

# *Nev's been a driving force from the start*

By  
**DAVID BRASCH**

**THEY** say Nev Jackson would go to the opening of an envelope. While that might not be exactly true of the Mackay Club stalwart, he certainly has not missed too many greyhound track openings in his three-decade involvement in the sport.

Nev, 65, was on track for the opening of Mackay (of course), Cairns, Townsville, Ayr, Rockhampton, Bundaberg, Albion Park and even Cannington.

His work at Ansett for many years allowed him to get to those tracks for their opening.

Nev will best be known for his dedication to greyhound racing and being behind the opening of the sport in Mackay.

"I'm the only member of the steering committee still involved in the industry," he said.

Mackay will celebrate its 30th anniversary this year.

"I was in a pub having a drink with Rod Hegerty, who is a nephew of former Brisbane trainer Ken Gibson," said Nev.



*Nev Jackson at work as a Mackay trainer.*

"Rod was racing a bitch called My Marvel in Brisbane at the time and during our pub discussion we talked about getting greyhound racing started in Mackay."



*Nev and Norma Jackson always attend every race meeting at the Mackay track.*

Nev remembers the club being built with funds loaned by the Mackay Show Society and repaid several years later by the then Racecourse Development Fund.

Mackay started with only two race distances, 541m and 774m, but in 1978 was thriving so much that 60 dogs were once on the not required list.

"Costs to trainers have crept up and unfortunately returns have not kept pace," said Nev. But that hasn't stopped Nev and wife Norma from enjoying greyhound racing and its benefits.

He has been to the running of every Mackay Cup since the track started, and in the 30 years Mackay has been racing has missed only 10 race meetings. He also won the 1992 Mackay Cup with Leroy My Man.

Open heart surgery in 1988 didn't stop him, but nursing his first wife Colleen and eventually losing

her through breast cancer nearly did.

“We started racing in the era of Bill Brittain and Max Mason, and the best Racing Minister I’ve ever seen in Russ Hinze,” said Nev.

“But this Board is on the right track, specially promoting a better class of race like Young Guns and \$1000 Maidens.

“It is big bikkies in areas like ours.”

Nev Jackson has held every position within the Mackay Club. He is treasurer now and has been president “on and off” over the years.

He continues his show dog judging, and has a small but smart team of dogs in work.

Mackay wouldn’t be the same without Nev and Norma Jackson.