

May Federal election

Both the State body of ABC Friends and its various regional groups worked in various ways to make an election issue of the ABC's independence and funding. As we know, this failed. The result is that the funding cuts announced in the preceding budget will go ahead. Although their effects on staffing and programming may not be immediately obvious, it is still important that viewers and listeners lobby against them now and into the future.

New website and membership facilities of ABC Friends NSW & ACT

Elizabeth O'Hara, FABC Armidale's membership secretary, has already emailed you these details. Your local committee urges all members to join the state branch when membership subscriptions fall due. To do so will give the whole organisation greater 'clout' and will provide you with valuable information on our national broadcaster and Friends' campaigns. A reminder: the website is <http://www.abcfriends.org.au/>.

Note: Members whose subscriptions are now due will receive emailed reminders. Continuing support will be much appreciated.

Radio National on the FM band?

The Armidale group petitioned Barnaby Joyce about moving RN to the FM band, as many listeners are frustratingly unable to receive it via AM radio. Mr Joyce has replied that he has written to Mitch Fifield, the Minister for Communications, asking that "consideration be given" to our concerns and points raised.

Role of ABC Friends

ABC Friends is primarily a supporting lobby group for the ABC and has no role in influencing ABC content or presentation. However, if any member has suggestions to put to the ABC management, s/he should write directly to the ABC Managing Director, Mr David Anderson. People can also contact 'favourite' ABC staffers to commend them for their loyalty and hard work. They deserve our praise/appreciation for difficult jobs well done.

Activities of ABC Friends Armidale

2018 Media Prize for a UNE student studying Media and Communications was awarded and sent this June to Melanie Kennard. The amount (\$500) was covered by the Regional Australia's community partnership 'dividend'. We thank all members who kindly nominated FABC as beneficiary of this excellent program.

Markets: At the April market over 200 signatures were collected urging Federal electoral candidates to support the ABC. Their responses to a related questionnaire were collated by committee member Robin Jones and an article written thereon for the local media. The August market will be attended by ABC Friends. Offers of assistance should be emailed to the vice-president, Brian Byrne: bbyrne@une.edu.au.

Renew Armidale wants to have utilised some of the CBD's many empty shops. If members have any ideas on how FABC might assist with this please email them to Priscilla Connor: priscilla.connor@iinet.net.au.

ABC Friends have a **Facebook page**: ABC Friends; for Armidale, look for Friends of the ABC Armidale.

This year's FABC **Annual Lecture** will be given by well-known ABC personality, **Matt Peacock**, on Thursday evening, October 17th, 5.30 for 6 pm, upstairs at the Wicklow Hotel. The bar will be open and finger food will be provided. Please enter this information in your diaries!

Matt Peacock is a senior Australian journalist who has worked for ABC News in television and radio since 1973. He authored a critically lauded book on the asbestos industry. during that time, and later became staff-elected director of the network.

