



April 17, 2019

Wagner College wants its present students to know about this campus landmark

by CHARLIE DE BIASE JR.

It's hard to believe it's been almost 12 years since Wagner College's baseball team last played a game at Dr. Bill Willets Field.

But it's true.

The Seahawks, in fact, haven't competed at their Grymes Hill campus since May 17, 2007. In that contest, Wagner played to a rain-shortened 2-2 tie against the New York Institute of Technology.

Shortly after, the school began construction on a multi-million dollar residence dorm that, today, is known as Foundation Hall.

"What eventually became Dr. Bill Willets Field was Wagner's home baseball field for 58 years (1949-2007)," said alum John Iasparro, who is a member of Wagner's Hall of Fame Committee as well. "Wagner named the field after Dr. Willets in 1978 and today, nobody knows anything about it."

The Seahawks, however, will do its part to make sure its current students and anybody that visits its campus know about the former field that was named after Willets — a Wagner Hall of Fame athlete who passed away in 1975.

The school will unveil a plaque commemorating Dr. Willets, a one-time dentist, as well as the field right where home plate once stood on May 2 beginning at 11 a.m.

"The plaque will mark the spot and give a memorial on the name of the guy the field was named after in 1978," said Iasparro. "The key is, we don't want Dr. Willets or the field to ever be forgotten."

Iasparro said a number of alumni, as well as former Advance sportswriters Jack Minogue and Jay Price, are planning to attend the brief ceremony. A noon reception at Spiro Center's ticket lobby, which will include refreshments, will follow.

"It's going to be short and sweet, but former players and fans are encouraged to attend if they can," added Iasparro.