

From the President's Desk

ABC Friends Mediawaves, News and Headlines

Hello Members and Friends,

After a busy few weeks trying to "STOP THE CHOP" the 2016/17 budget was extremely disappointing with further cuts that will cost more jobs, eliminate services and programs. We are continuing our July 2 Election Campaign activities to elect a Government who will respect Our ABC integrity, culture, popularity and funding needs that restore and maintain OUR ABC.

As mentioned in our last newsletter, a strong team of delegates from our Branch will actively participate on your behalf at the 2016 ABC Friends NSW/ACT Annual Conference which will bring together all Branches. We will report on the conference in the July newsletter.

Our next major Campaign Event, the Winter Magic Festival Parade and Information Booth in Katoomba needs your support. Please make every effort to raise community awareness of the dilemmas confronting OUR ABC on Saturday June 18. There will not be a June monthly meeting as a result. Further details for the Festival/Parade will be available shortly.

The last public Campaign opportunity for us before the July 2 Elections is the Magpie Markets on Sunday June 19 at Lawson Public School 9.am to 2.pm. If you can spare an hour or two that suits you, it would be greatly appreciated.

Meantime since we last met Beverly and I have sold our Lawson home and will move to Cranebrook in early July.

Barry Redshaw

President, Blue Mountains Branch

Encouraging signs

New ABC MD, Michelle Guthrie, passionately engaging the delegates at the ABC Friends NSW State Conference on June 5.



Next meeting

Grand View Hotel,

Wentworth Falls

Saturday, July 16, 10:00am

Meet the Candidates Forum held on Saturday May 21



All known candidates for Macquarie, along with senate candidates from the major parties were invited to ABC Friends Blue Mountains Meet the Candidates Forum, held on Saturday May 21st. We were joined by Susan Templeman, Labor candidate, Terry Morgan Greens candidate, Hal Ginges, Animal Liberation Party and Senator Doug Cameron, Labor senate candidate for NSW.

We had a full house of around 100. Blue Mountains residents grilled the candidates on a variety of issues and the forum could easily have run longer.

Each candidate gave a five minute opening address and all focused on the importance of the ABC as our independent, publicly funded source of news, current affairs and also entertainment.

ABC Friends NSW President, Mal Hewitt, emphasised how in two and half years the ABC has lost 500 staff, nearly 500 million dollars, with another 48 million to go, announced in the latest budget and that the ABC we see and listen to and consult on our personal devices has been

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incredibly diminished over this time and is not the ABC it was three years ago. He then addressed a question to Doug Cameron asking if Labor were elected would *they* **restore** the ABC's funding and also **restore** the Australia Network so that the ABC can continue to do the job that over 80% of the Australian people want it to do.

Doug Cameron's response reiterated how the previous Labor Government had put more money into the ABC pointing to his opening address and again highlighting what support and funding Labor had given the ABC. While saying he and Susan Templeman were not in a position to announce Labor's funding policy on the ABC he did say that "The ABC is a fundamental part of democracy in this country, it should be properly and effectively funded as Labor has done..." and that "We're strong supporters of the ABC and we see a long, long future and it becomes more and more important as every day goes on".

Terry Morgan emphasised that the loss of 500 staff is particularly concerning because what tends to happen these days is that when cuts are made to an organisation, particularly a publicly funded organisation, but any organisation, the first to be removed are human beings, the workers, the people.

Hal Ginges mentioned that it is only the ABC which exposes cruelty to animals and to all beings and if they were elected they would press and press and press to get the funding back to the ABC.

More pictures on our website <http://www.fabcnswbm.org.au/gallery/>



2016 Budget Nibbles at the ABC

In this year's Federal Budget, the ABC's 'core funding' for content was left alone but:

- \$6 million a year was cut as ABC's budget for 'enhanced newsgathering' was not renewed in full (\$20 down to \$14 million a year)
- \$30 million over three years was not renewed for ABC's tied funding to cover the costs of digital transmission
- also requests for \$30 million in funding for regional broadcasting was not funded

Fact Check has been a casualty of these latest cuts.

Read the SMH story:

[Telling porkies gets easier for polities as ABC shuts down its Fact Check unit](#)

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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.