine-stage ride.

A reception for the cyclists will be held in Melbourne on October 10 which is World Mental Health Day.

The riders stayed with host Rotarian families on the Sunday night. For information visit [www.greataustralianbikeride.org.au](http://www.greataustralianbikeride.org.au)



**Riding high:** Mandurah Mayor Paddi Creevey farewells Great Australian Bike Ride cyclists Roberta Gordon, John Farrugia, Geoff De Chaneet, Karen Brown, deputy mayor Darren Lee, City officer Graeme Davies, Gonny Rundell, Ross Andrewartha and John Rundell on their way to Bunbury on Monday morning.