

# Bike riders spreading the word about breast cancer

Mark Hinchliffe

AFTER surviving life-threatening breast cancer five years ago, Meredith Campbell decided she would take back control of her life.

So she learned to ride a motorcycle and has been spreading the word about biking and breast cancer ever since.

Campbell, 39, of Brisbane, was at the head of a thundering pack of 16 breast cancer survivors on Harley-Davidsons who rode into the city on Friday after a 1900km journey from Sydney; the long way.

"There is an element of risk in riding a motorcycle, but I chose to take that risk. Breast cancer was something I didn't choose.

"This is about taking back control of my life and my destiny," Campbell says to the enthusiastic cheers of her riding companions.

The crusade to spread the word about surviving breast cancer began five years ago when Campbell had completed her therapy.

"The hardest thing was to adjust. People saw my hair had grown back and they wondered why I wasn't getting on with it," she says.

"But you lose optimism and a certainty about your future after breast cancer."

She then met fellow breast cancer survivor Megan Dwyer of California who had a bike licence.



MEREDITH Campbell, front, and the Amazon Hearts riders.

"Riding a motorcycle was something I was going to do when I got old. It was my mid-life crisis. But now its come early," Campbell says.

Campbell and Dwyer started Amazon Hearts and began the first Thunder Ride in the US in 2004 to raise breast cancer awareness.

Last year the Thunder Ride was extended to Australia and this year two American and an English woman have joined.

Campbell says five of the women learned to ride just to participate in the Thunder Ride.

Harley-Davidson supplied the bikes and some of the gear and although only three of the women

own Harleys themselves, others are now lining up to spend up to \$30,000 on a bike.

"The women love the freedom of motorcycling and the time spent alone in your helmet with your thoughts," Campbell says.

The women return home today after their gruelling ride, but will next weekend participate in Pink Ribbon rides around the country to raise funds for cancer research.

The Brisbane Pink Ribbon ride goes to Mt Tamborine from Griffith University at Mt Gravatt on Sunday at 10am with registrations from 8am.

Visit:  
[www.amazonheartthunder.org](http://www.amazonheartthunder.org)