

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Greetings Friends and Supporters!

First up:

The ABC Friends Annual Dinner, 20th July 2023

Michelle Rowland, Minister for Communications, addressed an assembly of around 100 Friends at the **NSW/ACT Annual Dinner at Beta in Sydney.**

Minister Rowland thanked the Friends, stating that our volunteer based organisation has “a proud and productive history of advocacy for the ABC on behalf of millions of Australians who access and enjoy ABC content and rely on the public broadcaster to stay connected and informed.” We’ll share interesting and important details of Michelle’s address at our branch meeting next Tuesday.



NSW/ACT ABCF President Tess Howes thanked our branch for our contribution to the raffle fund raiser: a beautiful hamper of Blue Mountains products which was won by our National ABC Friends President, Cassandra Parkinson! You can read Tess’s report on the event in the **August edition of Update.**

Springwood Spring Festival, Saturday 2nd September

You’ll recognise our stall by the new ABC Friends logo (and Bluey!) This event draws thousands of people—local and non-local—and is thus a great opportunity to spread the word about Our ABC, and the role of the ABC Friends in defending and promoting our national independent broadcaster. Hope to see you there!

Blue Mountains Branch AGM

Please set aside **Saturday 25th November for our AGM at the Wentworth Falls School of Arts.** Our Guest Speaker will be **Philippa McDonald**, who, during a 30 year career as an award-winning senior reporter for the ABC “worked across the breadth of ABC News and Current Affairs programs including the 7:00pm news, 7.30, Lateline, Foreign Correspondent, radio news, AM, PM and The World Today ...Philippa has reported for the ABC from throughout Australia and abroad from Indonesia, Thailand, Burma, Cambodia and Fiji.” (<https://www.abc.net.au/profiles/content/s2777573.htm>) More details will be provided closer to this event.

Our regular monthly meeting will take place at the Grand View Hotel, Wentworth Falls, next **Tuesday 8th August at 10.30am.**

An agenda will be sent out shortly.

We’d love you to join us!

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ABC Friends National President Cassandra Parkinson brandishes the Blue Mountains hamper at the Annual Dinner.

one from the ALP (currently Dr Mike Freeland), one from the Liberal Party and a third from minor parties or independents. She noted that an **annual ABC Showcase** visits the Federal parliament and is well-attended by MPs of all persuasions.

She emphasised the Labor government's commitment to the managerial and editorial independence of the ABC, noting the provision of the five-year funding cycle and the sum of \$742m for the ABC and SBS to continue valuable programs such as enhanced news gathering and audio description of broadcasts. She stated that the Albanese government "wants the ABC to feel assured of resourcing and funding" and affirmed her personal commitment to funding of ABC radio as an essential emergency broadcaster.



Governments have a responsibility to "talk up the ABC", Ms Templeman believes: "We are a weaker society if the ABC has weakened its reportage."

She praised the work of ABC Friends, emphasising that our public visibility "is so important" in promoting the national broadcaster in its task of "exposing Australians to Australian stories".

She closed by encouraging branch members to contact her office if they have questions or branch resolutions for her attention.

Address by Susan Templeman, Federal Member for Macquarie and Special Envoy for the Arts

We were pleased to welcome Ms Templeman to our July branch meeting at the Grand View Hotel.

Ms Templeman outlined her parliamentary work as **Special Envoy for the Arts**, in which she reports to the Prime Minister and the Minister for the Arts, Tony Bourke. She sees as essential the need to reach out to non-ALP members of parliament in order to promote discussion of the arts. A priority is the need to legislate the provision of Australian content quotas on streaming services and inclusion of the ABC "within that ecosystem". With particular regard to the ABC, she promotes to MPs the importance of the national broadcaster within the government's National Cultural Policy, giving as an example the ABC's role in providing opportunities for emerging arts practitioners.

Ms Templeman also spoke about the **Parliamentary ABC Friends** group, of which she is a member, explaining that the parliamentary Friends are concerned to keep abreast of developments concerning the ABC and within the broadcaster. She explained that the group is co-chaired by three MPs:

Our next branch meeting: Tuesday, 8th August, The Grand View Hotel, Wentworth Falls, at 10.30am.

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