

50 Something Extra – National Seniors

October - November 2009

Jack's journey across the Nullarbor

Seventy-six year old Jack Evans has turned his passion for restoring vintage motor cars into a national awareness and fundraising campaign for a deadly lung condition that affects two million Australians.

In October, Jack, from Armidale in NSW, will travel with his daughter Alison in a Triumph Super Seven of the same age. In memory of his late wife Gill, who passed away in 2006 after battling Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) for 16 years, Jack will travel 4000km across the Nullarbor from Perth to New South Wales in the restored Triumph.

Jack and his daughter will stop at many towns along the way to increase awareness about COPD and raise much needed funds to assist the ongoing support services provided by The Australian Lung Foundation.

A former cabinetmaker by trade, Jack has spent the last three years restoring his Triumph- which now includes distinctive 'Triumph for Breath' signage.

"I'm thrilled to have finally finished restoring this beautiful car which has been in my shed gathering dust for the last 35 years," he said.

"As well as commemorating Percival Armstrong and George Manley's 1929 journey, I am looking forward to getting on the road and doing my bit to raise awareness of COPD and much needed funds for The Australian Lung Foundation.

"I hope to raise \$12,000 on my trip, that's \$3 a kilometre, as well as highlight the long term damage smoking can cause," he said.

Jack will travel through Kalgoorlie, Ceduna, Port Augusta, Broken Hill and Tamworth before arriving home in Armidale in mid-October.

COPD is the umbrella term given to a long-term lung condition that includes chronic bronchitis and emphysema.

COPD causes breathlessness which worsens over time until simple daily activities such as showering or making a cup of tea become almost impossible.

Alarmingly, as many as three out of four Australians with COPD are unaware they have



Jack Evans with his Triumph Super Seven.

the disease and are therefore not taking important steps to manage the condition. COPD is the seventh leading cause of death in Australia and the second leading cause of avoidable Australian hospital admissions, accounting for more than 50,000 admissions each year.

Anyone who has been a smoker, or is a smoker and suffers from some shortness of breath and/or a productive cough, should see their GP and take a simple lung function test.

While COPD is incurable, there are treatments available that can help people reduce their symptoms, improve their quality of life and stay out of hospital.

The Australian Lung Foundation is able to provide advice, support and assistance to those with COPD around the country.

Patients and their carers can call the Lung Foundation's Information and Support Centre on 1800 654 301.

To follow Jack's journey or to make a donation, visit www.lungfoundation.com.au.