

November 7th 2019

NEW ZEALAND BUSINESS JOURNALISM AWARDS

The New Zealand Shareholders Association is delighted to announce the winners of the 2019 Business Journalism Awards that were hosted last night by Tony Mitchell the Chair of NZSA and Richard Harman journalist and broadcaster.

Held at the prestigious Northern Club, the New Zealand Shareholders Association awarded the 2019 Business Journalism Awards in front of a guest list containing leading media, directors and CEOs of New Zealand's listed companies and industry partners.

Tim Hunter took home a swag of awards including the supreme award the NZSA Business Journalist of the Year.

Head Judge Richard Harman had this to say about Tim's work. "For young aspiring journalists, they could look at Tim's material and learn how to go about writing business stories; about how much research and legwork is required and about the need to stand back and really understand what might matter to the reader, listener or viewer. Tim does all of that and he does it to an exceptionally high standard.

"The NZSA Business Journalism Awards were established to encourage, identify and applaud outstanding business journalism in New Zealand. Supporting and recognising this profession is paramount for the industry and shareholders." Said Tony Mitchell Chair of the NZSA.

NZSA congratulates all finalists and winners in this years' awards.

BUSINESS FEATURES

Finalists: Gareth Vaughan (Interest.co.nz), Andrea Fox (NZ Herald) & Tim Hunter (NBR)

JOINT WINNERS: ANDREA FOX AND TIM HUNTER

The Features entries were of a high quality and in the case of the winners, outstanding.

Andrea Fox's Fonterra story was a highly topical, authoritative analysis of what went wrong in our biggest company. She drew on her long experience reporting Fonterra and the extensive range of contacts she has built up to produce a piece that was stamped with authority and was highly readable.

Tim Hunter's three-part examination of the rise and fall of the CBL insurance group read like an international thriller as his narrative crossed countries and jurisdictions; it was an

extensive piece of work supported by clear graphics and lively writing. And, most importantly, it explained how and why this insurance company fell.

BUSINESS COMMENTARY

Finalists: Rod Oram (Newsroom), Gareth Vaughan (Interest.co.nz) & Tim Hunter (NBR)

WINNER: TIM HUNTER

Entries were all of an excellent standard in contrast to much of the so-called “opinion” that seems to be populating many web news sites. The finalist pieces were analysis based on facts which were included in the pieces.

Any of the finalists could have won but Tim Hunter’s commentary on the new Reserve Bank capital requirements did because it dealt with a highly topical issue.

Tim took a tough (but supportive) stand on the Reserve Bank’s proposal to increase the capital requirements for trading banks. His opening two paragraphs read: “Who knew the Reserve Bank had balls? This is a conservative institution more prone to fretting over fractions of a percentage point than strapping on its prudential power and riding into battle. It’s like discovering the Queen has the names of all her corgis tattooed across her torso.”

BUSINESS NEWS

The judges decided not to make an award in the news category this year as none of the entries were deemed to be up to the standard needed to win an award of this stature.

The judges could only speculate on the reasons for the reduced quality and consider the changing media dynamics to be impacting through factors such as:

- The 24 hour news cycle compromising on quality and depth of articles. There were some good topics but time pressures may have stifled the ability to convey the real story.
- The withdrawal from newsrooms of experienced Chief Reporters, News Editors and Sub Editors may have be responsible for a less rigorous and directed structure and writing of stories.

BUSINESS JOURNALIST OF THE YEAR

TIM HUNTER (NBR)

Tim Hunter dominated these awards this year. His entries were excellent, his writing lively, readable and understandable - he tackled the difficult topics without jargon or assumed knowledge. It is clear he is a healthy sceptic, not pushing a barrow, happy to gather an extensive array of facts and largely let them speak for themselves.

His piece on CBL during the year at times read like it was written by a thriller writer; his piece on the Reserve Bank was a gutsy defence of the bank's position on the capital requirements at a time when the huge PR resources that the Banks and the Bankers' Association can command were pushing to media a very different view.

For young aspiring journalists, they could look at Tim's material and learn how to go about writing business stories; about how much research and legwork is required and about the need to stand back and really understand what might matter to the reader, listener or viewer. Tim does all of that and he does it to an exceptionally high standard.

YOUNG BUSINESS JOURNALIST OF THE YEAR

ANDREW BEVIN (NBR)

Andrew Bevin's portfolio of features entries had a common theme, they all contained a healthily sceptical approach to management and authority. In the case of his Arbor story for example, the difficulty of the questions he asked on behalf of the "disappointed" shareholders caused a record of what was going on. Andrew held his ground and produced a readable and intensively researched story.
