

Friends of the

ABC

Blue Mountains Region

April 2006

Next Meeting:

Where: Grand View Hotel

When: Saturday 22 April

Time: 10.00am-12noon

Friends of the ABC NSW

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

This is your Newsletter

Please email us any articles that you would like to include in it. Also you may wish to share links to relevant web sites.

Please send to:

fosterthorpe@tpg.com.au



Foundation Day

The Foundation Day stall at Springwood on 1 April was a great success. Thanks to all those volunteers who helped out on the day and tried to spread the word about all the future concerns for the viability of the independence of the ABC.

NSW FABC Regional Conference

The NSW FABC Regional Conference will be held on the weekend of 19 and 20 August at Rooty Hill RSL Club – in Sydney's west.

FABC NSW will meet the cost of the conference including meals and accommodation. If any branch requires assistance with transport costs, please advise.

Each branch is entitled to two delegates except the host branch (Parramatta) which may exceed that number. Please consult your committee to determine the names of the delegates attending. It is envisaged that we will commence the conference about 10am on the Saturday and conclude immediately after lunch on the Sunday.

Letter from FABC NSW President

Dear Friends,

GetUp and FABC co-operated to achieve a remarkable response to the campaign for increased funding for the ABC. At the latest count, almost 77,000 responses have been registered.

Let us now support GetUp's latest campaign on opposing Senator Coonan's media reforms. FABC has been a long standing opponent of concentrating media ownership even further than it is currently and helping media moguls. Go to the web page at

www.getup.org.au/campaign/NoMediaMonopoly.asp?campaign_id=29

and register your opposition to the proposed changes. Spread the word amongst your family, friends and work colleagues and if they haven't registered their vote for a boost in ABC funding ask them to follow the link on the same web page – let's push for 100,000 votes

Regards, Gary Cook

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Democrats Press Release:

Re Staff Elected Director to ABC Board

The Communications Minister's decision to remove the staff-elected ABC Board member position should be widely condemned, the Australian-Democrats said today.

"Minister Coonan's decision to remove the staff-elected ABC Board member is bad politics, bad public policy, and bad corporate governance" said Senator Murray, Democrats Spokesperson for Accountability.

"It is bad politics because it exposes a nasty prejudice, it is bad public policy because an experienced staff member provides invaluable skills and insights to the Board, and it is bad corporate governance because not only is that ABC Board member the only appointment on merit through democratic election, but in Europe and in many companies overseas, staff membership of boards is common because it is so useful.

"Senator Coonan perversely claims that an elected position is less accountable than an appointed one. At present no ABC Board member, apart from the staff member, is elected. They are appointed by the Government of the day against partisan political criteria as an act of patronage. There are no

public advertisements, no objective panels for selection, and no published criteria for Board selection.

"Consequently even the best ABC Board members labour under the slur of being fellow travellers of the Government of the day, fifth columnists trying to subvert the ABC charter of independence.

"This latest blow would remove the only board position that is still selected by merit and by anyone other than the Government of the day.

The staff-elected position on the Board is the sole remaining voice not supported by this Government. It is no wonder they are trying to remove it.

"The ABC belongs to all Australians, not the Government of the day, and the ABC board must contain people with experience and skills in broadcasting, journalism and communications to ensure that Aunty can provide the range and depth of programming and the independence of views that its charter mandates."

The Democrats renew our calls for appointments to the boards of all statutory bodies to be made independently of Government and to be based on

merit against published criteria", concluded Senator Murray.

Note: the Australian Democrats have moved over 30 selection on merit amendments, all of which have been knocked back by the Government.

Friends of ABC Committee Members

President: Denise Thorpe
47571009

fosterthorpe@tpg.com.au

Vice President:

Dave Davidson

Secretary: Carole Dent
47544766

Treasurer: Ron Uttridge

Vice Treasurer: Muriel
Tonkin

Membership Secretary:
Carole Goodwin
47512680

Newsletter: Bob Foster
fosterthorpe@tpg.com.au

Publicity: Ingrid Haydon

Minutes Secretary : Vacant
(Volunteers/
nominations welcome)