



Great Australian Bike Ride

Together on the road for mental health



www.greataustralianbikeride.org.au

21 September 2009

WHAT: ADELAIDE LORD MAYOR MICHAEL HARBISON TO FLAG OFF THE GREAT AUSTRALIAN BIKE RIDE

WHO: The epic Great Australian Bike Ride - **17,800 kilometres** around Australia for mental health research - leaves Adelaide for Melbourne in the final stage 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 around Australia**.

Adelaide resident and Chair of the Australian Rotary Health Research Committee, Prof Michael Sawyer, is riding from Adelaide to Melbourne. Michael is Head of the Research and Evaluation Unit at the Women's and Children's Hospital in Adelaide and Professor of Paediatrics at the University of Adelaide.

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

- **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.

Among the many **Australian Rotary Health** funded programs are five research projects at the Murdoch Childrens Research Institute in Melbourne. **Dame Elisabeth Murdoch** and **Australian Rotary Health Ambassador Michael Klim**, are two of the special guests who will welcome cyclists back to Melbourne on 10 October.

WHERE: Torrens Parade Ground

WHEN: 10.00 am Sunday 27 September

-ends-

**To meet the Ride call Ride Director Geoff Kennedy: [0400 335 759](tel:0400335759)
Riders are available for media interviews and photos**

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