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Frederick J. Postolese

Frederick J. Postolese, WWII veteran, baseball player

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July 4, 1924 – Dec. 7, 2015

Frederick J. Postolese, of Williamsville, a standout local baseball player in the 1940s and 1950s, died Monday in Hospice Buffalo, Cheektowaga. He was 91.

Born in Buffalo, Mr. Postolese played all sports at Kensington High School and served in the Army in Europe in World War II. The Brooklyn Dodgers drafted him when he returned from service, and he played shortstop for six seasons on the organization's farm teams in Olean; Asheville, N.C.; Greenville, S.C.; and Mobile, Ala.

In Greenville in 1949, he had a .303 batting average, was a South Atlantic League All-Star and roomed with future Dodgers manager Tommy Lasorda. He was in line for a promotion to the Dodgers top farm team in Montreal in 1951, but suffered a knee injury and returned to Buffalo. In later years, he assisted the Los Angeles Dodgers at the team's spring training camp in Vero Beach, Fla.

He and his late brother Norm, an outfielder who also was drafted by the Dodgers, played with the legendary Simon Pures teams here in the 1940s and 1950s. Both brothers were inducted into the Western New York Baseball Hall of Fame, which honors local muni players, in its inaugural class in 1997.

Mr. Postolese worked for his father-in-law's importing company, then was a warehouse supervisor for Leader Drug Co. Working for Marriott Hotels, he helped open the Buffalo Niagara Marriott on Millersport Highway in Amherst and later was a director of purchasing for Hilton Hotels. After retiring in the late 1990s, he was a starter at Glen Oak Golf Course in Amherst.

In addition to golf, he enjoyed bowling and horseshoes.

Survivors include his wife of 64 years, the former Sandra Militello; two sons, Frederick J. III and Gary P.; four grandchildren; and a great-grandson.

A Mass of Christian Burial will be offered at 9 a.m. Thursday in St. Gregory the Great Catholic Church, 200 St. Gregory Court at Maple Road, Amherst.

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