

Profile of a Hayes Track Alumnus:

Wilfred (Will/Willy) Storz '51



Will Storz's parents immigrated to the United States from Lauterbach, Germany, in 1931, just in time for the Great Depression. Ludwig, his father, found work as a confectioner in a French pastry shop in Manhattan. His mother Veronica was homemaker for Will and his sister Hilde.

Will was born and raised in the South Bronx. When he was in the first grade, his family moved to the Parkchester section of the Bronx. Will attended St. Raymond's Grade School, from which he graduated in '47. Cardinal Hayes seemed a practical choice for a high school. Not only would it provide a good Catholic education, many of Will's schoolmates from St. Raymond's were going there.

In his freshman year, Will attended classes at the Hayes annex located in Holy Family Parish, near Parkchester. Will initially had little interest in running for Hayes. In the beginning of his sophomore year, however, he decided to enter a

half mile intramural race. He won it, and Hayes track coach Howie Borck asked him to come out for the track team. Will did, but, after a couple of days, decided it was too much work, and quit.

The following fall, Will noticed that many of his friends were earning school letters (and impressing their girlfriends), so he decided to give cross country a try. When he saw Howie Borck in the locker room and told him of his intentions, Howie replied, "How many days are you gonna stay out this time, Storz?"

The next day Will competed in his first cross-country race. It was a three-team meet that included LaSalle Academy, and took place on the high-school cross-country course at Van Cortlandt Park. Participants included all track team members (distance runners and sprinters alike), as well as those eager to join the team. Will, wearing a pair of high-top sneakers, started off with teammate Jack Groll initially, but, feeling chipper, soon started passing runners. As he scampered down the last remaining hill on the course and came out onto the flats toward the finish line, he noticed that there was nobody ahead of him. He still remembers the look of surprise on Howie Borck's face as he became the first runner to cross the finish line.

Running for Hayes in his junior and senior years, Will emerged as a dominant half miler and miler. He considers his coach Howie Borck instrumental in his success, citing his ability to get the best out of all his runners. He remembers being shocked and saddened when he learned about ten years after graduation that Howie had died suddenly.

Will's senior year was highlighted with team success and personal records. Will co-captained the track and cross-country teams with Jim Dolan. During cross-country season, Will hit a personal best of 13:33.5 on the hilly Van Cortlandt course, which set a new school record. During Indoor season, he ran a 4:30.4 mile during the Hayes Games at the 102nd Engineers Armory, placing first in the meet and setting a school and meet record. He was awarded the Cardinal Hayes Trophy as the Most Valuable Competitor for the meet. In March at the old Madison Square Garden, he won the Catholic High School Championship Mile. His victory helped Hayes dethrone archrival Bishop Loughlin as meet champion. The Hayes track team would also go on to win the Outdoor Track CHSAA Championship.

In the Penn Relays that spring, Will anchored the Distance Medley Relay, running the mile in 4:28. The relay—consisting of Bob Cleary (half mile), Jim Moran (quarter mile), and Al Purcell (three-quarter mile)—finished second, behind

Bishop Loughlin. In that same meet, he anchored the Two Mile Relay—which included Bob Cleary, Bill Good, and Jim Dolan—to another second-place finish, running a personal best of 1: 59.8 for a half mile.

Will's athletic accomplishments did not go unrecognized. He and Gerry Bochicchio—a star halfback and captain of the football team—shared the Hayes Athlete of the Year Award. In the *Cardinals Calendar* (the Hayes yearbook), the following was observed: "During the course of the season, Wilfred Storz established himself as the greatest cross-country runner in Hayes history..." Howie Borck's message to him in the same yearbook read, "To the best miler and cross-country man in Hayes history."

Along with his athletic accomplishments, Will developed lasting friendships with many of his teammates. He still stays in touch with Jim Dolan, Dante Pellei, and Jack Groll. Bill Good remains to this day his dearest friend. Bill lives in Manhattan and Will in Connecticut, but they visit each other whenever possible. These teammates and other graduates were with Will for the Hayes 50th Class Reunion. Will describes the walk down the aisle at St. Patrick's Cathedral reenacting the graduation ceremony from 50 years ago as a "truly thrilling experience."

After graduating from Cardinal Hayes, and with the guidance and advice of Howie Borck, Will attended Columbia College (at Columbia University), where he received a BA, with majors in geology and business. He ran both cross country and track there. Although he would hit a personal best of 4:23 in the mile, he was also recruited for the 440, and was a member of a one mile relay that won both the Intercollegiate Relays at the Millrose Games and the Division II division of the Penn Relays his junior year. That year, Columbia College won the Indoor Heptagonal Championship, in which all Ivy League schools plus Army and Navy competed.

Upon graduating from Columbia College, and after a brief stint in the US Air Force as a second lieutenant, Will entered the business world—first at Combustion Engineering, and then at United Nuclear, located in Connecticut. Ten years later, he moved on, and became owner/manager of Midas Coin Center in Orange, Connecticut. This was followed by a managerial position for the Glen Terrace Garden Center, in Hamden, Connecticut. In '77, Will became a sales representative for the Arett Sales Corporation, where he sold to garden centers, hardware stores, and box stores in Connecticut until his retirement in '95.

Will met his future wife Anne at a wedding in December of 1957. Two years later they were married, and she has been his life's companion,

friend, and traveling partner for 46 years. Anne graduated from the College of New Rochelle, and has been a college administrator, teacher, editor, and freelance writer. Will and Anne have three children—Bill (a special education teacher), Karen (an editor and homemaker), and Liz (a computer programmer and homemaker). They also have seven grandchildren, ages 2 to 13. They feel lucky in that, because everyone lives in the New England area, they have the opportunity to enjoy all of their grandchildren.

Will's retirement has allowed him to spend more time on three of his favorite passions—bird watching, photography, and the outdoors. He and Anne enjoy traveling, and he has photographed birds in Belize, Trinidad and Tobago, St. John, and Hawaii and other parts of the United States. They have also visited Ireland and Germany.

Will also does volunteer work at a soup kitchen in New Haven, Connecticut. As a volunteer for Connecticut Audubon Society, he gives guided tours and is a bird bander at the Milford Point Coastal Center Facility.

Will reflects positively upon his high school years at Hayes. He credits the teachers with laying a good foundation for all facets of his life: faith, education, his various careers, and his relations with others. It is interesting that his closest friends are some of those from high school. He has fond memories of his days on the track team during a time when school spirit was high and Hayes teachers such as Monsignor Pavis would bring cheering sections to various meets, particularly the City Championships at old Madison Garden. He and Bill Good officiate at the annual Hayes Invitational. In this event, he sees the possibility of a meet as grand and expansive as the Hayes Games of his high school years.

