

# Reward for one of country's finest



(L-R) Bob Pavitt and Kate Nivison with Terry Burke on receiving his award

**COUNTRY RACING STALWART TERRY BURKE WAS TAKEN ABACK UPON RECEIVING THE PRESTIGIOUS SIMON NIVISON ACHIEVEMENT AWARD** WORDS: SHARON HUNT (EXECUTIVE OFFICER – NSWROA)

Longstanding NSWROA member, Terry Burke, was surprised and deeply honoured when his name was read out as the winner of the Simon Nivison Achievement Award at the 2011 NSW Country and Provincial Racing Awards in late September.

"To say that I am thrilled is very much an understatement" said Terry. "Simon and I grew up together and were close friends so, to be given an award named in his honour, is without a doubt the pinnacle of my career."

As readers may be aware, awards presented at this function are in recognition to those who have gone above and beyond in their efforts to improve and develop NSW Country and Provincial Racing.

So let's get to know Terry Burke whose journey in our industry is very interesting to say the very least.

As long as Terry can remember racing has always been a part of his family's life.

Attending a country race meeting on a Saturday was the normal practice when he was growing up and so it was inevitable that this familiarity would grow to an unsurpassed passion for the industry.

Terry's father, Pat Burke, was a foundation committee member of the reformed Tamworth Jockey Club (following the War) and was president of the club for 12 years.

When he relinquished the role, Dr Brian Martin became President for two years before Terry took over the reins for seven years as part of his 27 year tenure with the club. Terry is now the proud patron of the Club.

Terry has also served on the Racing NSW Country Board for six years (including three years as vice-chairman) before retiring last year and served 25 years as a Committee member of the Hunter and North West District Racing Association; with 12 of those years as chairman.

As chairman, Terry demonstrated the capacity to lead by example and has encouraged Clubs to strive for optimum performance.

As you would appreciate Terry has seen many changes in our industry over the years.

He cites changes in field sizes, attendances at race meetings, the emergence of TAB meetings and the 'social' aspect of racing as the principal areas of change.

He commented: "These days you have to have a



Lady Manina with regular rider Alan Scorse in the saddle

feature meeting to draw a crowd – that wasn't the case years ago. Families would turn up week in and week out; it was the normal thing to do."

A stock and station agent by trade, Terry was a partner in the firm Blanch, Burke & Smyth; a group of gentlemen with similar interests.

The firm conducted an annual three-day mixed thoroughbred stock sale which, at its peak period, had sale toppers of \$30,000 to \$40,000.

One of those sale toppers at \$40,000 was Vain Fury (Vain-Kid Sister) who was bred by longstanding NSWROA member Bruce McHugh.

Vain Fury recorded 20 wins (including the Listed-NJC Newmarket Handicap), 8 second placings and 10 third placings from his 74 career starts.

Another well-performed horse to have graduated from this sale was the precocious Domino.

Domino (Gunsynd-Princess May) who was bred by another great country racing stalwart and, coincidentally, another Tamworth Jockey Club president and NSWROA member, John Clift.

The horse was the winner of five races (including the Listed-ITC Brambles 2YO Classic and the Listed-STC Skyline Stakes).

After some eight years, the partnership sold the firm to Australian Estates in Brisbane.

Terry is now the principal of Burke & Smyth Country Pty Limited.

A racehorse owner for some 50 years, Terry has bought many horses during this time (the first of which was at 21 years of age), but without a doubt the best horse he has had to date has been Lady Manina who

he co-owned with his father and Mr M.K. Blanch.

**Lady Manina, a chestnut filly by Baguette out of Manina (by Todman), was bought privately from her breeder Barry Chivers for the sum of \$10,000.**

Lady Manina was placed with Roy Hinton at Broadmeadow who would be her trainer for the remainder of her career.

In her first start for Terry and his co-owners she won a Quirindi maiden then raced through her classes to record 10 consecutive wins on country, provincial and city tracks.

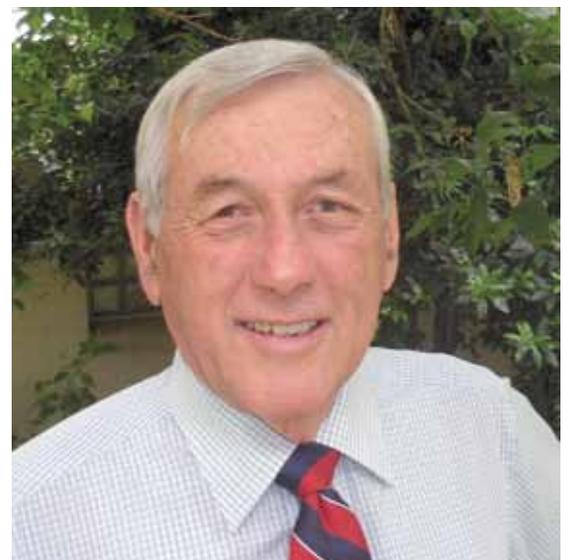
Terry told me that this was a record at the time that Lady Manina shared with illustrious mares Surround and Proud Miss – not a bad 'club' indeed to be a part of!

Lady Manina had success in the Black Type arena when she saluted in the Listed-Tatts NSW Carrington Stakes in 1980 in the race record time of 57.1 seconds. This record would stand for nine years until Sunalong Lass recorded 57secs to salute in 1989.

In an era that contained many good horses, Lady Manina also raced against one of the greatest horses of modern times – Kingston Town and was gallant in her second placing to the champion in the 1980 Group 2-Expressway Stakes, going down by 1.5 lengths and giving 'The King' some two kilograms in weight.

Lady Manina would have 21 career starts for 12 wins (including a Listed Race), a second placing (at Group 2 level) and 2 third placings for \$39,855 in prizemoney.

At the conclusion of her racing days, Lady Manina was sold to Bruce McHugh and Angus Armanasco but unfortunately had to be put down following a



Long-term racing administrator Terry Burke



paddock accident before she had a chance to become a broodmare.

When asked what his most memorable moment on a racecourse was, Terry was in two minds between Lady Manina's wonderful success in the Carrington Stakes and her second placing to Kingstown Town.

He said: "It was no disgrace to run second to a champion galloper and that is what Kingstown Town was."

These days Terry is a co-owner of Hector the Sheriff (who has had two wins and a second placing from his

five race starts) and Sparkling Lady (who has recorded a third placing from three starts to date).

I asked Terry what he would say to someone contemplating entering into the ownership ranks.

He said: "You must be mindful to go into ownership with the attitude that it is for the enjoyment rather than thinking you are going in it to make money.

"If you are lucky enough to get a horse to pay its way – it's a bonus."

Racehorse ownership – there is nothing quite like it!

Racehorse owners are very special people – are you one? If not, why not give it a go!

If you are interested in participating in this wonderful sport why not become a member of NSW Racehorse Owners Association.

Membership applications are opening shortly for the 2012 membership year. Simply visit our website - [www.nswroa.com.au](http://www.nswroa.com.au) or telephone the NSWROA office on (02) 9299 4299. **RNSW**