



## October-November 2017

Email all queries and feedback to: [kotuku.media@xtra.co.nz](mailto:kotuku.media@xtra.co.nz)

### Guild annual meeting

Welcome to the new president of the NZ Guild, Elaine Fisher (pictured below left with the new vice president, Leigh Catley). Elaine is editor of *Coast and Country*, in the sunny Bay of Plenty, and Leigh is GM Communications and Marketing for Federated Farmers, in Wellington.

Elaine and Leigh were elected at the Guild's AGM on 13 October. Also elected were: treasurer, Mick Calder; secretary, Sue Miller; national executive, Ali Spencer (immediate past president), Jackie Harrigan, Sara

Passmore, Gerald Piddock, Cheyenne Nicholson, Neal Wallace and Sam Halstead.



### Our new president

I have my school bus driver Gus Dallas to thank for my career in journalism. The sometimes gruff owner of an aging fleet (read about four) school buses engaged me in lively discussions and debates between stops along the route home, during which I deposited mail, groceries and parcels of meat wrapped in white

newsprint and tied with string, into rural delivery boxes.

Not only did Gus have the school bus contract, but also the rural delivery one and, for a packet of chewing gum, got older students to stand on the steps by the bus door, ready to put parcels in the mail boxes, after the first cloud of dust had drifted passed the bus.

Gus, among his many jobs, had been a journalist and must have figured I might have what it took to do the same. He introduced me to Lincoln Gould then editor of the *Lower North Weekly News* in Warkworth and I became the "Paparoa- Maungaturoto Correspondent" during my last year at high school.

With Lincoln's encouragement and guidance I set out to find a job with a newspaper. With typical teenage arrogance, I turned down an offer to work on the women's pages of the *Northern Advocate* – I wanted to be a news reporter. My first job was with the *Plateau Gazette* in Taumaranui and over the subsequent years I worked for the *Taupo Times*, *Waikato Times*, *Whakatane Beacon*, the *Bay Sun*, *Bay of Plenty Times*, *Katikati Advertiser*, and for five years was editor of the *Kiwifruit Journal*.

I joined privately-owned, Tauranga-based SunMedia in 2011 as editor and only fulltime journalist/ photographer of its monthly rural publication *Coast & Country News*. I also write for SunMedia's news website *SunLive* and *Newsie* and for *Avoscene*, the Avocado Industry Council's publication.

Over the years I have won a number of journalism awards, both through the Guild awards and the NZ Community Newspapers awards. While at the *Katikati Advertiser*, I also won a Qantas Award for best community project.

I'm married to Graham, who I met while working at Whakatane. He's been a possum hunter, deer culler, painter and decorator and farmer. For 10 years we owned a small deer farm in the hills adjacent to the forest park, not far from Katikati. Now Graham has retired and we live in the harbour-side rural village of Tanners Point, just north of Katikati where I work from home.

We have three children: Rebecca who has the role as Growers Regulatory Advisor - Food Safety with Wellington-based Market Access Solutionz and is also executive manager for NZ Citrus; Roydon owns an arborist company in Kumeu; and Owen has a degree in food technology and is production manager at Florentines Patisserie, Tauranga.

I'm forever grateful to Gus for suggesting I give journalism a go because without his advice I doubt I would have taken up this career. It's given me

opportunities that 16-year-old school girl could never have imagined. I've travelled to the US with Fonterra, Italy, Europe and Japan with Zespri and throughout New Zealand meeting inspiring people, writing stories, learning and enjoying new experiences.

It's also a pleasure to be part of the Guild which promotes excellent agricultural journalism and encourages more journalists to specialise in this important field of writing.

### New executive member

New national executive member Sam Halstead heads Latitude Strategy and Communication in Wellington and has worked for communications consultancies in New Zealand and the United Kingdom, holding marketing and communications roles with public and private sector clients.

He is a founding director of Latitude Strategy & Communication and provides counsel to a wide range of clients with a strong focus on the primary production sector as well as unlisted and listed companies.

A former journalist in NZ and the UK, Sam has won a number of public relations awards, including an International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) Gold Quill, two Chartered Institute of Public Relations Scotland prizes and received two prestigious European SABRE award nominations. He has a Bachelor of Communication Studies degree from Auckland University of Technology.

### Professional development

The Guild has funds available to provide members with some professional development opportunities each year, funded from the Congress 2015 surplus. This could be for individuals to attend tertiary courses relating to agriculture or journalism, or perhaps personal development, or for groups. They could be organised by the guild or organised by small groups.

Some suggestions from the British Guild: writing for online audiences, writing opinion pieces, blogposts and reviews, win that pitch, pitching story ideas to editors, harnessing the power of social media, how to create video content for the web, Google analytics for PR, effective blogging, news writing for print and online, features writing,

photography for writers, photograph image editing, keep it legal - media law workshop, writing effective press releases, client newsletters and intranet, strategic PR and management, measuring and evaluating PR, crisis and issue management.

If you have any suggestions for courses or where you believe there is a need, drop me an email at [kotuku.media@xtra.co.nz](mailto:kotuku.media@xtra.co.nz).

### Guild travel grant

The IFAJ 2018 Congress is being held in The Netherlands. The Congress will be held at Wageningen University and Research centre, from 10 – 15 July, 2018. There is more information on the congress website, [www.dutchroots.info](http://www.dutchroots.info).

The Guild offers members the opportunity to attend each year, as part of its members' benefit programme from the surplus made from Congress 2015. The Guild will provide either the cost of registration and accommodation for the Congress, or travel costs to and from The Netherlands. Applicants must be a Guild member, must have a current passport or be able to get one, and must be able to travel to The Netherlands in July next year.



Information on the Travel Grant and an application form will be on the Guild's website soon - <http://www.nzgajc.org.nz>. Applications for the Guild Travel Grants close on 10 December 2017.



**2017 photography award winner – by Des Williams in Shearing.**



## 60th Jubilee October 2018

Next year will be the 60th anniversary of the establishment of the Guild, and we are planning a few activities to mark the event. Much of it will be centred around the annual awards dinner, with briefing sessions, possibly professional development training the next day, and more. That will be 12 and 13 October, 2018.

We will be looking for sponsors (to keep costs down for members), so if you can think of agri-business companies that may like to be associated with our organisation and our 60th anniversary, let me know.

If you have any older photos that could go on to the website in a Guild history archive, also let me know.

## New forestry award

Talented quiz master – in fact, quiz master par excellence – Don Carson announced at the recent award's dinner that there would be a new award next year, sponsored by the Forestry Owners Association and the NZ Farm Forestry Association.

The Forestry Journalism Award will recognise the vital importance of the forestry industry to the New Zealand economy, and could include articles covering raising pine seedlings, farm forestry, timber harvesting, processing, value-adding, exporting etc.

Some of the details are being finalised but will be released next year. During the year as you write articles, think about what you could enter.

## Guild Facebook

The guild now has a facebook page for updates on guild activities <https://www.facebook.com/NZGAJC>

## Change in email addresses??

If your email services were provided through Vodaphone and consequently you now have a new email address, can you let us know – for the newsletter and the membership directory. Oh, and for the treasurer to use for invoicing.

## Belated news on a guild winner

Fairfax New Zealand agribusiness journalist Gerard Hutching took the supreme prize at this year's New Zealand China Council media awards. As well as being named best journalist in the business reporting category, He received a \$10,000 bursary to travel to China for reporting. Neil Wallace, previously of the *Otago Daily Times*, won the award for best regional reporting.

One of Gerard's articles was on Chinese food safety and how a New Zealand berry grower with a business in China felt his products were unfairly targeted by Australia and NZ; another on the pressure China was putting on NZ not to complain about poor quality steel; and a third on the start of the chilled meat to China trade.

## The NZGAJC winners were:



Clockwise from left: *Alexa Cook, Brittany Pickett, Jackie Harrigan, Nigel Stirling, Des Williams and Gerard Hutching.*

