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Brief: ROTARY

>> Maclean Rotary host the Great Australian Bike Riders

Denis Green introduced the attending members of the Great Australian Bike Ride at our last meeting. Denis is the coordinator of the Sydney to Brisbane leg of the ride.

The ride was the idea of a member of the Rotary Club of Mornington in Victoria. About 2 years ago Australian Rotary Health decided to organise the bicycle ride around Australia to raise funds and promote awareness of mental health. The plan is to ride through all Rotary Districts in Australia and to visit as many clubs as possible. The ride will cover about 18,000km. The first stage was from Mornington, around Tasmania to Melbourne. The 2nd stage was from Melbourne to Sydney. They are now on the 3rd stage from Sydney to Brisbane. They will then travel to Townsville, Mount Isa, Darwin, Broome, Perth, Albany, Kalgoorlie, and Adelaide and be back in Melbourne to arrive on 10 October 2009, which is World Mental Health day. At present there are 11 riders and 9 support crew. Their theme is "On the road for mental health".

Bob Missingham is from the Rotary Club of Murwillumbah. He is riding the Sydney to Brisbane leg. His leg covers 1500km over 19 days. Even with a couple of rest days, the daily journeys are about 100km each. He describes the ride as not hard. The riders have the easy job. They ride to morning tea and then they ride to lunch. The support crew, do all the work. They set up morning tea and lunch and organise accommodation and Rotary meeting attendances.

Bob's \$2,750 entry fee was sponsored by his Rotary Club. He also received a \$4,000 sponsorship from a friend who runs a chicken product business called "Got Balls".

Chris Dallen is from the Rotary Club of Penrith Valley. Chris attended a dinner held to raise funds for mental health awareness. At that dinner the Great Australian Bike Ride was mentioned. A friend suggested to Chris that he should take part. Chris was later approached by his club asking if he would participate if they sponsored him. Chris is also riding the Sydney to Brisbane leg.

Denis Green completed the presentation by informing us that the aim of the ride is to raise \$1 million for mental health research. So far the ride has raised \$400,000, but they have covered the heavily populated areas of Australia and soon head into far less populated areas. A plea was made to the Board of our Club to consider making a donation to Australian RotaryHealth Foundation and the Great Australian Bike Ride.