

From the President's Desk

ABC Friends Mediawaves, News and Headlines

Hello Members and Friends,

It is now full speed ahead to the 2016 Election that is likely to happen on July 2, as a double dissolution election for both houses of Parliament. The 2016/17 Federal Budget will be presented on May 3rd and is not likely to restore funding for Our ABC and with some worrying concerns that further cuts will cause changes to programming, services and loss of even more jobs. We must continue to ramp up our Branch Election Campaign and we need you to step up and join the Campaign Team. So far, only 24 of our 180 members have registered! It is not too late to register with Garth Taylor at gartht@aapt.net.au or telephone 47843301 to join the Team and make your choice of support. Your contribution can be either one or all options, street stalls, markets, letter boxing or helping out at the Candidates Forum we are currently planning. There may well be other opportunities closer to or on Election Day.

Our regular attendance at the Magpie Markets at Lawson Public School (3rd Sunday, 9.am.to 2pm.) continues to attract extraordinary interest and support with many not aware of the attacks and outcomes of funding cuts. The ABC Friends Petition to all Candidates seeking their commitment and support to restore and retain OUR ABC as a well resourced, innovative, independent National Broadcaster and a matter of fundamental importance to our democracy and culture still attracts many signatures from locals and visitors. We are currently investigating the Blue Gum Faulconbridge Market (4th Saturday 9am to 2pm) at the Public School. Can you help?

Breaking News!

ABC Friends NSW President, Mal Hewitt has just announced that the NSW State Conference will be held on June 3 to 5 hosted by The Hunter (Newcastle Region) ABC Friends. It is interesting that many of our Branches cover Federal seats which are considered marginal and does increase our potential to influence the outcome in those seats. Holding the Conference before the Election means that we may be able to strengthen and support our local activities in a number of ways.

Barry Redshaw
President ABCFBM Branch

Next meeting

Grand View Hotel,

Wentworth Falls

Saturday, April 16, 10:00am

Canberra Visit

Former Queensland Senator, Margaret Reynolds, State representatives for ABC Friends including our Campaign Coordinator, Phil Greenidge visited Canberra on 1st and 2nd March. Several meetings were organised with parliamentarians from all parties to discuss funding of the ABC, regional broadcasting and Australian content.

Andrew Wilkie chaired a meeting with The Australian Institute's Ben Oquist and Fergus Pitt, several Senators and our representatives. Andrew Wilkie is a strong supporter of the ABC and was quick to let it be known that there are many friends of the ABC in parliament. Andrew asked that the Friends remain committed as the work is important and relevant. Please read Fergus Pitt's No Politics at Aunty's Table which can be found on our website.

Blue Mountains Radio Interview

Peter Walker from Radio Blue Mountains interviewed Mal Hewitt and Phil Greenidge on March 12.

If you missed it we are hoping to have an audio on www.fabcnswbm.org.au very soon.



"The cuts to our National Broadcaster are **damaging to the quality and integrity and the amount of local content** which affects both our society and our industry; writers, producers, directors, actors, set makers, directors of photography, the next generation of media graduates and creators. **Give back those funds and it will give back.**"

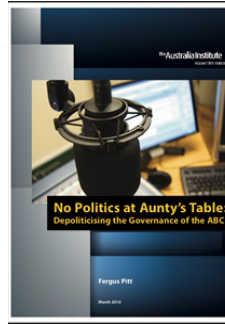
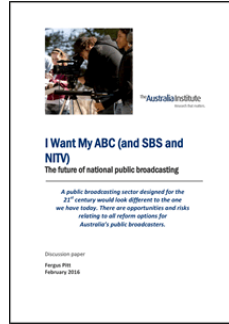
Gillian Armstrong, AM
Director

www.handsoffourabc.org.au

Photo: Tim Baure



Three important reports on our website



Sydney Morning Herald

3 March Matthew Knott

Communications and Education Correspondent

...“The independence of the ABC should be enshrined in the Australian constitution to prevent politicians meddling with its charter, a new report argues.

The report, by the progressive Australia Institute think tank, also argues for the Australian public to have a role in selecting ABC board members and for funding to be depoliticised.

According to the report, *No Politics at Aunty's Table: Depoliticising the Governance of the ABC*, the ABC charter has come under intense pressure recently from political parties and commercial interests.

Commercial media outlets have argued for the ABC to scale back its online operations, even though its charter includes the delivery of “digital services”.

The report also argues that the ABC board appointment process has “once again become deeply politicised” despite the introduction of an “arms-length merit based” appointment process in 2012.

Last year Communications Minister Mitch Fifield [bypassed the recommendations of the independent nomination panel](#) to appoint businesswoman Donny Watford to the ABC board.

The Australia Institute recommends several changes including:

- giving a cross-party committee responsibility for overseeing ABC board appointments
- introducing an “audience supported” board member, who is backed by written submissions from ABC audience members
- eliminating the option for the Communications Minister to bypass the nominations process.

The triennial funding arrangements should also be made more transparent by calling for public submissions on ABC funding every three years”....

Stop the Chop!
Join & Donate
abcfriendsnsw.org.au

Committee

President

Barry Redshaw

president@fabcnswbm.org.au

Vice President

Garth Taylor

gartht@aapt.net.au

Secretary

Libby Blackburn

secretary@fabcnswbm.org.au

Minutes Secretary

Penny Taylor

pennytaylor@hotmail.com

Treasurer

Bob Macadam

robert@macadamr.com.au

Membership Secretary

Janelle Clark

janelleclark@hotmail.com.au

Media Coordinator

Tony Young

media_coordinator@fabcnswbm.org.au

Newsletter Editor

Eunice Goodberg

egoodberg@yahoo.com

Campaign Coordinator

Phil Greenidge

campaign_coordinator@fabcnswbm.org.au

Branch Photographer

Jan O'Leary

Committee Members

Margaret Foy

Helen Routledge

Bev Redshaw

Branch Website

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

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.