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Edgar T. Longacre, 85, A Minor Leaguer Till Wwii

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By **S. Joseph Hagenmayer**, **INQUIRER CORRESPONDENT**

POSTED: July 15, 1998

Edgar Thorp Longacre, 85, a once-promising Swedesboro High School athlete whose minor-league baseball career was halted by World War II, died from complications of pneumonia Sunday at Harvest Village in Atco.

Mr. Longacre lived in Audubon from 1946 until he moved to Atco three years ago. Born and raised in Swedesboro, he played varsity basketball at Swedesboro High and was a member of the 1929 Tri-County Conference championship team. He also played baseball and helped run the football team. He graduated as valedictorian in 1929.

With an academic scholarship in hand, he attended the University of Pennsylvania for three years before the Great Depression forced him to drop out and look for work. He had one marketable skill - even during the Depression - and so he began playing semipro baseball in Westville.

In 1935, he signed a contract with the New York Yankees and began playing in its farm system. His first minor-league season was spent in Joplin, Mo., with a team in the class-C Western Association. He was voted to the league's all-star team.

In 1936, he moved to single-A ball, playing with Binghamton of the New York-Pennsylvania League. It was there that he enjoyed his best season: a .324 average with only four home runs but 40 doubles.

The next year found him with the San Francisco Seals in double A, the highest level in the minors at the time. The Seals rotated five outfielders. Mr. Longacre was one, as was Dom DiMaggio, brother of Hall of Famer Joe DiMaggio and himself an eventual member of the Boston Red Sox. The Seals were managed by Lefty O'Doul, who in 1929 hit .398 for the Phillies with 254 hits - still tied for the National League season record.

Mr. Longacre led the Seals in fielding average that season, committing only one error in 99 games. Over the next four seasons, he played for Syracuse of the then-double-A International League.

Then he was drafted into the army.

A World War II veteran who served in the European theater, he helped lead a Fort Dix baseball team to the Eastern Coast Service Championship before being sent overseas.

After the war, he returned to semipro ball in South Jersey, playing for a Collingswood team.

Later, he was active in the Audubon Little League as both manager and umpire.

Mr. Longacre was employed as a laboratory technician for Mobil Oil Co. in Paulsboro for 37 years before retiring in 1978.

He also played semipro basketball for the Gloucester Fathers team in the 1930s and was honored for his athletic accomplishments by the South Jersey Oldtimers, the Gloucester County Hall of Fame, and the

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He was a member of the American Legion Murray Troutt Post 262 in Audubon.

He is survived by his wife of 56 years, Evelyn B. Weisser Longacre; sons, Edward G. and Lawrence T.; two granddaughters; and four great-grandchildren.

Friends may call from 9 a.m. today at John A. Healey Funeral Home, 9 White Horse Pike at Kings Highway, Haddon Heights, where religious services will begin at 11 a.m. Burial will be in Woodbury Memorial Park, West Deptford Township.

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