



Brenda Hutchinson considers her coming Melbourne Marathon attempt a "huge mental challenge".

Picture: MARK STEWART N10WG308

A marathon for 'mum'

WHEN Ashwood resident Brenda Hutchinson, 34, crosses the finish line in the Melbourne Marathon at the MCG on October 11, the memory of her mother-in-law, Trish, will loom large.

The former primary school teacher died of pancreatic cancer on Valentine's Day 2008, aged 66 – the third of four siblings to succumb to the disease. Ms Hutchinson described Trish, wife to Maurie, mother of three and grandmother of five, as a "strong person" whose family "was her life".

"She'd say, 'yes, this is horrible, but I've had a wonderful life'. She was so proud her children had grown up to be wonderful people, and made successes of their own lives," Ms Hutchinson said.

The finance firm partner heard about Can Too, an exercise activity of Cure Cancer Australia Foundation, and leapt at the chance to combine fitness and fundraising.

Can Too marathon participants access expert trainers for 20 weeks and pledge to raise \$2000 for cancer research, an amount Ms

Hutchinson raised in six weeks. When she offered to print the name of sponsors' loved ones on her running shirt, she received more than 25 names and \$3500 in sponsorship.

Despite four previous half-marathons, plus a regime of gym, personal training, pilates and skiing, the 42km full marathon is a "huge mental challenge".

Gruelling preparations have triggered strange aches, body-clock adjustment, 4.30am breakfasts, and several pairs of blister-inhibiting socks.

