

President's Report.

Greetings Friends!

Our trial Zoom Committee meeting, on 4th August worked well, with minor hiccups only. There were several first time Zoomers who were guided expertly by our Zoom host Chris Meaney. Carole Dent, our Facebook maestro, managed to join us from the train, masked up of course! We agreed that a regular branch meeting would be difficult to arrange. We are still hoping to meet up for our AGM in November, at the Grand View Hotel, subject to COVID restrictions.

The current NSW Friends' campaign is pre-October-budget focused. Barry, Bev and I participated in a recent NSW/ACT Friends Zoom meeting, to consider strategies for the Friends pre-budget campaign. The campaign will focus on how much Australians value the ABC, and what we risk losing if we don't stop the cuts. As Friends, writing to politicians is a key strategy. Another suggested strategy is the forming of alliances with like-minded groups to take joint action now and/or in the future campaigns e.g. Rotary, Lions, school P&Cs and councils.

Upcoming online webinar, titled "Stand up for the ABC", will feature speakers Kerry O'Brien, Ed Davis and Emma Dawson (Per Capita). There still may be time to register for this event scheduled for Wednesday 2nd September, 4pm. Hundreds of people have already registered.

Susan Templeman's Virtual Rally with Michelle Rowland, Shadow Minister for Communication, confirmed Labor's commitment to reversing the latest cuts to the ABC. Michelle spoke about the need to appeal more to pro-ABC organisations such as CWA, the Farmers' Federation and big industry. She spoke about the need for more resilience for the telcos, to keep Australians safe.... the first job of government. And, she admitted that the toughest interview she'd ever had, was with the ABC. Michelle is keen to receive ideas from ABC Friends.

Do you belong to a community group which may be interested in learning about our Blue Mountains ABC Friends branch? Talking to other groups about ABC Friends is a great way of raising awareness of the plight of Our ABC at a local level. Please let us know if your group would welcome a Friend or two to a meeting, once meetings resume.

Recent Roy Morgan polls confirm that the ABC is still by far the nation's most trusted media organization. Stats include: 79% of Australians oppose any further cuts to the ABC's budget; 49% believe it should get more Federal Government funding and 77% say they can rely on the ABC for accurate information. This excellent information on community attitudes to the ABC is a vital resource for Friends. As such, NSW Friends is developing a flyer with this information.

We have ordered a batch of 2021 Friends Calendars, as per requested by members. We will contact you once they arrive. Meanwhile, please visit our BM website and Facebook page for news and updates.

Yours in Our ABC

Sue Noske 0421 020 610

Western Suburbs of Sydney (WSoS) Report.

We must look to the future to ensure the ABC continues to deliver value to Australians. The sooner we are back to fight for Our ABC in Western Sydney the better. We still lament the postponement of our launch! We have been revisiting our advertising and venue bookings to confirm that they are ready to go when it is safe to do so!

With ABC Friends (WSoS) New Branch dormant and no likely early return to normality on the horizon we have moved on, despite no real surety to restart anytime soon this year or even early next year but we still hope 2021 might improve.

While every care is taken to ensure accuracy, the editor and publisher cannot assume responsibility for inaccuracies in articles in this Newsletter

From the Editors Desk.

1. "The effects Of Covid-19 global Pandemic has left us reeling. Our ABC is by your Australia's side, giving us information, we can trust and helping our democracy work by asking questions of those in authority, responding to challenges and helping audiences to do the same. We must also look into the future to ensure the ABC continues to deliver value to Australians".
2. "Our ultimate aim is to build and nurture a lifelong relationship with Australians, with content and services relevant to the different stages of life. Part of the project is making sure that everyone knows what we offer and where to find us.

WHAT won't change at the ABC will be just as important as what will."

References 1&2 are edited extracts from David Anderson, ABC Managing Director address at the National Press Club, Canberra, Wednesday 8/7/20.

ASK YOUR FAVOURITE SENATOR.

To support an inquiry into ABC Funding- ABC Friends latest news 15th August,2020.

More than 6,000 Friends have signed the FABC petition calling for the Senate to initiate an inquiry into the funding of the ABC 2015-23.

The most important matter confronting Our ABC, with the 2020/21 Federal Budget about to be revealed early October relates to Our ABC and Funding into the future to restore and increase funding to a realistic level. You can ask your favourite Senator to support an inquiry by going to:

<https://abcfriends.org.au/senator-inquiry-abc-funding> for information on how to support Our ABC.

We need your support Please!

ABC Fresh Start Fund

Supports 200 Australian Productions and New Content Ideas.

The ABC will support more than 200 Australian production and new content idea through its \$5 million Fresh Start Fund, to help safeguard local content and creativity against the impact of Covid-19. As Australia's biggest backer of homegrown content. The ABC will provide whatever help possible to support local talent in this incredibly challenging time.

Message to Our Letter Writers.

Because we are unable to meet on a regular basis, why not write a letter to local, Sydney or National media, post your concerns on Facebook, Twitter, our branch website or the ABCF website NSW/ACT.

If you need further details you can contact editorial contact below. You can also seek basic information about writing to persons of influence where you will find helpful addresses and ideas by clicking on www.abcfriends.org.au then click onto 'Get involved', and then 'Take Action'.

Open Letter to the ABC.

"Alberici and government influence-ABC Friends National Inc"

Posted in latest news from ABC Friends 26th August 2020.

ABC Friends have written an open letter to the ABC Chair, Ita Buttrose and Managing Director, David Anderson expressing grave concerns regarding the Federal Government's political interference in ABC staffing and editorial processes. You can read the open letter online.

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Editor's Note

Our branch 2020 year and AGM is threatened! You can self-nominate for 2021 vacancies if you are interested in being part of our branch leadership committee, there are a few important vacancies to fill. If you are interested or have questions you can contact Sue Noske (President). There will be more details in the October Newsletter.

KEEP ON STAYING SAFE AND WELL UNTIL WE MEET AGAIN.

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