

PAID ADVERTISEMENT

CUNNINGHAM

EXAMINER

SEPT/OCT 2006

Welcome to the September/October issue of the Cunningham Examiner:

It's purpose is to keep you updated on issues affecting our local community.

I want to hear from you too. If you want to promote a community event or just make a comment, my contact details are:

Sharon Bird MP

Federal Member for Cunningham

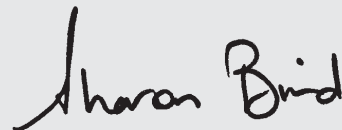
PO Box 387

Wollongong NSW 2520

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Email: sharon.bird.mp@aph.gov.au




Join FABC Illawarra:
See page 2.

Illawarra ABC Friends meet Shadow Minister: \$125m pledge

On a recent visit to Wollongong Senator Stephen Conroy, Shadow Minister for Communications and Information Technology, met with members of the Friends of the ABC Illawarra Committee writes Chris Cartledge.

The meeting was facilitated by local MP Sharon Bird MP, who is also a member of the FABC Illawarra.

The Senator reaffirmed Labor's policy to end political interference in the ABC by reforming the ABC Board appointment process. The Minister would appoint Board members from a shortlist developed by an independent panel established at arm's length from the Minister. The same process would apply to SBS.

He warned that when Labor was elected to Government any changes to the Board would take time as directors were appointed for 5 years. Also control of the Senate by the Coalition would continue for some years.

Senator Conroy promised that a Labor Government would review the ABC Charter and tighten the definitions around advertising. He was explicitly opposed to advertising for ABC broadcasts but was less adamant on the issue of Internet advertising.

The new ABC Count Down website, which stands apart from the ABC prime website, carries commercial advertising. When questioned, Senator Conroy said he was less concerned about advertising on Internet off shoots such as the Count Down site. When it was pointed out that it could be the thin edge of the wedge, he said we should all be vigilant to ensure this was not an opening for the new Board.

The Senator said that the Government had already changed the culture within the ABC – he had not been invited for an interview on **The 7.30 Report** or **Lateline** despite Minister Helen Coonan's frequent coverage on these programs in recent months. He pointed out that one of the Government's 'cultural warriors' Senator Concetta Fierravanti-Wells was an Illawarra local and that she had taken over Senator Santo Santoro's ABC complaint files and spies.

Senator Conroy said it was scandalous that even using the Freedom of Information Act he had been unable to obtain a copy of the KPMG Report on the Funding Adequacy and Efficiency of the ABC but committed a future Labor Government to the recommended additional funding of \$125 million.



Jan Kent Secretary FABC Illawarra meets with Sharon Bird and Shadow Minister for Communications and Information Technology Stephen Conroy.

Sharon Bird's office has a wide range of free, informative kits, factsheets and DVDs – see back page to order.

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Invite you, your friends & family to:

FIELD OF WOMEN

It is a day when 14,700 pink & white silhouettes representing the number of women & men affected by breast cancer each year will be planted & commemorated. This is a day of celebration & remembrance

Sunday, 22 October 2006
WIN Stadium
1pm-4pm

10.00am Church Service Congregational Church, Market St. Wollongong
 1.00pm "Celebration of Life" walk to WIN Stadium.
 Assemble from: 12.15pm at McCabe Park Church St. Wollongong.
 2.00pm "Field of Women" WIN Stadium free entry

Bakers Delight is a major partner of BCNA, raising more than \$1.38 million in the past six years

"We hope to see you there"

SHARON BIRD MP AND JENNIE GEORGE MP
INVITE YOU
TO A PRIVATE SCREENING OF

an inconvenient truth

We're all on thin ice.

Sunday October 1
4pm
Greater Union Cinemas
Wollongong
\$20

AN INCONVENIENT TRUTH is a feature film that offers a passionate and inspirational look at one man's commitment to expose the myths and misconceptions that surround global warming and inspires actions to prevent it. That man is former Vice President Al Gore.

Come along and don't forget to invite your friends

RSVP by Friday 29 September to Idalina-Jennie George MP 42626122
 Alison-Sharon Bird MP 42285899

Please Print, Fill in, and Post to:

Friends of the ABC (NSW) Inc

Post Office Box 1391
 North Sydney NSW 2059



I would like to Join / Renew

Membership Number (if known)

Name(s):

Address:

City:

Postcode:

Home Phone:

Work Phone:

Mobile:

e-mail(s):

Age Group: 30 or under 31 to 50 51 or over

I agree to my contact details being provided to the local FABC Branch: Yes / No

I am interested in: (tick all that apply)

- Letter writing Helping on stalls Office work
 Computer work Political campaigning

Fees	Annual	3-year
Individual	\$20 <input type="checkbox"/>	\$55 <input type="checkbox"/>
Family/ Household	\$25 <input type="checkbox"/>	\$70 <input type="checkbox"/>
Student	\$15 <input type="checkbox"/>	\$40 <input type="checkbox"/>
Pensioner	\$15 <input type="checkbox"/>	\$40 <input type="checkbox"/>
Corporate	\$60 <input type="checkbox"/> (covers 3 people for 1 year)	

I would like to make a donation of \$ _____

TOTAL \$ _____

I am paying by:

Money Order

Cheque in favour of FABC (NSW) Inc

Bankcard Visa Mastercard

Card Number:

Name on card:

Expiry date: /

Cardholder's signature:

Date:

Seawind cleans up at US Boat Show

Congratulations to Seawind – the Bellambi-based catamaran and boat manufacturer who won “Best Sailboat” at the 36th Annual International Boat Show in the United States.

Seawind's 1160 catamaran was judged 'Best Sailboat' from a display of 650 boats at Rhode Island, Newport where Australia II won the America's Cup in 1983.

At a time when so many are questioning the future of manufacturing in Australia, Seawind's achievement in the international market place is a breath of fresh air.

Seawind is a local manufacturer based at Bellambi and exports innovative design boats and catamarans to the US and Asia.



Local MP Sharon Bird and Shadow Treasurer Wayne Swan during a visit to award-winning Seawind in Bellambi.

Seawind is one of Wollongong's quiet achievers. I am delighted with their great win at this prestigious international event.

Medibank Private: Stop the sell off!

The Howard Government will sell Medibank Private if they win office at the next Federal Election.

Labor is opposed to the sale and looks forward to fighting the next election with the future of Medibank front and centre.

The Howard Government has put off the sale after failing to convince Australians that the sale would be good for private health insurance premiums.

The Minister for Finance and the Minister for Health were unable to provide any evidence that the sale would mean more competition in the sector and lower premium increases.

There were also significant doubts over the Howard Government's claim that the 3 million Medibank Private members had absolutely no rights in the sale of the fund.

A recent AC Nielson poll found that 63% of people were against the sale of Medibank Private.

In announcing the sale of Medibank Private in April this year the Minister for Finance claimed that, 'as a result of the sale, there would be less upward pressure on premiums'.

In 2001, Mr Howard promised that his election policies would 'lead to reduced premiums'.

In reality 47.7% of people in Cunningham who have private health insurance have experienced increased costs of up to 40% on their premiums.

John Howard has wanted to sell Medibank Private for more than 20 years and if he wins the next election there is no doubt that is one of the first things he will do.

Labor's Ageing Policy Paper launched

Labor has launched our Ageing Policy Discussion Paper. The discussion paper outlines a positive national vision for older Australians.

The paper, **Labor's Goals for an Ageing Australia: Activity, Quality and Security**, draws together a range of policy proposals around:

- Healthy ageing;
- Quality care in the community and in residential aged care; and
- Financial and housing security.

The purpose of this paper is to encourage discussion to improve the futures of, services for and care of older people in Australia.

I believe that healthy and positive ageing must be an achievable goal because older Australians deserve the best our nation can provide. As the Productivity Commission has said: 'Population ageing can only be conceived as a crisis if we let it become one'.

We don't want older people in Australia to feel they are a burden on younger generations. If we act now with sensible and practical solutions we can prevent population ageing becoming a crisis.



Labor's Ageing policy paper provides a positive national vision for older Australians.

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Free information kits, factsheets and DVDs

My office provides information kits on many different areas. If you wish to order any of the kits below, please fill out the form below and return to: Sharon Bird MP, PO Box 387, Wollongong 2520.

To order your free copies, please tick the items you want ...

- You and Your Government
- Child Support Scheme
- Guide to Australian Government Payments
- Pensioner Kit
- Veterans Kit
- Environment Kit
- Superannuation Kit
- Families Kit
- Youth Kit
- Do Not Call (Telephone) Kit
- Banking Information
- Connecting with Computers (DVD)
- Water Safety
- Net Alert (CD)
- Goals for Aussie Kids
- Safe Toys for Kids



- Keeping Baby Safe
- Cot Safety
- Fire Safety at Home
- Managing Your Money Booklet
- Safe and Secure Kit
- Labor's IR Taskforce Report
- Labor's 5 Point Plan for Small Business
- Join my Email List

Your contact details

Name _____

Address _____

Email _____

Phone _____

Please mail to: Sharon Bird MP, PO Box 387, Wollongong, NSW 2520.
For more information please phone Sharon's office on 4228 5899.

Fight Howard's hospital sell off

The Federal Minister for Health, Tony Abbott has announced the Howard Government's interest in privatising public hospitals around the country.

After making a speech stating his support for private management to run hospitals for profit, Tony Abbott said this on ABC Radio on 12 September:

Journalist: So, would you envisage these companies running public hospitals for profit, or not for profit?
Tony Abbott: Obviously, if you are a private business, you want to make a profit.

The Federal Minister for Health wants to destroy the great Australian institution of free public hospitals.

If the Howard Government gets re-elected, we won't just have a 'for sale' sign on Medibank Private, we will have a big 'for sale' sign on our public hospitals as well.

The AMA and the Australia Healthcare Association have warned against the Minister's plan.

Please sign Sharon Bird's petition against hospital privatisation. For a copy phone her office on 4228 5899.

Congratulatory messages

Sharon Bird's office organises congratulatory messages for 90th and 100th birthdays and couples celebrating their 50th and 60th Wedding Anniversaries.

It was great to see the messages received by Mr Danny and Mrs June Delaney from Bulli who recently celebrated their 50th Wedding Anniversary.



Sharon congratulates Mr and Mrs Delaney.