



Blue Mountains Branch Friends of the ABC Newsletter June 2014

From the pen of President Margaret.

What a glorious autumn we have experienced in the Blue Mountains this year. Magnificent autumn colours in abundance and for weeks on end. Nature at its best (we won't mention unseasonably warm temperatures)!!

If only the news was as good for the ABC. Predictably the federal budget slashed funding for both the ABC and SBS. The next shock will be when the 'Efficiency Review' is handed to the government in a couple of months' time. The effect that will have on the government decision to make further cuts to the ABC is as predictable as night follows day. We know that there is NO WASTE at the ABC. Staffing levels are at minimum levels and their working hours extended. Funding cuts equal further cuts to all facets of programming.

Repeats of programs will become even more prevalent, and good quality news programs will be reduced to minimalist levels.

Is this what Australians want? I hope not. All of us MUST protest against reducing the ABC to a trivial broadcaster. We implore all of you to write, e-mail or phone your local MPs and Senators and say, 'DO NOT TOUCH OUR ABC'. Do this as often as you like and don't forget to copy to the Minister for Communications, Malcolm Turnbull, e-mail malcolm.turnbull.mp@aph.gov.au

Other e-mail addresses for our Federal Representatives are:

senator.cameron@aph.gov.au
Louise.Markus.MP@aph.gov.au

The phone number for the Australian Federal Parliament is: 02 6277 7111

The loss of the Australia Network and Radio Australia is devastating. Mark Scott said in an ABC interview that every other developed country is doubling or tripling its efforts to broadcast in China. Australia is the ONLY country to be pulling out of China!

NEXT MEETING

WHERE: **Katoomba Winter Magic,**
Cnr of Waratah & Lurline Sts

DATE: **Sat, June 21**

TIME: **MEET AT 11:30 AM**



Check out our Branch Website...

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

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

Several members have attended protest rallies to retain a viable ABC at Bligh St Sydney, Louise Markus' office in Windsor and 'March in May' in Sydney.

Cheers,
Margaret

As you can see from President Margaret's column, the need for continuing activity in support of our ABC has not diminished. If any of you heard an interview on RN Breakfast on Monday June 2 with incoming Liberal Democrat Senator David Leyonhjelm you might well have started to feel uneasy. The Senator elect stated that there is no need for the government to own an organisation if it competes with similar private sector business, think Medibank, up for sale, and our ABC which according to Leyonhjelm should be sold off or just closed down!! To me this is pure Tea Party policy from the extreme right.

Leyonhjelm is one of the micro party senators elected in the September 2013 election and I fear his views blend in very nicely with the Liberal Party's extreme right policy makers and that of Tony Abbott's major backer, Rupert Murdoch, all to the detriment of our ABC. What do you think? Letters to Louise Markus and Malcolm Turnbull are extremely important. Please also use the Letters to the Editor section of this newsletter as a way to express your views to our local members.

This month our branch will be attending the Winter Magic Festival in Katoomba in lieu of our usual meeting at the Grand View. Please come along dressed in really bright clothing.

The parade commences at the corner of Waratah and Lurline Streets at 1130 so plan to be there 20 minutes earlier. Parking will be difficult, so allow plenty of time to walk from where you park to the assembly point. A wise transport alternative would be to come to Katoomba by train. More information to follow as soon as it is known.

The trip to the ABC Studios on Friday July 18 is well subscribed. If you haven't yet booked, contact our Treasurer Bob Macadam urgently. Attendees will also be part of the taping of Jennifer Byrne's *The Book Club*. We have to be at Ultimo by 0950 for the tour starting at 1000. This will be followed by a

recording of *The Book Club* starting at 1300 (1.00pm in old money). **If you are planning to go by train, catch the one leaving Katoomba 0724** and look for our group upstairs in the second carriage.

On May 7, four of us, Margaret Foy, Eunice Goodberg Margaret Taylor and I set off to join the group from Get Up to deliver a copy of Get Up's Hands off our ABC petition to the office of Louise Markus in Windsor. Unfortunately we got caught up in the traffic jam at Springwood from the fatal car accident just a few minutes earlier resulting in our arrival in Windsor 45 minutes late and missing the Get Up group. However we took a photo of our group outside Louise Markus's office.



And here is the Get Up group 45 minutes ahead of us.



The next meeting at the Grand View will be on July 19.

Looking forward to seeing you all at Winter Magic on Saturday June 21.

GT