

Blue Mountains Branch Friends of the ABC Newsletter June 2013

GREETINGS TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE BLUE MOUNTAINS BRANCH OF FRIENDS OF THE ABC

From Madame President.

Another month of activity surrounding the ABC, and to a lesser degree, SBS.

The election is getting closer, and more pressure is being sought from all political parties to reveal their intentions regarding their Policy Statements for the continuation of our public broadcasters.

The Federal Government Budget revealed \$129 million for the ABC, a pleasing sum of money despite the tough financial situation. Of course whatever money is allocated is never enough. The ABC has expanded so much in the last decade so it was quite ironic that whilst our public broadcaster has been leading the way in introducing both digital and on-line services, the funding was being decreased.

2013 was an important year for funding for the ABC as the previous triennial funding period was ending, and it was vital that funding wasn't decreased as the new 3 year period commenced.

It was also very reassuring to see a "tied amount of money" was allocated to restoring many of the regional services.

Our Branch has been active in lobbying local members of Parliament face to face on behalf of the ABC, and by writing and e-mailing all sides of Government to remind them of the relevance and importance of retaining a vigorous public broadcaster.

Generally we have received reassuring responses from all sides of the political arena.

In the lead-up to the election we must keep up the pressure on politicians of every political persuasion that a commercial-free, independent, and high quality public broadcaster is an absolute necessity in a democracy. I urge you all to help by making a phone call, or to e-mail Ministers and Shadow Ministers, to remind them that the public demand an Independent ABC. Letters to the Editor of all newspapers, both printed and on-line, is an excellent way of provoking dialogue within the community, and believe me, all Politicians are aware of public opinion and its impact on policy. Our monthly meetings held on the 3rd Saturday of each month at the Grand View Hotel in Wentworth Falls are attracting some wonderful new members,

NEXT MEETING

WHERE: Grand View Hotel,
Wentworth Falls
DATE: Sat, 15 June 2013
TIME: 10:00 AM



Check out our Branch Website...

Go to: Friends of the ABC NSW

<http://www.fabcnsw.org.au/>

Go to Local branches(left column) and click on 'Blue Mountains'

FABC COMMITTEE

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Please contact any committee member to find out more about Friends of the ABC.

and we welcome everyone ... please come and join us.

I would like to take a moment to remind you all to please check if your membership has expired. If you are not a financial member, I hope that you will renew your membership; it is very good value, and you are not only helping to retain the ABC, which is a part of our National Heritage, but you have the advantage of keeping abreast of all developments around our national broadcaster by receiving copies of the BMFABC Newsletter, the excellent quarterly Update magazine, and any relevant information that is sent to all members to keep you well informed and up-to-date with ABC developments. You also "are in the know" when any events or functions are planned and receive a discount price when attending.

Finally to a happy ending.

One of our most hard working and nicest Committee Members celebrated her 80th birthday in May. Alison Burnard.... please stand up!!!

On behalf of all our members, both local and at state level, happy, happy, birthday Alison. We appreciate all you do, and admire the way you efficiently get things done in a quiet and understated manner.

Alison celebrated with all her family and many friends at a very happy gathering on May 18th.

Long may you continue your inspiring life, and your involvement in many and varied organisations ----- especially the FABC.

Margaret Foy
President BMFABC

And now for GT's bit

As members of the Friends of the ABC I'm assuming that you really do care about, amongst other things, the independence of our public broadcaster.

There has been quite a lot of information going around about pushes by some groups to sell off the ABC and SBS. Top of the list is the **Institute of Public Affairs** (IPA) which despite its name sounding like a publicly funded organisation, it is anything but. The IPA is financed by Rupert Murdoch, Gina Rinehart and a couple of other very powerful and influential donors. Early in April Tony Abbott attended an IPA Gala Dinner as their guest speaker and it is claimed **that he pledged to support most of the 75 point plan.** The one that should concern all of us is:

Public broadcasting - gone. The ABC to be broken up and sold off, SBS to be fully privatised

Then, a little earlier this month The **Victorian Liberal Party's state branch** urged the federal Coalition to make a full-scale "operational review" of the ABC and SBS to "look at the feasibility of partial or full privatisation of both". It was planned that this be voted on at their state conference but fortunately, due to public pressure and a campaign by Getup, this proposal was abandoned. This doesn't mean that this school of right wing thinking has gone away and I believe that we will all have to remain on our guard.

And another one that I hope will be of concern to all is:

Medicare gone for most Australians.

If these revelations concern you please write to your local Federal Member. For most if not all of us it is Louise Markus, and our local Senator is Doug Cameron. Please also send a copy to your local newspaper.

Many of you will remember the ABC's Tim Bowden. He writes an interesting blog which you can find at:

<http://www.timbowden.com.au/>

Definitely worth a look.

And finally, a bit of humour.

I was visiting my son and daughter-in-law last night when I asked if I could borrow a newspaper.

'This is the 21st century, old man,' he said.

'We don't waste money on newspapers.

Here, you can borrow my iPad.

Well I can tell you, that fly never knew what hit it....