

Media Release: Friday August 8, 2008



The wild storms that savaged the central coast of New South Wales last June, stranding a coal ship carrying 770 tonnes of fuel, inspired many of the winning stories recognised at Northern NSW Journalism Awards tonight.

Judges praised NBN television reporter and the region's Journalist of the Year, **Paul Lobb**, for his "compelling, entertaining and extremely newsworthy body of work," covering the plight of the *Pasha Bulker*, which lay aground off Nobby's Beach in Newcastle for three weeks. His reports "brought to life the human drama" judges said.

**Samantha Turnbull** of the *The Northern Star* newspaper received the Tom Barrass Award for Regional Journalism at the special presentation in Newcastle for her "campaign-style of journalism" that led to her series of articles "Help for the Homeless". Judges commended "her ability to get her hands dirty and highlight the problem at its most raw".

**Ron McLean** also took out one of the night's highest honours, Most Outstanding Contribution to Journalism, for his commitment and dedication to quality country journalism during his three decades at the helm of the *Namoi Valley Independent*.

And democracy was well served by the likes of **Andrew McLeod** of the *Newcastle Star*, whose flair for investigative journalism helped hold local government to account. His story "Deputy's Development" was of "extreme public benefit...that prompted several investigations by authorities." judges said.

The awards, still affectionately known as the "PRODIGs", recognise excellence in regional media journalism across print, photography, television, radio and on-line media.

Please find a full list of winners in all categories below:

### **Special Awards**

PF Adams Young Journalist Award :  
Andrew McLeod, *The Newcastle Star*  
"Deputy's Development"

Tom Barrass Award for Regional Journalism:  
Samantha Turnbull, *The Northern Star*  
"Help for the Homeless"

Journalist of the Year Award

Paul Lobb, *NBN Television*  
"Pasha Bulker Grounding"

Most Outstanding Contribution to Journalism Award

Ron McLean, *Namoi Valley Independent*

**Category Winners**

Best Print Journalist

Emma Swain, *Maitland Mercury*  
"No More Hard Knocks"

Best Radio Journalist

*1233 ABC Newcastle* team: Liz Farquhar, Giselle Wakatama, Emma Tonkin, Jenny Bates, Katie Porritt, Beccy Gollings, Penny Evans and Dennis Malone  
"Wild Weather"

Best Television Journalist

Paul Lobb, *NBN Television*  
"Pasha Bulker Grounding"

Best Photographer

Phil Hearne *Central Coast Sun Weekly*  
"Floodwaters"

**Award Winners 2008**

Print News Report:

Greg Wendt, *Newcastle Herald*  
"Pasha Bulker"

Print Feature Writing:

Emma Swain, *Maitland Mercury*  
"No More Hard Knocks"

TV News Report:

Paul Lobb, *NBN Television*  
"Pasha Bulker Grounding"

TV Current Affairs:

Madeleine Bond and Michael Rauch, *NBN Television*  
"City Crime Series"

TV Camera Work:

Grant McIntyre, *NBN Television*  
"Bulk Carrier Aground"

Michael Rauch, *NBN Television*  
"June Long Weekend".

Radio News Report:

The *1233ABC Newcastle* team:

Liz Farquhar, Giselle Wakatama, Emma Tonkin, Jenny Bates, Katie Porritt, Beccy Gollings, Penny Evans and Dennis Malone: Wild Weather.

Radio Current Affairs/Feature/Special:

Jenny Bates, *1233ABC Newcastle*  
"June Long Weekend"

All Media Best Editorial Artist or Cartoonist:

Grant Sproule, *Newcastle Herald*  
"Inside Sport"

All Media Best Sport News Story:

Adam Hicks, *The Northern Star*  
"Kid of the Kings' Sport"

All Media Best Sport Feature:

Jim Callinan, *NBN Television*  
"The Gold"

All Media Specialty Journalism:

Ben Smee, *Newcastle Herald*  
"Violence in Newcastle"

All Media Investigative Journalism:

Clementine Cuneo, *The Daily Telegraph*  
"How did a nine year old girl starve to death?"

All Media Best Use of the Medium:

*1233ABC Newcastle* News Team for their emergency coverage of the June 07 storms and floods

**Photography Winners**

Photographic News Photography:

Phil Hearne, *The Central Coast Sun Weekly*  
"Floodwaters"

Photographic Sport Photography:

Darren Pateman, *Newcastle Herald*  
"Jets Road to Glory"

Photographic Feature Photography:

Natalie Grono, *Newcastle Herald*  
"Byron Blues"