Finish line and welcome home draws near for Aus-by-cycle 15,000km charity ride

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Seven months later and $13,000 in donations richer, amateur road cyclist Peter Maguire and his cycling partner John Dow are just weeks from completing a round-Australia bike ride in support of Cerebral Palsy Australia.

Canberra, November 21, 2008

Peter Maguire crosses the finish line of his 15,000km round-Australia cycle trip on December 2 at 3.00pm, seven months and one day after he set off on an inspired endurance ride of a lifetime. The trip has so far raised $13,000 for Cerebral Palsy Australia.

On May 1 this year, Peter set off with the blessing of family, friends and colleagues and with sponsorship from his employer of 24 years, Fuji Xerox Australias Canberra office, where he works as a technical specialist. Peter and his cycling partner John Dow were given a big send-off from Lennox Gardens in Canberra, which is also the venue of their return.

Peter has personally funded the trip so that all donations received along the way go directly to Cerebral Palsy Australia. The money raised will be distributed amongst CPAs state-wide offices and will be put towards purchasing equipment such as electric wheel chairs, walkers and lifting equipment to help make daily life easier for individuals, families and carers.

Peters Aus-by-cycle website features a daily diary of the trip in words and photographs. Its as much the story of a courageous and strenuous charity adventure, supported along the way by the generosity of strangers, as it is an insight into the changing terrain and in some cases, fortunes, of the remote towns of Australia.

Extract from Aus-by-cycle diary, 19 September 2008:

This is little Paris whose picture and story I was sent almost eighteen months ago when I was considering taking on this around Australia bicycle ride. She became my inspiration for everything that followed and meeting her on this day has made every stroke of the pedals seem worthwhile.
Today we were invited to visit the Centre for Cerebral Palsy in Coolbinia North Perth. I was so looking forward to meeting little Paris whose picture I have used in raising awareness and funds. It was the most amazing experience we have had on the entire journey so far. As we approached the entrance to the building we could see that the entire driveway was lined with people all cheering and clapping in a huge guard of honour. There was a TV crew and newspaper crew taking pictures and following the introductions and interviews, morning tea was enjoyed by all. I was able to spend the rest of the morning with Paris and her mum Vanessa. Without question, this for me was a wonderful experience. I was able to talk to Paris and her mum about the disability and best of all play with Paris on some of the playground equipment. I know I am going to have one of those lumps in my throat for a very long time.

We are grateful to Peter Maguire and John Dow for completing their amazing cycle and for the effort and generous support given to Cerebral Palsy Australia. We congratulate them both on their outstanding achievement, said Geraldine Walters, fundraising co-ordinator at the CPA Canberra office.

The Spastic Centre in the ACT offers a wide range of services and programs to children with cerebral palsy and their families. Life for these children presents complex and often significant challenges. Through donations like those collected during this cycle trip, The Spastic Centre can provide specialist support services, with a range of experienced professionals offering innovative approaches to children in the local ACT community, said Ms Walters.

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Further supporting material about the trip is available from Peter Maguires employer and sponsor, Fuji Xerox Australia and from CP Australia.

Photographs taken during the journey are posted on www.ausbycycle.com.

To arrange an interview or to be involved in filming Peters return to Canberra on December 2, please see below.

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About Cerebral Palsy Australia
Programs introduced in the ACT by CPA (The Spastic Centre NSW) during 2008 include Splash and Play (Hydrotherapy), Talk and Play (Communication), Hot Kidz (Technology Options) and Hippotherapy (Physiotherapy on horseback). All are provided through sponsorships from various businesses and organisations throughout the ACT, with ClubsACT providing the bulk of The Spastic Centre's funding, a partnership that has been in place since 2001. For further information, visit http://tscnsw.org.au/services/about_tsc/index.htm.