



NEWS

VIC

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Brian Hill A/g Pres FABC-ACT and Friends with banners and signed placards outside Parliament House.
Photo by Darce Cassidy.

FABC Bus & Car Cavalcade to Canberra

Throughout June, FABC's 'Support your ABC' bus toured Victoria. After being farewelled at a Melbourne rally on Sunday 17th, FABC's bus and car cavalcade then travelled on to Canberra, stopping along the way.

Mayors of cities and regions welcomed FABC's bus to their municipalities. Rain, hail, and the occasional shine, city and country people alike came to express support and concern for their national broadcaster.

Speakers who addressed gatherings in suburbs and towns visited by FABC included ABC journalists, church ministers, local traders and others from a broad cross-section of groups and interests in the community.

The *Support your ABC* bus visited Ballarat, Daylesford, Frankston, Mornington, Boronia, Ringwood and Blackburn. People came from Buffalo to meet the bus in Berwick. They travelled hundreds of kilometres to hear speakers in Healesville.

Along the road to Canberra, Friends of the ABC's cavalcade stopped at Seymour and Wangaratta. In Bendigo the Reverend R David Bowden, the Anglican Bishop, was one of several local speakers who addressed the large crowd. At a park in Albury-Wodonga the mayors of both cities and head of the regional arts centre were joined by local musician, Terry Lockwood who performed and informed the audience of the important role ABC regional

radio plays in promoting local music.

On arriving in Canberra, FABC's bus and car cavalcade of dedicated supporters was welcomed and the importance of the ABC as an issue in the forthcoming federal election recognised. A rally outside Parliament House, organised by Friends of the ABC in ACT was addressed by the Leader of the Opposition - Kim Beazley, Democrat spokesperson for Communications - Vicki Bourne, and leader of the Australian Greens - Bob Brown. Though the Minister for Communications, Senator Alston, failed to accept FABC's invitation to speak, an Age journalist observed a senior member of his staff moving amongst the rally crowd.

Friends of the ABC's presence in Canberra and the plight of the ABC became a topic of discussion in the Parliament on the day the cavalcade was present. And while FABC members went about meeting with and lobbying their local Members of Parliament, Prime Minister John Howard was heard to say in debate "I know that there is a bit of a rally or something on in Canberra today about the ABC."

Many thanks and congratulations go to the people who worked to organise the bus and car cavalcade visits and the dedicated FABC members who travelled to Canberra. They were good company and did a great job.

FABC AGM
Thursday 1 November
7.00 pm for 7.15 pm
Iwaki Auditorium
ABC Southbank Centre
Cnr Southbank Blvd & Sturt St

A.B.C.
FRAGILE
WITH CARE

Image on an artefact in the National Museum Canberra.

New TV Production Centre for Melbourne

The Southbank News Centre is now fully in operation. All the ABC's Melbourne News and Current Affairs now come from Southbank where a new digital production and transmission centre has been established. This is the ABC's first tapeless newsroom where news is produced from computer servers. This saves time and gives greater capacity to handle late breaking stories. Around 100 staff have moved from Ripponlea to Southbank.

ABC Shop—Mail orders: IMPORTANT CHANGE

To obtain a 10% discount when placing a home delivery order through the ABC Customer Order Centre, members of the FABC

now need to provide (by mail or fax) a clear copy of their valid FABC membership card

New regional station in Ballarat

Plans are well advanced for a new regional station in Ballarat (107.9 FM). This station will also house the Victorian Regional Production Unit which will shift from Southbank.

Can you help us with any of the following:

Pencil sharpener (sits on table but not electric)

Microwave oven

Stapler for thick documents

Ream or two of paper—white or any colour

Experienced caterers who might assist at fundraising functions

Contacts with local theatre companies to hold fundraisers

Mary Delahunty addresses Melbourne Rally in the Treasury Gardens 17 June. Photo by Lecki Ord.

REPORT: Support Your ABC Rally

Sunday 17th June 2001

ABC supporters once again demonstrated their determination to defend the ABC. Over 4,000 people, many with umbrellas and some with gumboots, attended FABC's rally in Melbourne's Treasury Gardens on Sunday June 17 to send off its bus and car cavalcade to Canberra.

After FABC President Lecki Ord opened proceedings, the rain stopped. The sun came out and the rally was stimulated and entertained by comedian Rod Quantock, Mary Delahunty - Victorian Minister for the Arts & Education, Ramona Koval - ABC journalist and presenter, Emeritus Prof Derek Denton -



founding director of the Howard Florey Institute; George Lekakis - chairperson of the Ethnic Communities Council of Victoria, and popular entertainer Shaun Micallef. Senator Bob Brown of the Australian Greens and Senator Lyn Allison of the Australian Democrats spoke of their support for the ABC. Comedian Max Gillies filled in for Prime Minister John Howard who declined FABC's invitation to speak.

Leaders of all major political parties were invited to address the rally. Instead of accepting a less senior speaker, FABC chose to accept the ALP's offer to have Kim Beazley welcome FABC's cavalcade to Canberra. The Prime Minister referred FABC to Senator Alston, Minister for Communications, who did not reply.

Activities were concluded by FABC Vice President, Dr June Factor after the following resolutions were resoundingly carried by the rally :

"The ABC is essential to Australian culture and democracy and must be maintained as a well-resourced, independent and comprehensive national public broadcaster.

1. We, the Victorian shareholders of the ABC, call on all federal politicians to restore ABC base triennial funding to at least its 1995/96 level in real terms and provide additional funds for the ABC to flourish in the new digital media environment.
2. We demand there be no commercialisation or privatisation of the ABC.
3. The Board and Managing director do not have the confidence of the community.
We, the Victorian shareholders of the ABC, call on the ABC Board and Managing Director to resign. Further, we call on federal politicians to introduce a new system of appointment to the Board which ensures its members are appointed on the basis of merit and commitment to independent and comprehensive national public broadcasting, not allegiance to the government of the day.

FABC is appreciative of the entertainers, speakers and cast of Something in the Air who so generously gave their time, and the invaluable support of the City of Melbourne which covered the cost of the staging and sound system.