

nsw racehorse owners

BY **SHARON HUNT**
Executive Officer – NSWROA

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE NSWROA COMMITTEE



NSWROA Committee (L-R) Michael Yates, Michael Kissane, Ray McDowell, Max Whitby, Sharon Hunt, John Vouris and Laurie Macri

As most writers will tell you when writing for various publications, you try to create an article which will appeal to the readership base as well as promoting either a product or organisation.

This is the format I generally use for the NSWROA column in the RNSW Magazine, so when I was asked by a member recently about the various committee members of the NSW Racehorse Owners Association, I thought that this would be the perfect opportunity to let everyone know about the gentlemen who voluntarily give their time to the NSWROA Committee.

Ray McDowell – President

Ray joined the Committee in 2005, was unanimously elected to the role of president in October 2008 and re-elected as president again in May 2009 following the AGM.

Ray has been a horse owner for over 35 years but is best known for his ownership of one of our greatest middle-distance performers, Intergaze.

He currently has over 10 horses in work with several trainers, including Kevin Moses at Randwick and Ken Lantry at Newcastle. Ray also has a few mares that he breeds with.

Ray works for Oaks Hotel and Resorts and has been involved in the strata and building management industry for over 20 years. He is actively involved in the improvement of racing and is delighted to be a member of the Racing Industry Consultation Group.

An avid fan of country racing, Ray is a regular traveller to the country race cups in Coffs Harbour, Grafton, Wagga and Newcastle each year.

Whilst trying hard not to show bias to one area over another, he does, however, have a soft spot for the Coffs Harbour carnival having been a former vice-chairman of the Coffs Harbour Racing Club.

Michael Yates – Secretary

Michael joined the Committee of NSWROA in 2006, was elected secretary in 2007 and re-elected to this position in May 2009.

Michael has been a regular attendee at race meetings for over 20 years. In the last 10 years he has owned and raced horses mainly in NSW. In more recent times, he has been involved in breeding.

Michael is a corporate lawyer who has advised metropolitan and provincial race clubs, and has been involved in significant thoroughbred and property-related transactions.

John Vouris – Treasurer

John Vouris joined the NSWROA Committee in 2007, was elected treasurer in July 2008 and was re-elected to this position in May 2009. John also represented the owners on the Appointments Panel for the board of Racing NSW.

John is a chartered accountant and partner of Lawler Partners in Sydney's CBD.

John has had many horses since the early 1990's but his prized possession was Before Too Long which ran in the 2002 Golden Slipper and won the Group 2-Champagne Stakes at Moonee Valley, breaking the track record.

His current horses are Polynesianprincess, Be Mine Tonight and Interfun bred from his broodmare Hula Hoop.

Darren Farnham – Committee Member

Darren has been a member of NSWROA since 2002 and was appointed to the committee in 2006.

He has had a passion for racehorses and horse racing in general for many years now and enjoys reading form and having a punt on a Saturday.

Darren regularly attends race meetings at Randwick, Rosehill and Canterbury, and he also makes the annual pilgrimage to his

home town for the Wagga Wagga Gold Cup.

Darren has two active partnerships in horses – Bellagio Wynn with Chris Waller and Gravitation with Clary Conners.

His first winner was at Hawkesbury with Senorita Peta in 2002, with his most remarkable win being Allow who won the 2006 Qld Oaks. Darren has also been involved in Baby Casino and Mehter.

Darren is the current chairman of the 'Racing's Night of Champions' Committee, ensuring that NSWROA delivers a high class 'black tie' awards night – befitting the feats of our horses, trainers, jockeys and all employed in the industry,

Darren is a highly experienced television executive and business professional having 19 years of experience working in the television industry.

Michael Inglis – Committee Member

Michael is the newest addition to the NSWROA Committee having been appointed on 7 July 2009.

Michael is a prominent barrister and accredited mediator and has a long association with the racing industry. He has been racing and breeding horses for over 25 years.

He is currently vice-president of Murrumbidgee Turf Club, having been elected to the board of the MTC in October 1998.

Michael has been instrumental in improving conditions for owners both within the MTC and in the southern region and also for the preservation of a number of meetings and race clubs in the country sector.

Christopher Keogh – Committee Member

Christopher Keogh was appointed to the NSWROA Committee in 1998 and is also a past president.

He has a 'passion for racing' which has been on-going for more than 30 years and he is an active racegoer, predominantly in the metropolitan area.

Chris has owned many horses over the years, the best being Merry Shade, winner of the Widden Stakes and Reginald Allen Handicap and also a third placing behind Burst in the Sires' Produce.

He also owned Cheeky Spy which won on all four metropolitan tracks.

Chris is a businessman who owns an importing/wholesaling company that specialises in products for the Hi-Fi/Video industry.

Besides his passion for horse racing, he also has a keen interest in rugby union and touch football.

Michael Kissane – Committee Member

Michael was a director of NSWROA from February 1995 to September 2003 and rejoined the board in 2006. He has been a director of other sporting and education entities over the past 25 years.

Michael has been a racehorse owner and an interested breeder since the early 1980's when he purchased his first horse.

Michael has had wins at Rosehill and other provincial winners at Newcastle and Muswellbrook.

Over the years Michael has owned, raced and bred horses in his sole name and in partnership with others and the trainers have included Cyril Kearns, Pat Quinn, Geoff Maynes, Darren Smith, Les Bridge, Noel Engelbrecht and Noel McInerney.

He is a keen racegoer attending race meetings whenever possible. His other interests include golf (he is a past president of Strathfield Golf Club) and fishing.

Michael has been a practicing solicitor for over 35 years and partner in the firm of Walker Kissane & Plummer at Burwood.

Laurie Macri – Committee Member

Laurie was appointed to the NSWROA Committee in March 2009 and has worked in the Finance and Stockbroking industries for 25 years and is currently an executive director of the Macquarie Group.

Laurie has been racing horses since 2004 and what commenced as fun with friends has expanded to an enterprise with over 30 horses currently in work in four states via 10 trainers.

When your first horse is the dual Group 1-winner Virage de Fortune and you have enjoyed subsequent Group success with Von Costa De Hero and Exceedingly Good, it is easy to stay passionate!

The majority of Laurie's older horses are currently trained by David Hayes and Lee Freedman.

In recent times this has been broadened to include Sydney-based trainers Gai Waterhouse, John Hawkes, John O'Shea and Anthony Cummings.

Laurie also has horses with two trainers in regional centres of NSW and continues to actively invest in the thoroughbred industry and purchased an additional six yearlings this year (either solely or in partnership). He

is a supporter of both the Magic Millions and Inglis.

Laurie continues to broaden his investment in the thoroughbred industry by retaining his ownership in mares post-racing so as to develop his breeding interests.

Max Whitby – Committee Member

Max was appointed to the NSWROA Committee in 1994 and is a past president and life member of the Association.

Max has raced horses for over 30 years and has enjoyed success with some Group 1 winners; Savabeel winning the Cox Plate in 2004 and Econsul winning the Caulfield Guineas also in 2004

He is involved with all aspects of the thoroughbred industry, owning shares in two stallions and has a large breeding stock both in Australia and NZ.

Max currently has 40 horses in work with seven different trainers in Australia and New Zealand and attends metropolitan race meetings at least twice a month and is an avid country racegoer.

Max attends the Albury, Wagga, Grafton, Coffs Harbour, Armidale and Scone Cup Carnivals every year and is a keen punter.

Max has been in the futures and finance industry for over 35 years, working at a corporate level for an international bank and since 1991 he has owned and operated his own futures broking business.

The Association

Since finally being recognised as the official body representing owners in NSW some 12 months ago, extensive lobbying by the NSWROA Committee has resulted in great outcomes for owners including:-

- compensation for owners as a result of the disruption to the training of horses due to the move from Randwick to other locations and back again;
- reconvening of the RIPAC Committee to discuss industry issues prior to the establishment of the RICG Committee; and
- the introduction of the BOBS Extra Scheme.

In closing, may I remind readers that the NSW Racing Industry's Night of Nights and flagship event of the NSWROA, the 'Racing's Night of Champions', will be held at The Grand Pavilion at Rosehill Gardens on Thursday 13th August.

For further details visit the NSWROA website www.nswroa.com.au or telephone the NSWROA office on (02) 9299 4299.