

Friends of the ABC

Blue Mountains Region March 2007

FABC Workshop

The Branch had a successful workshop last month, which produced many creative suggestions. Activities for 2007 nominated by work-shoppers included:

- Stalls at Springwood Foundation Day, Katoomba Winter Magic and Glenbrook Fair – manned by a roster of FABC members promoting public support for the ABC through conversation, sale of merchandise eg T-shirts, information dissemination; and garnering signatures on a letter related to a specific issue eg advertising on the ABC
- Speakers Forum – public meeting/s featuring keynote speakers and facilitated audience participation e.g. Quentin Dempster and Peter Manning in 2006.
- Meet the Candidates – an election year special with a moderator facilitating dialogue related to media policy between election candidates and the audience
- Media watch – monitoring developments in the media and responding through:
 - Letter writing – encouraging, supporting and monitoring letters by FABC members to politicians and newspapers that are effective in promoting the interests of the ABC; a sub-set was the suggestion of a Blue Mts FABC postcard
 - Talk-back radio – support for member participation in public dialogue that promotes the interest of the ABC
- Disseminate information on ABC services and ‘how to’ access emerging ones such as pod-casting
- Celebrate the ABC at stalls, forums etc and through letters, radio etc – send a positive message
- Partnering – with organizations such as Songlines to get synergy of effort e.g. in running a Forum
- Conduct a JJJ oriented ‘band night’ to attract youth
- Social gatherings eg get together with other FABC branches

Recommendation

Most energy seemed to focus on stalls, Speaker Forums and letter-writing and we (Bob, Carole and Colin) propose we focus at our March 17 meeting on forming member networks who take responsibility for each of these as a starting point. We assume this will result in some over-lapping between proposed activities eg a Speakers Forum might be merged with Meet the Candidates, in partnership with sister organization/s.

Next Meeting:

Where: Grand View Hotel

When: Saturday 17 March

Time: 10.00am Start

Friends of the ABC NSW

<http://www.fabcnsw.org.au/>

FABC Committee

President – Bob Macadam 47541620
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Secretary – Carole Goodwin
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Treasurer – Julia McGill

Membership Secretary—Janelle Clark

Publicity Officers – Bev. Plazier and Dave Davidson.

Merchandise Officer – Joan Macadam.

Web Officer & Newsletter – Publisher— Bob Foster.

Vice President / Newsletter Editor – Colin Bull.

Agenda for the March 17 Meeting

(10 am start)

The agenda proposed for the March meeting is as follows:

Item 1. Group work (1 hour)

Members will be asked to select one of the following groups:

Stalls – Joan Macadam, Co-ordinator.

Members of this group will be asked to plan and organise the Friends' stalls at the various Mountains' Festivals throughout the year. The group will be asked to initially ensure that arrangements are in place for the stall at the Springwood Foundation Day on 31 March.

Public Forum – Carole Goodwin, Co-ordinator.

This group will be asked to organise a public Forum with guest speakers and Candidates for the forthcoming Federal Election.

Letter Writing – Colin Bull, Co-ordinator.

Members of this group will be asked to set-up a

campaign of lettering writing and media monitoring to promote the interests of the ABC.

Item 2. Reports (1/2 hour).

Groups will be asked to report their progress. Matters requiring the approval of the whole meeting will also be considered.

Item 3. Forum (1/2 hour).

Following the workshop suggestion, it is planned to set aside time at each meeting for members to have a free-flowing discussion of topics relating to the ABC. At this first forum, members will be asked to draw up a list of topics to be discussed throughout the year.

Meeting to close at 12 noon.



Some thoughts from the President

Have you seen the latest Sydney radio ratings (SMH, 21.02.07)? ABC staffers must be dancing in the streets.

The ABC audience share rose from 15.8 percent in 2006 to 21.6 for the same survey period this year. Station 702 recorded a 3.0 percent increase to 9.9; Triple J was up from 3.4 to 5.6, Classic FM from 1.9 to 2.3 and Radio National from 1.7 to 2.0. Only NewsRadio showed a drop, from 1.9 to 1.8.

Even more impressive are the numbers of actual listeners, up from 1,582,000 to 1,769,000. And we are only talking about Sydney. To put this into perspective 2GB, market leader and home of Alan Jones, came first with 592,000 listeners. Incidentally, did you know that Fran Kelly's national audience for her breakfast program on Radio National exceeds that of Alan Jones by more than 100,000 listeners?

Can you imagine the purchasing power this audience represents? No wonder the advertising industry salivates over it.

Confronted by the issue of advertising on the ABC I reckon the listeners will see themselves as voters rather than consumers. They don't like the idea, and who can blame them.

The move to ABC radio reflects both push and a pull. We are pulled by the quality of the programs; and pushed by an aversion to advertisements interrupting, or even worse, corrupting them.

An ABC free of advertising is clearly an "Australian value" for many of us. There are others who don't care, and some who see us as a commercial audience ripe for the taking. The ratings suggest the 'don't cares' are declining. Let's make sure we keep the 'free marketeers', including some ABC Board members, at bay. An election year is a good time to let politicians know what we think.

Bob Macadam

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