Close to $1 million has been raised for the family of Det Insp Bryson Anderson VA, culminating in a gala event that began with a simple phone call from an Aussie country music superstar.

On 6 December 2012 Hawkesbury LAC’s Det Insp Anderson VA lost his life while attending a dispute at Oakville, near Windsor. He left behind a wife and three children.

Not long after news of Bryson’s death reached the public, HR Duty Officer at Chifley LAC, Insp Glenn Cogdell received a phone call from country music legend Lee Kernaghan.

“The idea was to organise a concert fundraiser for the family.”

Through Lee, Ray Hadley was contacted and offered his services to host a fundraising evening. Through his relationship with the owners of Doltone House, Mr Hadley was able to secure the venue as a sponsor for the evening, resulting in a discounted rate for attendees on the food and beverage package.

The wheels were in motion.

A history of helping police families

Lee’s call to Insp Cogdell was not the first time the veteran performer has offered his support to the police family.

Tamworth HWP officer, Snr Cst David Rixon VA was a happily married father of six who lost his life when he was shot on duty in March 2012.

Following Snr Cst Rixon’s death, Lee made contact with the officer’s widow, Fiona and her children. Fiona was a guest at the Tamworth Country Music Awards this year and Kernaghan gifted an Xbox to Fiona’s son, and continues to stay in touch with the family.

The compassion of the 2008 Australian of the Year was recognised at Tamworth when he was presented with a framed photograph and certificate by then Acting Commissioner Nick Kaldas and Assistant Commissioner McKechnie.

The people who helped

- Insp Glenn Cogdell, Chifley LAC
- Assistant Commissioner Geoff McKechnie, Commander, Western Region
- Supt Michael Robinson, Commander, Chifley LAC
- Supt Murray Reynolds, Staff Officer to the Deputy Commissioner
- A/Supt Dave Jones, Hawkesbury LAC
- Lee Kernaghan
- Steve White, Lee’s manager
- Raff Del Vecchio, Police Association, Police Bank and Police Legacy
- Mick Hilder, Police Association

The birth of an all star gala

After a combined effort from the organising committee, the fundraising event spearheaded by Kernaghan was scheduled for Thursday 18 July at Doltone House, Darling Island Wharf.

Lee also came up with the event’s title: “May the Force be with you - Bryson Anderson All Star Gala Event.” The night was a culmination of all the previous fundraising efforts for the Anderson family, in particular those of the Hawkesbury LAC, which included golf and bowls days.

Those in attendance were entertained throughout the evening by a fantastic line up of stars, including Angry Anderson, the Wolfe Brothers, Lee’s sister Tania Kernaghan and of course, Lee himself.

Tania flew to Sydney on the day to be a part of the gala, even though it was her birthday.

“I could not have thought of any other place to be today apart from helping out here tonight,” Tania said on the night. “It is a great honour and privilege to be here.”

The night included NSWPF displays held in front of the venue, with Police Launch Nemesis, The Mounted Unit, PORS, the Dog Unit.

Both live and silent auctions were held for more than 80 items, with Ray Hadley in the role of celebrity
In Bryson’s Memory

Auctioneer. For auction on the night the Police Executive provided a position on the CAPP Program and puppy naming rights of a Police Dog.

In appreciation of all the support received from the entertainers, Mr Hadley and Lee’s manager, Steve White were presented with plaques of appreciation.

The night raised more than $90,000 for the Anderson family, Windsor fundraising activities raised more than $80,000 and the major raffle organised by Hawkesbury LAC raised over $20,000. It is expected that the total amount of funds that will be placed in trust for the Anderson family will be in the vicinity of $1 million.

All commands, including specialist commands, were encouraged to host an event for retired police in the week leading up to or following the official date. Launched last year and now an annual event, Commissioner Andrew Scipione said the day provided one small tribute to the contribution made by retired police officers to the organisation.

“Last year, during our 150th Anniversary celebrations, we made the decision that on the first Thursday in September every year we would acknowledge and recognise our retired officers,” Commissioner Scipione said.

“The proud organisation that stands today owes so much to the foundations that (our retired officers) helped to lay.” Retired Police Day 2013 provided an opportunity for retired and current police to interact. Retired police who attended RPD events were also able to get a feel for contemporary policing, police equipment and infrastructure.

The day was also a time to reflect on retired officers who have passed away during the last 12 months.

“There comes a day for every police officer where it’s time to retire, but I know that for so many of our retired police officers you can leave policing but policing never leaves you,” Commissioner Scipione said.

This year, the NSWPF celebrated Retired Police Day (RPD) on Thursday, 5 September.

Above

Media Photo: The face of last year’s media launch, retired Det Sgt 1st Class Bill Harris with President of the Retired Police Association of NSW, retired Sgt Paul Bisceco; retired Insp Irene Juergens APM; retired Commissioner Tony Lauer APM; retired Det Insp Jim Counsel; Minister for Police & Emergency Services, Michael Gallacher MLC; retired Commissioner Ken Moroney AO, APM; retired Acting Commissioner Neil Taylor APM and Commissioner Andrew Scipione APM.

Above Left

Pictured at the recent Bryson Anderson fundraiser are Lee Kernaghan and Tania Kemaghan with the Dog Unit’s Sr Cst Luke Ellem and Police Dog Bryson. Duty officer’s vehicle Hawkesbury 10, which bears the personalized registration plates of BCA-12 in honour of Det Insp Anderson VA is in the background.