

**HUNTER VALLEY THOROUGHBRED BREEDERS – BREEDERS OF LEADERS
2022 HTBA EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR AWARDS**

11 MAY 2022

The Hunter Thoroughbred Breeders' Association is once again very proud to pay tribute to three exceptional employees, in the fields of administration, horsemanship and leadership.

**HTBA Employee of the Year (Administration) Award, Sponsored by OAS Technology.
Winner – Ms Gwenda Bradford- Mordey from Godolphin**

This year's HTBA Employee of the Year (Administration) Award goes to a lady who is passionate, dedicated, a lover of sports, an indefatigable problem solver, a caring and loyal individual, a former Coral Queen winner and an invaluable asset, Ms Gwenda Bradford – Mordey.

Gwenda, or "Gwenstar" as she is affectionately known, commenced her administration career as a corporate travel planner, which spanned 20 years. She ventured into the thoroughbred industry with the purchase of Lurline Lodge an agistment farm in Dalswinton, near Denman. As Gwenda turned her talents to working and understanding the breeding of thoroughbred horses, Lurline Lodge became her pride and joy. Gwenda and her late husband managed Lurline Lodge with good friends Verna and David Metcalf for 13 years.

After the sale of Lurline Lodge, Gwenda joined Darley Australia in 2006 bringing with her a wealth of experience, industry knowledge and connections. For the past 16 years Gwenda has provided exceptional all round administration from her post at reception including assisting managers, client and visitor liaison, staff communications and event coordination. Gwenda is always up for a challenge and problem solving is her middle name. A penchant for numbers, Gwenda greets all who call personally having memorized every client's and callers' mobile numbers not only at Kelvinside but across all 7 Godolphin sites in Australia!

The HTBA congratulates an irreplaceable talent and this year's Employee of the Year (Administration) Award winner, Ms Gwenda Bradford-Mordey.

**2022 HTBA Employee of the Year (Horsemanship) Award, Sponsored by The Hunter Media Co.
Winner – Ms Stacey Reeve from Sledmere Stud**

This year's HTBA Employee of the Year (Horsemanship) Award is presented to a very astute horsewoman who is recognised for her passion, commitment, care and love of horses and Polo Cross, Ms Stacey Reeve.

Stacey has been an integral part of Sledmere Stud for 15 years during which she has demonstrated extraordinary dedication, pride and loyalty to the Sledmere business and all its horses. Stacey is a devoted Sledmere Stud advocate and ambassador who has made a measurable impact to the farm and its brand. Her contribution can be measured by the success that Sledmere has had from conception to foaling, weanling handling and the results in the sales ring and on the racetrack all of which could not have been achieved without Stacey's input, care, management and dedication. Demonstrating her love of horses, Stacey will always go above and beyond to personally oversee their welfare, veterinary treatment and recovery of all horses under her care.

Respected by her peers, a role model with her horsemanship skills, Stacey is a born team leader imparting her knowledge and experience to all staff at Sledmere, she continues her professional development and knowledge attending the many seminars and short courses HTBA host. Her talent to educate young stock and pass on this knowledge is an invaluable asset to the team at Sledmere.

The HTBA congratulates Ms Stacey Reeve for her remarkable horsemanship talents and recognises her achievements by awarding her the 2022 HTBA Employee of the Year (Horsemanship) Award.

**2022 HTBA Employee of the Year (Leadership) Award, Sponsored by Morgan + English | Thoroughbred Recoveries and Safe Industries Australia.
Winner – Ms Toni Freeman from Riversdale Farm**

This year's HTBA Employee of the Year (Leadership) Award is presented to a lady who grew up in a show jumping family, has exemplary experience in the thoroughbred industry, both here and overseas, is a dedicated horsewoman, has prepared and sold Group 1 champions, and is a respected leader and mentor to many in the industry, Ms Toni Freeman.

Growing up in Barraba NSW and travelling to show jumping shows all over the east coast of Australia, Toni displayed her love of horses and horsemanship from an early age. Her career in the thoroughbred industry commenced with yearling preparation at Coolmore, progressed to yearling management at Glenlogan Park and expanded to all aspects of stud work through her work in Japan and the USA.

On her return to Australia, Toni took up a placement as Yearling Manager with Riversdale in 2011 where she has been ever since.

Throughout her career, Toni has prepared and sold Group 1 champions such as Nettoyer, Samadoubt and Behemoth, run large drafts at all major sales, trained and mentored staff, and demonstrated an exceptional rapport with trainers, agents and clients alike. Toni's dedication to horses, staff and the Riversdale farm is unparalleled. Toni goes above and beyond in all that she undertakes. She is a very much valued and appreciated member of the Riversdale family.

In addition to her significant achievements, Toni is very humble, has an insatiable thirst for knowledge, and is a natural leader and mentor. A frequent attendee of annual HTBA Breeders seminars and industry Supervisor and Management courses, a true leader by example to which many in the industry today would owe their success in large part to Toni's leadership, dedication and care.

The HTBA congratulates Ms Toni Freeman on her outstanding leadership and contribution to the industry by awarding her the 2022 HTBA Employee of the Year (Leadership) Award.

Media Contact: Hellen Georgopoulos 0419 850 224

BACKGROUND: The Hunter Valley's Thoroughbred Breeding industry contributes over \$5 billion annually to the national economy and \$2.6 billion annually to the NSW economy. It supports over 230,000 jobs throughout Australia. It is one of three international centres of thoroughbred breeding excellence in the world – alongside Newmarket in the UK and Kentucky in the USA. It is Australia's largest producer and exporter of premium thoroughbreds. It is an iconic part of Australia's sporting history and an industry worth protection.

