

September, 2019.

Next Meeting September 21st 2019. 10.am.

Grand View Hotel Wentworth Falls.

Please attend our AGM, November 16th, 2019 10.am.and show support for our Branch's Future.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT.

To all our Blue Mountains Branch Friends: please mark Saturday 16th November in your diaries and your calendars. Helen Grasswell, co-founder of the ABC Alumni (alongside Matt Peacock and Greg Wilesmith) has accepted our invitation to be our Guest Speaker at our AGM. Helen is now retired having clocked up 50 years in journalism, including 27 years at the ABC.

To quote ABC Backstory (12th December 2017) Helen was a foundation producer of Australian Story. Over the past 22 years, Helen has won Walkley, Logie and human rights awards and produced many of the program's landmark scoops, including the crisis surrounding former governor-general Peter Hollingworth and Hazel Hawke's battle with Alzheimer's disease.

At our August meeting Barry Redshaw Co-Vice President encouraged all members to consider committee jobs for 2020. We really need a web-savvy member to manage our website as soon as possible (fabcnswbm.org.au). Please let us know if you are interested in this job. No CV required.

Barry will be bringing job descriptions to our next meeting for your perusal. We appreciate that many members are unable to commit to a committee role. However, we also need many volunteers for events we participate in, throughout the year, such as Springwood Foundation Day and the Blackheath Rhododendron Festival (Saturday 2nd November). A big thank you to the members who have already volunteered for this event. We will have Friends merchandise for sale, such as, the Leunig-designed tote-bags. These are a popular item for Christmas gifts. We will also have plenty of free colourful bumper stickers available. I Love my "ABC (logo) Not Fake News" bumper sticker... the bright yellow sticker helps me locate my red car in a crowded car park: bonus!

Next year, we hope to also participate in the Winter Magic Festival and the Hawkesbury Show. Hence the need for lots of volunteers! These local events offer great opportunities to engage one-on-one with people and to grow our membership.

Hope to see you at our next meeting on Saturday September 21st.

Yours in Our ABC Sue Noske.

RANTS AND RAVES.

Congratulations to Mal Hewitt OAM and his editorial team who continue to "Update" us with another outstanding publication that continues to raise our awareness and encourages us to continue our fight to Defend our ABC and Media Freedom! A perfect example is Joy Thomson MSc AM, our member who continues to have letters regularly published in B.M. Gazette and other media. We also acknowledge all other members who contribute in the defence of OUR ABC in many ways! that do not go unnoticed.

First it was the Michelle Guthrie and Justin Milne debacle, then the Dutton Australian Federal Police attack on OUR ABC and Media Freedom! And now the Prime Ministerial manipulation to attack and damn those who support the ABC eg. Get Up by attempting to deface and dismantle an independent Activist Group. If the Prime Minister is planning to introduce new laws that will remove the Get Up group then he must also include the millionaire donors and the I.P.A. who continue to encourage the SALE OF THE ABC.

ABC Chair Ita Buttrose says her staff are “fragile, sensitive, in need of reassurance.”

Michael Koziol and Samantha Hutchinson, SMH August 13, 2019.

Having worked with Kerry Packer and Rupert Murdoch during her career, media icon, Ita Buttrose has had a wealth of experience dealing with strong personalities. So perhaps the new-ish ABC chair was caught a little off guard by the sensitive souls she has encountered in the corridors at Aunty. Asked about the leadership upheaval at the broadcaster over the past year, Ita Buttrose noted such changes were usually unsettling to staff, particularly at the ABC. “Creative people, the kind of people who work at the ABC, are very sensitive people.” she said.

<https://www.smh.com.au/national/abc-chair-ita-buttrose-says-her-staff-are-fragile-sen>

Australian Federal Police will not rule out charging journalists who published stories based on leaked classified information.

ABC News (Politics) Mathew Doran, August 14, 2019.

The AFP raids prompted the government to request the Parliament intelligence and security committee to examine whether there are appropriate protections for journalists and whistleblowers, or if too much ground has been ceded to national security. Media bosses appeared before the committee in Sydney, while the nation’s law enforcement and security agencies appeared in the nations capital.

<https://www.net.au/news/2019-08-14/police-will-not-rule-out-charging-journalist>

Cost Cutting on the agenda at ABC board meeting.

Jennifer Duke, SMH August 21, 2019.

The board of the public broadcaster ABC are discussing a range of cost cutting measures including the negotiations over a staff pay deal and plans to remove content from News Corp’s Foxtel. Chair Ita Buttrose and managing director David Anderson have been wrestling with how to handle the freeze on the ABC’s \$1 billion budget that has come into effect this year.

The ABC is facing \$84million less in funding over three years than previously expected as part of an indexation pause introduced by the Turnbull Government in the 2018 Federal Budget. The ABC has argued, this amounts to a budget cut and could cause it to make tough decisions around staff and programming. One of the key topics for discussion is a plan to save money by removing the ABC’s TV channels from pay-TV service Foxtel. Under current arrangements the ABC pays \$4million to Foxtel for it’s satellite providers to air it’s shows on the platform. Also on the agenda is a new employee pay agreement that has been the subject of intense disagreement with ABC staff and management.

<https://www.smh.com.au/business/companies/cost-cutting-on-the-agenda-at-abc-boar>

VALE THE HONOURABLE TIMOTHY ANDREW FISCHER AC.

We note the sad passing of Hon. Tim Fischer, a true “Defender of OUR ABC” who loved our ABC and was prepared to say so. He registered his interest publicly when he became part of the National Defender FABC Campaign November 2017 and he took every opportunity to lay praise and defend Our ABC whenever possible across Australia.

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