

### From the President's Desk

#### *ABC Friends Mediawaves, News and Headlines*

Hello Members and ABC Friends,

It was great to be back together at our first General Meeting for 2015. When I stood to open the meeting imagine my first reaction when seeing the room almost filled with more than 30 members, some returning from a long absence and a number of visitors who either took away Membership Application Forms with them and some who joined up. My response was WOW!!! – there were more chairs needed and apologies recorded.

Then, through the door, to our surprise, came the ABC Friends NSW & ACT President, Mal Hewitt in person. Mal is a member of our Branch and a resident in the Blue Mountains. The atmosphere in the room was electric that reflected real enthusiasm and interest. My thanks to all who attended and I hope that this was an indication of your intentions to not only attend our meetings whenever possible, but a demonstration of your concerns, participation and recognition of the urgency that ABC Friends anticipate in 2015 when we will need help to support our public events and parades.

Our Immediate Past President, Margaret Foy presented her belated 2014 AGM President's Report after missing the AGM due to illness. Margaret presented, with some emotion evident, her report and results of another successful year with acknowledgment of the support of her fine team for their loyalty and friendship. The meeting congratulated Margaret on her outstanding Presidency by acclamation.

On introducing Mal Hewitt to the meeting, Mal congratulated Margaret Foy for the service and leadership of ABC Friends, Blue Mountains Branch and her service and her involvement with the ABC Friends NSW & ACT Committee. Later in the meeting, Mal confirmed his worst fears of the as yet not implemented "Lewis Report" and that the cutbacks so far have been ABC Board "determinations and implementations", without compassion or discussion! The NSW & ACT Friends Committee are currently reviewing the flavour of the major Federal Parties & political climate toward their intentions for reversal of earlier Budget and implemented cutbacks should there be favourable change of Government in the near future!

### Next meeting

**Grand View Hotel,  
Wentworth Falls  
Saturday March 21, 10:00am**



Over 30 people attended our first meeting of 2015 at the Grand View Hotel, Wentworth Falls.

ABC Friends NSW President Mal Hewitt made a surprise visit.

After the meeting, members and visitors retired to the Bistro for lunch with "Friends" to share ideas, opinions and chatter.

Finally, your generous giving of time is always appreciated as we unite our efforts to defend OUR ABC. From time to time we need you to volunteer to stage successful public events to spread the bad news of the ABC/SBS cutbacks and the effects that will change OUR ABC as we know it forever. The first event for 2015 is Springwood Foundation Day Parade on Saturday, 14th MARCH, 2015.

Please join with us after future meetings and relax over a refreshing drink or meal.

Thanks for your support  
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## Committee

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For membership enquiries or changes, please contact the Membership Secretary .

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

## SPRINGWOOD FOUNDATION DAY, 14 MARCH 2015

ABC FRIENDS BLUE MOUNTAINS WILL MARCH IN GRAND PARADE AT 1PM. COME AND JOIN US.

### ...Bias in the eye of the beholder

*Media Watch 23 Feb, 2015*

Colleen Ryan, a former editor of the Australian Financial Review, who was commissioned to audit the ABC's Budget coverage and Sarah Ferguson's interview with Joe Hockey, asked:

**.. was it fair and impartial? Did it grant due respect to the interviewee? Would the average viewer consider its tone (on the part of Ferguson) as so aggressive that it exhibited bias?**

— *ABC Editorial Review no 4, February, 2015*

Colleen Ryan's verdict was that two exchanges did:

**... not meet the impartiality guidelines to treat the interviewee 'with civility and respect unless there is a compelling reason not to do so.'**

— *ABC Editorial Review no 4, February, 2015*

But it is worth pointing out that Colleen Ryan's final conclusion actually gave the ABC a pretty clean bill of health, saying:

**In my assessment, the overall quality of the Budget coverage was excellent..... I found no hint in any of the coverage that either stated or implied that any perspective was the editorial opinion of the ABC.**

— *ABC Editorial Review no 4, February, 2015*

Ryan also praised Ferguson's professionalism, saying the ABC host had done a fine job on Budget night in difficult circumstances. Her interview with Shadow Treasurer Chris Bowen, said Ryan, had been similarly tough and aggressive.

Jim Middleton who spent more than four decades at the ABC thinks it's brave and laudable, telling Media Watch:

**I admire the courage of the ABC in opening itself up to independent scrutiny in this way, and I am glad it intends to continue the process despite the fallout from this episode.**

— *Jim Middleton, Sky News Correspondent, 19th February, 2015*

## Quentin Dempster

If you haven't had a chance to read the transcript of Quentin Dempster's address to the Australian Institute of International Affairs on February 3<sup>rd</sup> please do so.

It can be found on **ABC Friends Blue Mountains website** and **ABC Friends NSW website**