

DAY IN OCTOBER



Melbourne Marathon Spartan Legends from left; Pete Battrick, Peter Ryan, Neville Gardner, David Foskey, Manny Karageorgiou, Roger Weinstein, Wayne Thompson, John Dobson, Bruce Hargreaves and Frank Biviano. Picture: JANINE EASTGATE

but still made it to the start line that year.

"I had to grit my teeth and force the pain out of the back of my mind," he said. Frank Biviano, also 69, was diagnosed with bowel cancer and had to have surgery 12 weeks before the race back in 1987. But he's still running and thinks nothing of the drive from Cowes on race morning.

"If I listen to my doctor he tells me to stop at 70. We'll see what happens after that but so long as I'm not a nuisance and holding up traffic I think I'll keep going," Biviano said.

Bruce Hargreaves, a mere baby at 60, moved to Brisbane in 1983, but thinks nothing of his annual vigil to Melbourne.

"I've run more than 120 marathons around the world,

so flying to Melbourne for a race that I love is nothing," he said. "We are all getting slower and have a mix of ailments, but on race day we just seem to get the job done."

The youngest of the Legends is 57-year-old Manny Karageorgiou, whose Greek heritage has inspired him along the way.

"In the past few years I've completed the Kokoda Track

with my son, Pana, and trekked to the base camp at Mount Everest, so I reckon I'll keep running them while I can still stand on my own two feet," Karageorgiou said.

The other Legends — David Foskey, Roger Weinstein, John Dobson and Wayne Thompson — all envisage running the race for many years to come.

"It's got to the stage where it

would take more courage not to run the marathon than actually doing it," Weinstein said. "None of us want to do it, the hunger has gone out of it, but we've gone so far you can't pull out. It's a bit of madness really."

"But all of us are really proud of the record and it gives us an added goal in life."

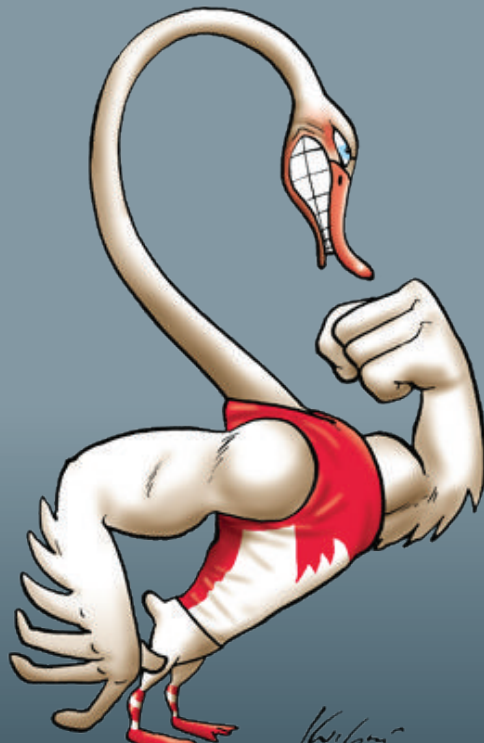
As to how long the Legends will keep going, they only need

to take a leaf out of Box Hill resident Tony Martin to know that 50 consecutive Melbourne's may be achievable.

Martin, who is 85, missed the first race in 1978 because he found out about it too late, but has run every one since and will be aiming to break six hours this year.

"As long as the body still goes, I'll keep going," he said.

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