

Outstanding Achievement Awards

Awarded to individuals and publications for outstanding achievements in their media field.

2024 Voyager Media Awards

Martin van Beynen

Known for his investigative prowess, fearlessness in confronting corruption, and mentorship of aspiring journalists, Martin van Beynen's relentless pursuit of truth throughout his career has exposed corruption scandals within public institutions and contributed to impactful convictions.

Kamala Hayman, editor of The Press, collected the award on Martin's behalf.

Mike Fletcher

Ōpōtiki News has been fortunate to have Mike Fletcher serving as a regular Opinion writer for the past few years. A former president and life member of the Community Newspaper Association, he signed off for the final time as a writer a few weeks ago stating, "After 64 years of being treated kindly by newspapers, it is time to quit the keyboard".

In addition to his own journalistic endeavours, Mike has also been a generous mentor and support to countless new journalists as well as judging for the Media Awards.

Todd Niall

Todd Niall retired in December last year after a stellar 46-year career in journalism across television, radio and publishing. He has been described as a journalist whose only agenda has been to provide the public with a contextualised understanding of how political decisions affect their everyday lives.

2019 Voyager Media Awards

University of Canterbury

In recognition of 50 years of running a postgraduate journalism programme.

2018 Voyager Media Awards

Pat Booth

New Zealand print journalist and writer. He is noted for his coverage of the Arthur Allan Thomas case, and the Mr Asia crime syndicates.

Tom Scott

Thomas Joseph Scott ONZM is a New Zealand cartoonist. In the 1990s, he won New Zealand Cartoonist of the Year six times, and won the award again in 2009.

2017 Canon Media Awards

Donna Chisholm

Donna received her award for more than four decades as a news reporter, feature writer and editor – for the Auckland Star, 8 O'clock, Sunday Star, Sunday Star-Times, Metro, North & South and the NZ Listener. Currently editor-at-large for North & South, and a senior writer for Metro and the Listener, Donna is widely regarded as one of the stars of New Zealand journalism. Donna has won multiple Qantas and Canon awards including the inaugural nib health journalism scholarship in 2016. Among her significant achievements was helping to free David Dougherty, wrongfully convicted of the abduction and rape of an 11-year old girl. As a journalist with the Sunday Star-Times, Donna kept up a relentless campaign of stories until David Dougherty was released from prison. Presentation of the Outstanding Achievement award to Donna at the 2017 awards prompted a standing ovation.

Ross Setford

Ross received his award in recognition of 50 years' sports and news photography. Starting on the Hawera Star, then a daily, in 1967, Ross worked for various newspapers in New Zealand and Australia, and for NZPA. He co-founded Fotopacific Photo Library and later Fotopress with Ross Land. Since 2011, he has run Setford News Photo Agency in Wellington. Ross is best-known for his sports photography, especially rugby, and he has been a familiar sight running up and down the sideline at many of the biggest tests over the decades.

Matamata Chronicle

This title turned 50 in 2017, a significant achievement for a community newspaper. The Chronicle was founded by Jens Sorrenson and later bought by Harry Baker who worked as editor, typesetter, compositor and printer. And sometimes paper boy, when the regulars didn't show up. In 1984, the paper was bought by New Zealand News. When that company was sold and broken up, the Chronicle went to Independent Newspapers Limited (INL) which later became Fairfax NZ. Harry Baker's two sons, Mark and Simon, started as photographers on the paper and later worked for Reuters and The Associated Press respectively. The award was accepted by Chronicle reporter Rexine Hawes.

New Zealand Cartoon Archive

The archive celebrated its 25th year in 2017. The award for outstanding achievement was presented to archive founder Ian F. Grant who is chairman of the Guardians of the NZ Cartoon Archive. Situated at the Alexander Turnbull Library, National Library, Wellington, the archive has amassed more than 50,000 cartoons from more than 60 cartoonists, with new images added every week. New Zealand cartooning's fine tradition dates back to Punch magazines of the 1860s, a time before photography had become widespread. Catalyst for the archive's establishment was Ian's cartoon history The Unauthorized Version, published in 1980. A revised edition followed in 1987.

2016 Canon Media Awards

Nelson Mail

The Nelson Mail was honoured for reaching a milestone of 150 years' continuous publication. Robert Lucas landed with his family, and a printing press, in 1859. He tried a few community mastheads before settling on the Nelson Evening Mail, in 1866. After three months, five gold diggers were murdered by four local thugs. Stories covering the arrests, the trial, the hangings (attended by the editor) dominated for weeks. Circulation soared, the paper never looked back.

Owned by the Lucas family for 127 years, the Mail was sold in 1993 to Independent Newspapers Limited (INL) which itself was sold to Fairfax ten years later.

Marlborough Express

Marlborough Express was also honoured for reaching a milestone of 150 years' continuous publication. The Marlborough Express was established in 1866 by immigrants from England, this time, Samuel and Thomas Johnson from Manchester. They sold out to Smith James Furness and James Henry Boundy in 1879, heralding the start of the Furness dynasty which lasted for more than a century. The paper was bought by INL in 1998. And Fairfax acquired it as part of INL in 2003.

Greymouth Star

Greymouth star also honoured for reaching a milestone of 150 years' continuous publication, was established as one of numerous goldfields papers launched at the time, including the Labour Party-owned Grey River Argus. Ownership changed a few times before the company was floated in 1891 to a who's who of Greymouth. In 1995, a majority shareholding passed to Allied Press, publishers of the Otago Daily Times.

Massey Journalism School

In 2016 Massey Journalism School celebrates its 50th anniversary, making it New Zealand's oldest continuously operating journalism programme. Journalism training's been critical to the improvement in after failing at other careers, but that hasn't been so for a long time. And no institution can claim to have had a greater role in shaping journalists in this country than the Wellington course, founded by the Wellington Polytechnic in 1966 and run since 1999 by Massey University.

2015 Canon Media Awards

Clive Lind

Marking his retirement, Clive was recognised for his 50 year newspaper career which included 26 years on the Southland Times, the last seven as editor. Clive moved to the afternoon Evening Post in Wellington as deputy editor, and was appointed editor for a brief but tumultuous period before its merger with the morning Dominion in 2002.

Clive then edited the Manawatu Standard before assuming a new role with Fairfax as editorial development manager. Somehow, he found time to write several books, one of them a significant history of the dairy industry. He also served for eight years on the Press Council, five years as chairman of the Journalist Training Organisation (JTO) and many years as a member of the Media Freedom Committee.

The Dominion Post

The Post half of the capital's daily newspaper celebrated 150 years and the story was well told in a video produced by Fairfax which was shown to the Canon awards audience. The paper was founded in 1865 by Dublin-born printer, newspaper manager and leader-writer Henry Blundell. Operating from 1894 as Blundell Bros Limited, his sons and their descendants successfully operated the business until its merger in 1972 with its rival, Wellington Publishing Company, publisher of The Morning Dominion, to form Independent Newspapers Limited (INL). The Dominion was founded by a group of farmers and businessmen in 1907.

The Evening Post's last issue was 6 July 2002 with a new paper being born the following day, The Dominion Post. INL was sold a year later to Australia-based Fairfax which continues to publish the paper today.

The outstanding achievement award was accepted by editor Bernadette Courtney.

Outstanding Achievement Awards

2015 Canon Media Awards cont..

New Zealand Listener

The Listener was honoured for reaching a milestone of 75 years' continuous publication, a significant achievement when so many of its kind around the world have succumbed to economic pressures. The Listener was born in the dark days of 1939, against a backdrop of threatening calamity in Europe. Government-owned, its main brief was to provide radio programmes. Under forthright editors Oliver Du Puy then Monty Holcroft, the Listener achieved a reputation for independence. And helped by its monopoly on programme listings, circulation expanded to peak at 376,000 in 1982, massive by today's standards.

Later in the 80s, the Listener lost its programmes monopoly and in 1990, was sold to New Zealand Magazines, then more recently to German family-owned Bauer Media.

The award was accepted by editor and longtime staffer Pamela Stirling.

2014 Canon Media Awards

The New Zealand Herald

The first edition, founded by W. C. Wilson, in 1863 battled 10 different rivals to survive its first decade. One of those competitors was Alfred Horton's Daily Southern Cross. In 1876, Wilson's sons Joseph and William reached agreement with Alfred Horton to amalgamate the two papers and one of our most famous publishing companies, Wilson & Horton, was born.

In 1996, control passed to Tony O'Reilly's Independent News & Media, later moving to associated Australian-based company APN News & Media, the New Zealand arm of which has since been merged with APN's radio and entertainment interests to form NZME.

The award was accepted by editor-in-chief Tim Murphy.

Timaru Herald

Launched as a weekly in June 1864 by Alfred George Horton and Ingram Shrimpton, the paper went daily in 1878. Nine years later, it was bought by Edward George Kerr whose family owned and ran the paper for nearly a century before selling to Independent Newspapers Limited (INL) in 1985. INL was bought by Fairfax in 2003.

The award was accepted by editor Peter O'Neill.

Fred Tulett

Fred retired in 2014 after 15 years as editor of the Southland Times, which followed a similar period as chief reporter of The Dominion in Wellington. During that time, Fred mentored scores of reporters, most of whom will have their own memories of Fred's inimitable newsroom management style. One of the old school, Fred had a sharp eye for news and he taught many up-and-comers about how to get big stories. Fred was always comfortable with the adage that a journalist's job is to comfort the afflicted – and afflict the comfortable.

2013 Canon Media Awards

Sir Julian Smith

Sir Julian Smith, chairman and managing director of Allied Press, publisher of the Otago Daily Times, this country's oldest surviving daily newspaper and the last independently-owned metropolitan paper in both New Zealand and Australia. Sir Julian was knighted in the New Year Honours for service to business, recognition of his leadership and involvement in a range of Otago businesses – foremost among them his family-owned newspaper, the Otago Daily Times. Sir Julian and his brother Nick are the fifth generation of their family to run the business, and Sir Julian has been at the helm for nearly 40 years.

Sir Paul Holmes (posthumous)

Sir Paul was knighted just before his death, aged 62, in February 2013. One of NZ's best known broadcasters, Sir Paul also had a great love for writing, much of which was published via his regular columns in first the Herald on Sunday then the NZ Herald's Saturday edition. He twice won the Columnist of the Year award. His last column, published on October 12 2012, told of his school years at Karamu in Hawke's Bay, and being invited back to be keynote speaker for the school's 50th jubilee. In the days afterwards, he put down his paper to focus on his battle to recover from open-heart surgery and prostate cancer – a battle he ultimately lost.

Tim Pankhurst

Tim Pankhurst, former Chief Executive of the Newspaper Publishers' Association. Tim Pankhurst spent 38 years in journalism in New Zealand and Australia, including editing four major daily newspapers – the Waikato Times, The Press, Evening Post and Dominion Post. As chief executive of the NPA, Tim negotiated the transfer of management of the Qantas Media Awards from Barry and Carolyn Young to the NPA, and the naming sponsorship from Qantas to Canon. Tim has moved to a new role outside media as head of Seafood New Zealand.

2012 Canon Media Awards

Ian Grant

The extraordinary contribution to New Zealand media by Ian Grant was recognised at the Canon Media Awards in Auckland. Mr Grant, from Masterton, was presented with the Print Industry 2012 Outstanding Achievement Award and honoured for his influential role in preserving and enhancing New Zealand's cartooning heritage.

Mr Grant is the founder of the New Zealand Cartoon Archive, which celebrated its 20th anniversary earlier this year.

2011 Canon Media Awards

Jim Tully

Jim Tully was a student at the University of Canterbury Graduate Diploma in Journalism class from 1969 and then spent 18 years in daily newspapers, during which he was awarded the inaugural New Zealand Journalist of the Year in 1978 at the Qantas Media Awards and held such positions as editorial manager and assistant editor of the Auckland Star and editor of the 8 O'Clock weekend newspaper.

Jim joined academia in 1987, receiving the Canterbury University's Teaching Award in 2007 and in 2011 - at the Canon national media awards - the Print Industry Award for Outstanding Achievement: "In the past 25 years Jim has inspired and shaped the futures of many of the country's best-known journalists and editors. I am sure his experience and wisdom will be greatly missed by his students and colleagues," said Canon's country manager Mike Johnston.

Peter Bush

Born in Auckland and growing up on the West Coast, Peter Bush started taking photos from the 1940s. He began capturing the All Blacks on his first assignment as a news photographer for the New Zealand Herald in 1949, also capturing many key social and cultural events in New Zealand and overseas. He worked as a photo-journalist for many newspapers including Gisborne Herald; Auckland Star; Truth; and Sunday News.

"Peter Bush's career is legendary," said Canon's country manager Mike Johnston. "He has been a fixture on the sidelines of All Blacks test matches over the past six decades, while also finding time for news and landscape photography. Peter has been a devoted Canon EOS user for some time and his images capture all the energy, emotion and history of our nation's favourite sport. We are incredibly proud to be able to recognise Peter's career and honour him with this award."

Peter Bush passed away on 16 December 2023 at age 93.