

78-year-old S'pore retiree with passion for long-distance running

Judith Tan
Correspondent

Retiree Bernard Moey, 78, is not letting his age define him.

In fact, the septuagenarian is letting his legs do the “talking”, participating in marathons across the globe – from the Middle East to India, and from Papua New Guinea to Thailand.

His passion for long-distance running, however, has its roots in Singapore.

“What started me off seriously was The Straits Times Run of 2018. It had three distances – 5km, 10km and 18.45km. I took part in the 18.45km. I was 71. That same year, I signed up for the Standard Chartered Singapore Marathon in De-

cember and was disappointed (with myself). I managed to complete only 25km of the 42km after injuring my left kneecap,” Mr Moey said.

It did not stop him. The next year, he signed up for both marathons again – this time completing the 42.15km of the StanChart marathon. “That was my first great achievement – for someone in his 70s,” he said, adding that he never looked back since.

Mr Moey said he started his journey in sports in his childhood, thanks to his late father, who was a pole vaulter and a boxer.

“He taught my older brother and me how to box, but we did not take it up as a sport. I had always been

fascinated by distance running

and took part in my first national event when I was only 10. It was the Singapore Free Press Race of 1957 from Kallang to Farrer Park,” he said.

It was there that he was head-

hunted and went to the Middle

East to work on oil rigs. Once

again, he was headhunted to set up

food stations in 1990 for the Amer-

ican troops taking part in Operation Desert Shield and Operation Desert Storm.

“I used to walk every day from St Gabriel’s School, which was then in Upper Serangoon Road, to my home in Balestier (Road), just to run holding his walking stick, “in case my legs gave out”.

Trained at hospitality training

school Shatec in 1983, Mr Moey

worked in several jobs but never

liked working behind a desk.

“At Shatec, I learnt and special-

ised in mass feeding, so I moved to

Brunei and worked in the mass

catering industry,” he said.

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ican troops taking part in Operation Desert Shield and Operation Desert Storm.

“There was no time to be behind the desk. I was constantly on the move, driving from east to west, providing food for hundreds of thousands of soldiers,” he said.

Consequently, the success of healthcare is now measured not only by how long one lives, but also by healthspan. Healthspan refers to the number of years a person

lives in good health, remains func-

tional, active, and free from chronic

disease or serious disability.

He said a key mission in health-

care today is, therefore, not just to

prolong life, “but to narrow the gap

between our healthspan and our

lifespan – in Singapore it is about 11

years – and that way our added

years are healthier”.

Both geriatricians agree that

medical advancements have sig-

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individuals living into their 70s

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