

GIVING CHILDREN BRIGHTER DAYS

WORDS BY JILL CRAIG

If you are a fan of great Aussie music and like to get out for a great weekend away, save the Labour Day weekend in March for the Brighter Days Festival - in Bright of course.

When a group of like minded friends whose interests include bikes, cars and music formed a fundraising committee to organise the inaugural "Brighter Days" event in 2013 they had no idea it would be such a success.

Their motive was to do something that would make a real difference to children and their families with complex health issues.

"We chose two children's charities to support; SUDC (Sudden Unexplained Death In Childhood) a charity close to some of the group's heart which assists in research for unexplained deaths of perfectly healthy toddlers and the other is the DEBRA foundation (Dystrophic Epidermolysis Bullosa Research Association); a not-for-profit volunteer based organization, whose mission is to improve the lives of those living with Epidermolysis Bullosa (EB).

EB is a rare, debilitating and sometimes fatal disease whereby the skin blisters and peels at the slightest touch. Living with EB has been likened to living with third degree burns. It is very painful, and sufferers must be bandaged every day with dressings to protect and medicate their wounds," said Jason Reid, Vice President of the Brighter Days Foundation.

The formula for the music event was a real winner and in their first year they raised in excess of \$32,000.

"Since 2013 we have continued supporting these two charities. The success of the 2014, 2015 and 2016 Brighter Days Festivals far exceeded our expectations and raised a combined total of over \$950,000," Jason said.

"We hope to raise more funds each year through natural growth and as awareness of the annual event develops. The name obviously is two-fold the first, that the event is held in Bright the second is in the hope that we can make a "Brighter Day" for some kids," he said.

Brighter Days is an incorporated fundraising entity, it is made up of a group of committed people from within our group and also a subcommittee of people from Bright and Melbourne who help the cause immensely.

The 2017 event will be held on the Victorian Labour Day weekend on March 10 -12.

The line-up is an impressive mix of Australian artists including Joe Camilleri, Chocolate Starfish, Mick Peeling Band.

The Screamin' Eagles have a devoted band of followers who will be lining up at Bright on Labour Day.

Mental as Anything is another must see act at Brighter Days 2017. Entry to the festival is free, and all the music is free to attend.

The main fund-raiser is the Mega Raffle, with a Harley-Davidson Ultra Limited motorcycle, valued at around \$40,000 as first prize. Second prize is a Harley-Davidson Street 500 and third prize is a Kincome tool pack valued at \$5000. Funds are also raised through donations and merchandise sales.

*To find out more about Brighter Days or to purchase a raffle ticket
head to the website www.brighterdays.org.au*

