



Cyclist joins mammoth Aussie ride

DESPITE suffering a heart attack in 2008, 65-year-old Geoff De Chaneet will be on his bike and cycling an amazing 4600km around the country to raise money for research into mental illness supported by Australian Rotary Health.

"I'd like to do it. it's a fitness challenge and I'd like to raise money for the foundation," he said.

The Great Australian Bike Ride be-

gan in March and attracts riders from all corners of the nation to get into gear and cycle around the country for charity and a good time.

Mr De Chaneet believes cycling is an excellent form of exercise and the ideal sport of choice.

"I used to be a distance runner, but I got sore feet so I switched to bicycling," he said.

Mr De Chaneet will join a group of

peddling cyclists on June 28 and ride for 41 days, from Darwin to Perth, across challenging terrain and in testing conditions.

"The Murchison River to Geraldton part will be the hardest," he said.

The average day's ride is 109km, with the longest leg being 151km.

To support Geoff De Chaneet call 9780 0828.



Geoff De Chaneet



Cyclists Dave Humphry, Mel Gray, Kevin Beltrame and Rod McDougal take a break at Burwood. Photo: TIMOTHY CLAPIN

Riders earn a break

Rashell Habib

BURWOOD became a much-needed pit stop for cyclists in the Great Australian Bike Ride after they arrived from Melbourne, having completed three of the nine stages of an epic 17,800km ride around Australia.

The cyclists are making the journey for charity in a bid to raise money and awareness of mental illness. Money raised will go to mental health research and education programs supported by Australian Rotary Health (ARH). Burwood Rotary Club president Steve Cookson said the event was a

great boost, raising funds for a good cause.

“This year we’ve already raised over \$5000 for ARH through a Christmas harbour cruise. We’re confident that, through other activities, we’ll surpass the \$10,000 the Rotary Club of Burwood donated to ARH last year”, he said.

The cyclists continued on to Strathfield, Bankstown and Liverpool before ending the day at Mulgoa. While most cyclists are taking part in one or two stages, Gonny Rundell, John Farrugia, Tom Brown and Roberta Gordon are riding the entire way around Australia.



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Taboo tackled

Mental illness will affect one in five Australians during their lifetime and Rotary Clubs of Penrith, Penrith Valley, Nepean, Wallacia/Mulgoa Valley and Lower Blue Mountains have combined for a community forum on anxiety and depression, in the Nepean Room, Penrith Council, on Wednesday, May 6, 6.30pm to 9.30pm. It will help overcome misconceptions and myths about mental illness. The Australian Rotary Health, giving \$8 million over eight years for research into mental illness, has taken on a campaign to raise community awareness of the much-ignored topic of mental health. The forum is an ideal chance to discuss the concerns, destigmatise mental illness, raise awareness and provide information. "It's time we got over the fears of these illnesses, recognise them, seek treatment and encourage others to seek treatment," said Dr Sachint Lal, of Rotary Penrith Valley. Attendees will hear from someone with a mental illness, a carer and from psychiatrist Dr Augustus Pusic. The forum is free. Refreshments provided. No need to book.

**Details: Dr Sachint Lal,
0418 266 289.**



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On track to raise funds

The Great Australian Bike Ride is a national fund-raising event supported by Blue Mountains and Penrith Rotarians and the Penrith community. The 17,800-kilometre ride around Australia is raising money for mental health research and education programs funded by Australian Rotary Health. The ride is broken into nine stages with cyclists choosing the distance they want to ride. Chris Dallen (left), of Penrith, is a cyclist on a mission these school holidays. Hailing from the Rotary Club of Penrith Valley, the 31-year-old teacher is riding the Sydney-Brisbane stage of the event, raising money for mental health research and education. While Mr Dallen is supported by the Penrith Valley Club, the Rotary Club of Lower Blue Mountains, known for its Glenbrook Garden Gnome Convention each Australia Day, is also sponsoring him by contributing \$1000 – provided he carries a gnome with him.

To sponsor Chris Dallen go to www.greataustralianbikeride.org.au.