

Beating cancer inspires road trip

By ADAM HARVEY

AFTER Marie Fox survived breast cancer, learning to ride a motorcycle no longer seemed such a risk.

"You take on a new view of life when you have been through something like that," the Birchgrove advertising manager said.

So, she jumped on the back of a 500cc Suzuki — and discovered that the roads were jammed with survivors, just like her.

After cancer, it seems, there is not much that stands in your way.

"It made me think, 'I've survived cancer — I can do anything!'" she said.

Now, along with four other Australian women and 15 Americans, she is preparing to ride on a Harley-Davidson along the west coast of the US to raise awareness of breast cancer and money for research.

Harley-Davidson has supplied the bikes and organisations including Harvey Norman and David Jones are helping to pay airfares and accommodation.

Their ride starts this week and they will be accompanied by a documentary crew.

The riders hope the journey will become an annual event, and they are keen to publicise the impact of cancer on younger women.

About 25 per cent of



Charity ride: Marie Fox and Donna Handley prepare to take to the road *Picture: Kristi Miller*

women with breast cancer cases were diagnosed in their 30s or 40s. Marie was 42 when she was found a cancerous lump on her breast. Another Australian rider, Donna Hadley, discovered she had cancer on her 35th birthday.

Both women underwent about six months of intensive radiotherapy and

chemotherapy, recovered, and decided to make a few changes in their life.

"I had always looked for some sort of thrill," Donna said, "like driving a go-kart or jumping out of a plane — and it never occurred to me that I could ride a motorbike."

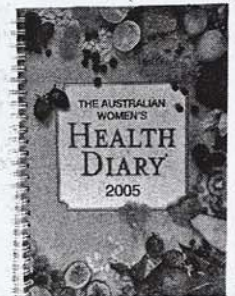
Their week-long ride in the States will begin with a quick bike familiarisation

course, as some of the Harleys have engines twice as big as anything the women have ridden before.

After that, the road is theirs although US Harley Owners Group (HOG) chapters will escort them.

"My husband is so jealous," Donna said.

Follow the bikers' trip on www.changinggears.org



Fund-raiser: The Diary

Diary boosts funds

THE Breast Cancer Institute of Australia aims to raise \$500,000 for clinical trials programs.

To mark the start of Breast Cancer Awareness month, it will donate the proceeds from its annual Women's Health Diary.

Since 1999, the diary has generated more than \$2 million for breast-cancer trials.

This year, with Channel 7 Melbourne newsreader Jennifer Keyte as ambassador, the institute hopes to raise a record amount.

More than one in 12 Australian women will contract breast cancer.

But according to institute spokesperson Jenny Sly, more women are surviving because of advances in early treatments — a result of clinical-trials research.