

# Friends of the ABC

Blue Mountains Region November 2007

## From the President...

Hugh Mackay coming to speak at our AGM on November 17 caps off an excellent year for FABC in the Blue Mountains. The highlights?

- Peter Manning's presentation to a 60 strong audience at our 2006 AGM
- Setting up our stalls, writing and public forums working groups at the planning workshop in February
- "Say NO to advertising on the ABC" as the focus of our lobbying effort during 2007
- 320 letters to Senator Coonan signed and sent by the public at the Springwood Foundation day, another 370 at Katoomba's Winter Magic Festival, and more to come from the Glenbrook Fair on November 10
- An overflow audience at the Carrington for our 'Media, Democracy and the Role of the ABC' forum in July
- Positive feedback on the forum from our panel of stars – John Highfield, Peter Manning, Richard Bawden and Neil Inall
- The quality of interaction at our 'Meet the Candidates' forum in September – Kerry Bartlett (Liberal), Bob Debus (Labor), Carmel MacCallum (Greens), David King (Democrats) and Tim Williams (Independent) and 60 FABC members
- The camaraderie among members at our monthly meetings, in our working groups and at our events, and during social functions like the "ABC Ultimo Tour" on November 5

Plans for 2008 include lobbying via a writing campaign and FABC stalls at local festivals, and public forums with invited speakers. In principle commitments from Geraldine Doogue, Fran Kelly, Monica Attard and Chris Masters augur well.

Hugh Mackay is arguably Australia's foremost social commentator and his topic 'Advance Australia (and the ABC) ... Where?' gives him plenty of scope to relate insights from his just-published book to his lifelong study of the media and its influence on our lives. Bring your friends along with you – there is no charge. The Grandview bistro is a fine venue for a post-meeting lunch and a good way to close a vintage FABC year.

## Annual General Meeting 10 am, November 17, Grand View Hotel, Wentworth Falls

### Agenda

1. Address by Hugh Mackay.
2. President's report
3. Treasurer's report
4. Election: Nominations to be called for President; Vice President / Newsletter editor; Secretary; Treasurer; Membership Secretary; Publicity Officer; Merchandise Officer; Forum Committee to organise guest speaker functions



## Hugh MacKay

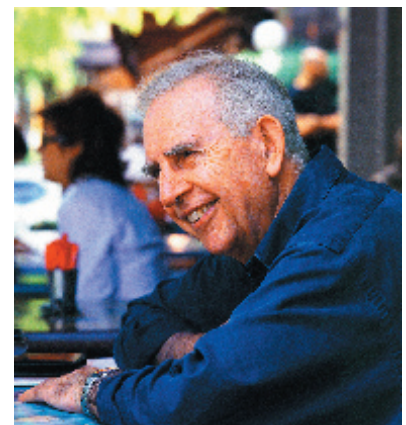
Hugh Mackay, arguably Australia's most influential social commentator, will be guest speaker at the Friends of the ABC meeting at the Grandview Hotel in Wentworth Falls from 10am-12pm on Saturday Nov 17, and the public are invited to attend at no cost.

Hugh is a psychologist and social researcher and the author of eleven books. He has honorary doctorates from NSW, Macquarie and Charles Sturt universities, as well as the 2004 Hartnett Medal from the Royal Society for the Arts. He writes a weekly column for the Sun-Herald and the West Australian; is a frequent guest columnist for the major dailies and broadcaster on ABC radio.

In his latest book "Advance Australia... Where?" he returns to the issues he addressed 15 years ago in his bestseller "Re-inventing Australia".

Hugh points out that "While we enjoy unprecedented levels of prosperity and the promise of more to come we are battling an epidemic of depression, taking on record levels of debt, and yearning for a deeper sense of meaning in our lives."

While many Australians complain about feeling powerless and isolated Hugh sees some encouraging signs that we are learning how to absorb the impact of the revolutionary changes that are shaping us, including the implications for public broadcasting and the role of the ABC.



Hugh Mackay