



FONDLY REMEMBERED: Patricia Freeman, left, who has died at the age of 87

# 'End of era' as great hunt supporter dies

**'PRIVILEGE':** Friend of Sir Alfred Munnings

By Will Clarke

THE death of one of hunting's leading characters – who counted Sir Alfred Munnings among her friends – has been hailed as the “end of an era” by those who knew her.

Stoke-by-Nayland resident Patricia Freeman, who has died aged 87, was among the first female point-to-point racers and was a keen supporter of country pursuits throughout her life.

Diane Roe, administrator of the Sir Alfred Munnings Art Museum, near Colchester, which regularly played host to dinners with Miss Freeman, said it was a privilege to have known her.

“Her lifestyle and those of her contemporaries simply does not exist anymore. It was the Edwardian life – totally embed-

ded in the countryside. She would look fantastic dressed up with her mother riding side saddle in the hunt. And it was through the hunt her family became friends with Sir Alfred Munnings. She was the last connection to that world.”

Roger Clark, grand master and huntsman with the Essex and Suffolk Hunt and the East Anglian Bloodhounds, paid tribute to the “great huntswoman”, who died on March 24 at Colchester General Hospital.

He said she had always backed the sport she loved and had a reputation for not suffering fools gladly. “She was sharp, but she will always be remembered for her support of the hunt,” he said.

Busky Laurie, who had known Miss Freeman and her family for many years, said she would remember her as a “great friend”.

She said: “Stoke-by-Nayland

has lost one of its most colourful characters. I remember first seeing her riding during the 1930s and I first got to know her at the blacksmiths in Stoke-by-Nayland.

“She was well known for driving her car with her little dog Daisy always accompanying her. She was also a keen supporter of hunting and seldom missed a meet of the Essex and Suffolk Hunt.

“Miss Freeman did not have much use for modern appliances and right up to her death she used an old fashioned mangle to put her sheets through every week.

“She was also well known for her work with the Royal British Legion following the death of her fiancé in the Second World War and had collected for them for 60 years.”

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