

## President's report

### Lockdown Blues and Reviews

Forget the Blues (unless you're a footy fan) and tell us what *you* think is essential ABC viewing and listening. Do you look forward to tuning in to your favourite radio presenter or program? Or a favourite ABC TV offering? Have you caught up with, or discovered another ABC gem during LD? If so, please share your reflections with your fellow BM Friends via email to Carole Dent, ([carolead@gmail.com](mailto:carolead@gmail.com)), or post your appraisal directly on our Facebook page.

Have you been watching *Ms Represented*? Our National Friends President Margaret Reynolds is one of the influential women interviewed by Annabel Crabb in this riveting four-part series.

Our much-anticipated second Glenbrook Rotary market was cancelled. Hopefully, our opportunity to front a Make-More-Friends stall will present itself before Christmas! The September Springwood Spring Festival has also been cancelled, but we'll keep our well-positioned site booked for next September's Festival.

Meanwhile, rest assured that the NSW /ACT Friends are developing grass roots campaigns for marginal electorates in order to ensure voters know which MPs and Senators support and defend the ABC, to spread the word about the huge impact of the massive cuts and make people aware of the ever-present threats to our National Broadcaster.

We are all encouraged to come up with some slogan suggestions for the Friends' election campaign (see story in the latest National Update). What about: Our ABC must be **Raised**, not Razed!

Victorian Friends' slogan, "**The fires. The virus. The crisis ...**" is such a succinct and powerful message about the essential role of the ABC.

Best wishes,

Sue Noske



### ABC Friends National UPDATE

Great content—such as the cartoon at left—is to be found in the second edition of *Update*, out this month (and emailed to members). A particular highlight is a celebration of the achievements of *4 Corners* in holding the powerful to account (“Shame, Australia, Shame—Politicians Behaving Badly”).



## The Essential Role of the Public Broadcaster in the Nation's Health and Well-Being

This title may sound a little grandiose, but the absolute necessity for an independent not-for-profit ABC was demonstrated by a 'Media Watch' edition in mid-July which called public attention to erroneous and potentially dangerous misinformation expressed on Sky After Dark concerning vaccination efficacy and the health dangers posed by the Delta strain of the Coronavirus.

As Jeff Waters wrote for ABC Friends (Vic) in an article entitled '[Jock Shocking – The ABC Mouse That Roars](#)' (26/7/21), '*For more than 30 years, one of the smallest programmes in the ABC suite has been punching well above its weight.*

*'An excellent example of this influence was on display recently, when a letter from **Media Watch** resulted in a video conversation between Sky News presenter Alan Jones and controversial former Liberal MP, now independent, Craig Kelly being pulled from the internet ... Even though Sydney radio shock-jock Ray Hadley had pointed out the dangerous claims were wrong to his own audience, it was not until Media Watch wrote to Sky News management that Sky issued a correction to the madness, and deleted the irresponsible exchange from its website.'*

Mr Waters' article can be read here:

<https://me.abcfriendsvic.org.au/index.php/2021/07/26/jock-shocking-the-abc-mouse-that-roars/>

**The Media Watch report that exposed the inaccuracies:** '[Sky News forced to correct the record after Alan Jones and Craig Kelly broadcast misleading information about COVID-19, vaccination safety and the Delta strain.](#)'

(Broadcast: Mon 19 Jul 2021, 8:50pm; published: Mon 19 Jul 2021, 9:18pm)

<https://www.abc.net.au/mediawatch/episodes/jones/13450962>

Sky and other Murdoch organs, in Australia and abroad, are increasingly relying on populist stances – as we see from this case, sometimes grossly misinformed—in order to preserve shrinking audiences. The need for an ABC to provide clarity and truth is clearly a national imperative. The national broadcaster must be adequately funded and pressure from ultra-conservatives for its privatisation resisted.

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### Letter Writing

If you're in search of a lockdown project, and you feel inspired to pen a letter in support of the ABC, the ABC Friends (Vic) site has a great online resource which provides useful tips:

<https://me.abcfriendsvic.org.au/index.php/write-a-letter/>

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**So, in closing— the words of Chief Foreign Correspondent, Phil Williams, who retired in April:** "*For all its foibles, the ABC remains the most important media institution in the nation. It is a vital part of our democracy and must be protected and preserved.*"

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**Next meeting of ABCF (Blue Mountains): TO BE ANNOUNCED.**

***The very best wishes until next we meet!***

***-Ian Bate, editor***

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**Website: [www.fabcnswbm.org.au](http://www.fabcnswbm.org.au)**

**Editorial contact: [sribate@tpg.com.au](mailto:sribate@tpg.com.au)**