

Changing Gears

The ride of our lives...

"It TOOK TWENTY women on twenty bikes just ten days to wake up America. They figure thirty days should cover the world."

That's your welcome to the [Changing Gears](#) website. Ambitious? Hey, it's only the sophomore year for this organisation and already they've raised over \$45,000 for breast cancer charities.

Last year twenty young breast cancer survivors (including a few Aussies!) rode up the west coast of the United States to raise charity funds. This year the ride is extending to Australia and the United Kingdom. Twenty Australian and American breast cancer survivors will take part in the inaugural Australian leg of the fundraiser ride, from Sydney to Brisbane on twenty motorcycles loaned by Harley-Davidson.

"The Australian Ride will benefit the [Breast Cancer Network Australia](#). Breast Cancer Network Australia (BCNA) was officially launched in October 1998 and is the national voice of Australians personally affected by breast cancer. Its role is to empower, inform, represent and link together people whose lives have been affected by breast cancer. It links together more than 110 breast cancer member groups and over 11,000 individuals across the country.

In 2004 twenty young breast cancer survivors challenged themselves to a 1,000 mile ride to raise funds and understanding of the disease they battled. Along the way they made a big dent in the way people with the disease were treated and supported, especially younger women. This year teams of young survivors from the UK, US and Australia will take on a global ride across all three continents to take their message even further. " – [www.changinggears.org](#)

These people are organised, publicity savvy and, most importantly, motivated. The founding directors of Changing Gears are both themselves young breast cancer survivors. Obviously, when they set out to do something, they don't mess around.

What does this have to do with WIMA? Besides the fact that motorbikes are involved, Meredith Campbell, the Aussie co-founder of Changing Gears (along with American Megan Dwyer), is a member of WIMA Australia and approached WIMA with the idea of combining forces for a good cause.

Imagine you owned a lemonade stand and one day a major soft drink distributor stopped by and offered you the full use of their advertising clout. Would you say no? You'd probably say, "What's the catch?" The catch is... we all want to raise money for Breast Cancer research and charities. WIMA can use the publicity generated by Changing Gears and Changing Gears can use the local logistical knowledge of a group that's been in the business of charity rides for a few years; the perfect symbiotic relationship. Translation: Pepsi is offering to publicise our little lemonade stand. Let's grab it and run.

How will we handle the expected surge in numbers of bikes? Thought and planning – but at least we've got time and the necessary information to do the job. Last year the Queensland ride was expecting the same number of bikes as the year before, roughly 350. Over 800 bikes showed up, and to the credit of the organising committee, they were absorbed into the ride with little fuss. That was on the ride day itself. Knowing that the numbers could take a huge rise this year, we can plan in advance to meet the needs. Thankfully last year gave us the confidence to know it can be done.

It's going to be a busy time for us logistically, but I'm glad WIMA has decided to accept the challenge of this opportunity.

Wend your way to the Changing Gears website. [www.changinggears.org](#) Once you've read about the organisation, charities and sponsors involved, continue on to the "Meet the Riders" page. Each participant (including both the founding directors) has written a personal profile telling a bit about herself, her experience with cancer and why she wants to be involved in this ride. (Why? Because it's there, of course!)

Not just another boring statistic now are we.

JT

[Just make sure you go to [changinggears dot org](#), NOT dot com. Apparently the dot com site is all about bicycle tours with cooking themes. The Queensland newsgroup was alive with bicycle/food jokes after that little misdirection. Laugh it up girls. I don't get mad, I get even... Okay, slightly mad. -Ed.]

More Motorbike Trivia

(See page 12 for answers)

3. This motorcycle, based on the Heritage Softail, was released by Harley-Davidson in 1990:
 - a) Fat Boy
 - b) Low Rider
 - c) Dyna Glide Sturgis
 - d) Daytona Dyna Glide