



PRESS RELEASE - UNDER STRICT EMBARGO UNTIL 10.00PM THURSDAY NOVEMBER 26, 2009

Moving personal account of Black Saturday wins Gold Walkley for Gary Hughes

He lost three Walkley trophies when the Black Saturday bushfires destroyed his Kinglake home, but now *The Australian's* Gary Hughes' trophy case will be groaning after he took out the 2009 Gold Walkley and Best Print News Report for his accounts of the disaster.

Hours after watching his house and his family's possessions destroyed, Hughes borrowed a laptop and composed a vivid, dramatic and moving account of surviving the bushfire, a story which was read by millions around the world. Hughes' winning package of stories also included his report of returning with his family to what remained of their home.

The Walkley Advisory Board judges said Hughes' work "brought tears to our eyes".

"For someone to nearly lose their life, their family, everything they own and then file a story like that – that's what print journalism is all about."

While Hughes was unable to attend the ceremony, his wife Janice and daughter Kirsty graciously accepted the awards on his behalf and a pre-recorded video message expressed his gratitude. The Hughes family were also presented with three Walkley trophies to replace those Hughes had lost to the bushfires.

The Australian's photographer, **Renee Nowyarger**, was named Nikon-Walkley Press Photographer of the Year for a body of work which the judges praised as "rounded and versatile". Her stand-out photograph of an exhausted Malcolm Turnbull was singled out for especial praise.

Awards were presented in 33 categories. After an initial round of judging by three-person peer juries who chose the three finalists in each category, the Walkley Advisory Board selected the winner of each award. The board also selected the winners for the Gold Walkley and the Walkley Award for **Journalistic Leadership**, won this year by **Michael McKinnon** for his outstanding work in the cause of freedom of information over more than two decades.

The Walkley Trustees awarded the **Most Outstanding Contribution to Journalism** to the former *Sydney Morning Herald* journalist **Tony Stephens** who retired last year after more than 50 years in journalism. The Trustees said Stephens was recognised for the skill and dedication of his work, and his generous support as a mentor to other journalists.

More than 900 journalists and media identities gathered at the Royal Randwick Racecourse in Sydney for the gala event, hosted by *SBS World News Australia's* Anton Enus and Annabel Crabb, formerly of the *Sydney Morning Herald*.

The ceremony was broadcast on SBS, from 10.00pm, November 26. *The Walkley Magazine* yearbook edition featuring the 2009 winners was also released tonight. The magazine includes its usual diet of Australian journalism from the country's leading writers, artists and photographers.

The Walkley Awards, administered by the Media, Entertainment & Arts Alliance, have a proud history of celebrating the year's winning stories and images. The awards were established in 1956 by Sir William Gaston Walkley, founder of Ampol Australia.

For further information about the Walkley Awards visit the Walkley website at www.walkleys.com. Or contact Clare Fletcher on 0407 676 284 or clare.fletcher@alliance.org.au.

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54th Walkley Awards – 2009 WINNERS

Print News Report

Proudly sponsored by Media Super

Gary Hughes, *The Australian*, “Black Saturday 1 & 2”

Social Equity Journalism

Steve Pennells, *West Weekend Magazine*, “Collateral Damage”

Best Online Journalism

Proudly sponsored by Au8ust

Maroondah Leader team, “Feeling the Strain”

Daily Life / Feature Photography

Proudly sponsored by Nikon

Kirk Gilmour, *Illawarra Mercury* and *The Sydney Morning Herald*, “Batten Down the Boogie Boards”

Best Three Headings

Proudly sponsored by Dow Jones

Paul Cully, *The Sydney Morning Herald*

“From second fiddle to fecund Siddle”

“Benji Martian”

“The curious case of Jenson Button, the man whose salary is stuck in reverse”

Coverage of Indigenous Affairs

Proudly sponsored by SBS

Janine Cohen, **Liz Jackson** and **Kate Wild**, *Four Corners*, ABC TV, “Who Killed Mr Ward?”

Coverage of Community and Regional Affairs

Proudly sponsored by Fairfax

Louise FitzRoy, **Steve Kyte**, **Kon Karamountzos** and **Simon Rogers**, ABC Kinglake Ranges 94.5FM, “A New Voice”

Best Sports Journalism

Proudly sponsored by Nine Network

Anne Connolly, **Sarah Ferguson**, **Ivan O’Mahoney** and **Kate Wild**, *Four Corners*, ABC TV, “Code of Silence”

Sport Photography

Proudly sponsored by Nikon

Phil Hillyard, *The Daily Telegraph*, “Sports Light”

Radio News and Current Affairs Reporting

Proudly sponsored by ABC

Samantha Donovan, *The World Today*, AM and PM, ABC Radio, “Black Saturday Aftermath”

Radio Feature, Documentary or Broadcast Special

Proudly sponsored by QUT Creative Industries

Anita Barraud, *360*, ABC Radio National, “Indonesian Journeys: Democracy and Diversity: Jakarta, Aceh, West Timor, Bali”

Magazine Feature Writing

Proudly sponsored by BHP Billiton

Annabel Crabb, *Quarterly Essay*, “Stop at Nothing: The Life and Adventures of Malcolm Turnbull”

Best Scoop of the Year

John Garnaut and **Mathew Murphy**, *The Age* and *The Sydney Morning Herald*, “Rio Tinto Executives Detained in China”

Cartoon

Proudly sponsored by Banki Haddock Fiora

Peter Nicholson, *The Australian*, “Bashir and Bombing”

Artwork

Proudly sponsored by Purple Palate

David Rowe, *The Australian Financial Review*, “Budget Boat”

Outstanding Continuous Coverage of an Issue or Event

Proudly sponsored by Highway 101

HeraldSun.com.au team, “Black Saturday Bushfires”

Newspaper Feature Writing

Proudly sponsored by Pantera Press

Patrick Carlyon, *Herald Sun*, “Where the Hell is Everyone?”

News Photography

Proudly sponsored by Nikon

Justin McManus, *The Age* and *The Sydney Morning Herald*, “Black Saturday Body”

Business Journalism

Proudly sponsored by JP Morgan

Duncan Hughes, *The Australian Financial Review*, “ASIC Knew About Storm for Months”

Photographic Essay

Proudly sponsored by Nikon

Jason South, *The Age*, “Papua Birth”

International Journalism

Proudly sponsored by Seven Network

Fouad Hady and **Geoff Parish**, *Dateline*, SBS TV, “City of Widows”

Television News and Current Affairs Camera

Proudly sponsored by Australian Super

Tim Noonan, *Today Tonight*, Seven Network, “Street Gangs”

Television News Reporting

Proudly sponsored by Hart Security

Seven News Victoria team, “Black Saturday Bulletin”

Television Current Affairs, Feature, Documentary or Special (more than 20 minutes)

Proudly sponsored by Southern Cross Ten

Anna Broinowski and **Sally Regan**, SBS TV, “Forbidden Lie\$”

Television Current Affairs Reporting (less than 20 minutes)

Proudly sponsored by Media Monitors

Andrew Geoghegan and **Mary Ann Jolley**, *Foreign Correspondent*, ABC TV, “Zimbabwe, Left to Die”

Investigative Journalism

Proudly sponsored by Bayer

Michael McKinnon, **Neil Warren**, **Peter Doherty** and **Michael Best**, *Seven News*, “Police Corruption”

Broadcast and Online Interviewing

Proudly sponsored by Ernst & Young

Tracy Grimshaw, *A Current Affair*, Nine Network, “Simon Cowley”, “Nick D’Arcy”, “Matthew Johns”

Commentary, Analysis, Opinion and Critique

Proudly sponsored by ING Direct

Jo Chandler, *The Age*, “Angola versus Angelina”

SENIOR AWARDS

Nikon-Walkley Press Photographer of the Year

Proudly sponsored by Nikon

Renee Nowytagher, *The Australian*

Best Non-Fiction Book

Graham Freudenberg, *Churchill and Australia*, Pan Macmillan

Journalism Leadership

Proudly sponsored by Qantas

Michael McKinnon, national Freedom of Information editor, Seven Network

Most Outstanding Contribution to Journalism

Proudly sponsored by Sky News Australia

Tony Stephens, journalist and author

Gold Walkley

Proudly sponsored by the Media, Entertainment & Arts Alliance

Gary Hughes, *The Australian*

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