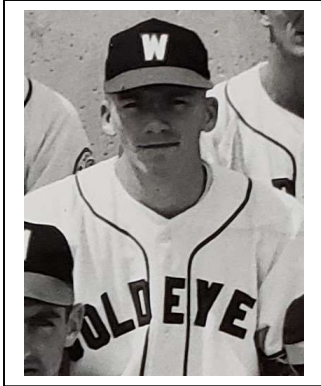

WILLIAM (BILL) CARPENTER

Sergeant #244

*Written & researched by John Burchill
July 13, 2021. Winnipeg Police Museum*



With the Winnipeg Goldeyes baseball team completing the first half of their 100 game schedule this week, I thought I'd look back at one of our own who graced the mound for "the fish", helping the team win Northern League pennants in their 1959 and 1960 seasons. Inducted into both the Manitoba Baseball Hall of Fame (1998) and the Manitoba Sports Hall of Fame (2019), "Bill" Carpenter was a member of the Winnipeg Police from 1967 to 1988.

William Donald (Bill) Carpenter was born in Athens, Pennsylvania, on February 5, 1937. At 6'3" and weighing 200 pounds, he excelled at most sports in high school, in particular basketball and baseball.

In 1954, his final year at Athens High, Carpenter helped his school win the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA) District Track & Field meet, placing first in the high jump and second in the broad jump. He led the Athens Bulldogs in scoring and placed second overall in the Roosevelt Trail basketball league, leading his team to the PIAA District championships. He lettered in football, quarterbacking and punting for the Athens Pigskin Chasers football team, and he was jointly awarded the Sayre-Athens Lions Club Award for citizenship, athletics, and scholastic achievement in high school sports.



Orioles Sign Bill Carpenter Of Athens

Bill Carpenter, 17, of Athens has been signed to a contract by the Baltimore Orioles. Bill was signed at his home at midnight Wednesday by Jim Weaver, Oriole scout. He expects to go to Clearwater, Fla. in February for training with the San Antonio club of the Texas League and may break in next Spring with York of the Class B Piedmont League.

Carpenter is well known throughout this area for his prowess as a Athens High bas-

Bill Carpenter signing with Baltimore Orioles. Courtesy Bill's daughter, Terri Dueck.

Towanda Daily Review, July 17, 1954.

However, it was baseball where he shone. Pitching and manning first base for the Athens High School team he was selected to pitch for the All-East team of the American Junior Legion against the All-West team in Ephrata, Pennsylvania when he was just 16. At the age of 17, he was one of twelve boys invited to a special tryout camp held by the Baltimore Orioles in New York in June 1954.

Carpenter obviously impressed the scouts as the Orioles requested an extension and waiver from Major League Baseball Commissioner Ford Frick on the July 1 signing deadline as Carpenter played for American Junior Legion teams and a player was under their jurisdiction until they turned 18. An extension was granted until July 15. Carpenter received his waiver and signed with Baltimore Orioles' scout Jim Weaver on the last day at his mother's kitchen table.

Carpenter finished playing out the rest of the summer with Barton of the Tri-County League, before starting training camp in 1955. He subsequently pitched with the Baltimore Orioles minor league affiliates in Wytheville, Paris, Cordele, and Fitzgerald before being signed with St. Louis Cardinals in 1958 who assigned him to their Keokuk affiliate in Iowa where he had an Earned Run Average (ERA) of 3.99.

When the new Winnipeg Stadium in Polo Park opened for football in 1953, a baseball field was included as part of the complex in the southwest corner. At the time, organized baseball had levels ranging from AAA down to D and major league clubs sponsored teams at all levels.



Winnipeg Stadium, May 23, 1958. Winnipeg Tribune



Winnipeg Stadium, July 20, 1959. Winnipeg Tribune

Mark Danzker, a Winnipeg businessman, purchased the Sioux Falls Canaries in the Northern League and gained permission to move the team to Winnipeg in 1957. An agreement was reached with the St. Louis Cardinals of the National League to supply players. In its first season, the new team finished in second place behind Fargo and drew more than 100,000 baseball fans to the Stadium. That year the Duluth-Superior White Sox won the first-half pennant and Winnipeg won the second half. In a playoff between the two pennant winners, the Goldeyes won the title two games to one.

In 1958 the Goldeyes finished third overall with a record of 65-53 and were knocked out of the pennant race by the St. Cloud Rox. To bolster their offence, the Cardinals assigned Carpenter to

the Winnipeg Goldeyes in 1959 where he went 19-4 with an ERA of 1.59 and two playoff wins. His 1.59 ERA was the best in organized baseball among pitchers with enough qualifying appearances. The Goldeyes were the runaway leaders during the regular season finishing with a record of 80 wins and 41 losses. In the playoffs, the Goldeyes eliminated Fargo-Moorhead and then beat the Aberdeen Pheasants two games to one in the final. Carpenter was selected to the all-star team that year.



1959 Winnipeg Goldeyes, Winners of the Northern League baseball league.
Bill Carpenter is second from right, middle row. Courtesy Bill's daughter, Terri Dueck

As a side-note to the 1959 season, it may come as a surprise to many in the current generation that it was illegal to play professional sports in Manitoba, indeed in Canada, on a Sunday. Section 6(1) of the federal *Lords Day Act*, R.S.C, 1952, c. 171, stated “*It is not lawful for any person, on the Lord's Day, except as provided in any provincial Act or law now or hereafter in force, to engage in any public game or contest for gain, or for any prize or reward, or to be present thereat ...*”

The federal law had been on the books since 1906 after the Privy Council in England ruled that it was within the federal government's criminal law power to regulate sport, entertainment, and almost all commerce on Sundays, although it permitted provincial governments to make exceptions for certain works of necessity or charity. The law was eventually declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court in the 1985 case *R. v. Big M Drug Mart Ltd.*, holding that the *Lords Day Act* infringed the freedom of conscience and religion as defined in section 2(a) of the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.



Part of the crowd of more than 6,700 watching Sunday's Goldeye baseball game.

19 Football Quiz Winners

Nineteen Tribune readers correctly picked the score of Saturday's football game when Winnipeg Blue Bombers defeated Saskatchewan Roughriders, 41-14 at Winnipeg Stadium.

Forecasters in Tribune Football Quiz No. 19, thus kept intact their record of being about the best informed grid fans in the country because there were seven winners in the previous quiz.

The 19 winners will share the \$100 prize, with Harold Samson of St. Boniface, Saskatchewan head

Police Watch Goldies Win Then Ready Possible Charge

Winnipeg police today are drawing up a report on Sunday's "bootleg" baseball game at Winnipeg Stadium, attended by a record 6,734 fans.

Among those who attended the game, first ever played on Sunday by the Winnipeg Goldeyes, were a number of city morality officers. They questioned park employees and collected names of witnesses.

Winnipeg police chief Robert Tait said today he had yet to receive the report from his officers. When completed, it will be sent to the attorney-general's department for study.

Deputy Attorney-General O. M. McKay told reporters today he had received no word of the report.

Officials of the baseball club said after the game Sunday they will contest any charges which might

be made by the province under the Lord's Day Act.

The question of commercial Sunday sports comes within the jurisdiction of individual provinces, according to a judgment given last February by the Supreme Court of Canada. Last year Winnipeg Magistrate M. H. Carton ruled that Sunday hockey on a commercial basis is legal in Manitoba.

As a result of the ruling, Winni-

However, the *Charter* was still 23 years away and, in 1959, baseball for gain or reward on Sunday was still illegal.

Nevertheless, the Goldeyes decided to play their final and deciding game at the Winnipeg Stadium on Sunday, September 13, 1959, before 6,734 delirious fans.

As baseball was not authorized under provincial legislation, Manitoba's Lords Day Alliance demanded a crackdown on these "bootleg" sporting events and the Winnipeg Police Morality Unit was out in full force to document the game in anticipation of prosecuting the participants after a review by the Attorney General's Department.

While no charges were authorized, it did result in a review of provincial legislation, which was amended on March 26, 1960, just prior to the new baseball season. The amendments would allow Sunday sports for gain, so long as none of the people involved in the game or contest derived more than half their annual income from it.

Police Watch Goldies (sic) Win. Winnipeg Tribune, September 14, 1959

In 1960, Carpenter went 6-0 with Winnipeg and an ERA of 1.47 before being sent to the Cardinals AAA and AA teams in Tulsa (3-3, 4.97) and Rochester (0-3), as well as Shreveport (0-1) in the Kansas City Royals system. He played in four countries that year (Canada, USA, Cuba, Mexico). The Goldeyes finished the regular season with a record of 72 wins and 51 losses, first in the Northern League but just one game ahead of Duluth-Superior Dukes. In the playoffs, the Goldeyes knocked off Aberdeen and then beat the Dukes two straight for the championship.

In 1961 the Goldeyes ended the season in sixth place with a record of 46 wins and 77 losses. Carpenter's ERA was a dismal 3.65 over 11 games (6-5) with Winnipeg and 2.47 with Tulsa over 6 games (3-3). In his final year with Winnipeg, Carpenter went 5-3 with an ERA of 4.79. He also served as the team's pitching coach. He hung up the spikes on July 24, 1962, citing a calcium buildup on his right elbow that was affecting his performance. He also told the Winnipeg Free Press that *"sooner or later you have to stop living out of a suitcase and settle down somewhere. My wife Pat is a Winnipeg girl, and with my feelings toward the city, the choice of where to reside was a natural. We have one child now and are expecting another ... I know there is not going to be another shot at the majors for me, so now's the time to quit"*.

AILMENT FORCES RETIREMENT

Big Bill Carpenter Hangs Up His Spikes

Bill Carpenter has hung his spikes above his locker in Winnipeg Stadium for the last time.

Carpenter, a long-time star with Winnipeg Goldeyes, today announced his voluntary retirement from the class C Northern Baseball League team.

In four whirls with the St. Louis Cardinal farm club here, big "Carp" compiled a 39-12 ledger. His best season as a Goldeye was in 1959 when he posted a brilliant 21-4 record with Chase Riddle's championship edition.

In making the announcement, Carpenter, a 25-year-old native of Athens, Penn., said calcium deposits on his right elbow were the major reason for the retirement at mid-season.

In a sign of real professionalism, Bill admitted he wasn't having the best season and decided to hang 'em up. In 30-plus relief chores this campaign, Bill had a 5-3 record.

Never once did Carpenter make excuses for his less-than-impressive performances in the last six weeks, although the medics would agree he had legitimate grounds.

"One of the reasons I tried to finish off the season," the righthander said Monday night, "was that I enjoyed playing ball in Winnipeg. I knew, though, that I'd have to make this decision sooner or later, regardless of my feelings for Winnipeg and its ball fans."

With him went the end of an illustrious minor league baseball career.

GOLDEYE GLINTS . . . Goldeyes host Minot Mallards tonight in the fifth annual Tom Boy Night . . . Game time is 7:30 p.m. . . . A large list of prizes will be awarded to lucky patrons at the park.



BILL CARPENTER
Bids Farewell

Palmer Tired,

Carpenter's voluntary withdrawal made life a little more pleasant for manager Fred Koenig . . . Normally, a pitcher would have had to be cut loose to make room for Bob Funge, a fire-balling righthanded relief ace . . . Funge, who played here in '59 with Bill, will be in the lineup tonight along with pitcher Fed Herrmann, and shortstop Red Matcek, a couple of newcomers.

With Carpenter's departure, the club was left one under the maximum of three permissible veterans . . . They are Funge and catcher Ray Oliver . . . Koenig, however, may re-enter the lineup in the near future . . . Funge, incidentally, arrived here Monday and took in the pro football game . . .

General manager Terry Hind's reaction to Carpenter's decision: "Bill's decision to retire for the balance of the season is a wise move because he has not been quite as effective in recent weeks and seems to be using a different pitching style (forced by injury). Bill makes his home here and a personal friendship exists between he and the club, so it's nice to know he'll be available to use if ever we are in trouble or if his arm returns to its former usefulness."

According to Bill's former wife, Pat, the Goldeyes paid him \$375/month in the first year, which increased to \$550/month in subsequent years. While that was equivalent to the wage of an employee working in the manufacturing sector in Manitoba, it only lasted as long as the baseball season and Bill had to find work in the off-months.

In the early years, Carpenter worked as a machinist at the Ingersoll-Rand plant in Athens, where his father had worked. When he came to Winnipeg he worked as a manager at Sportsman's Billiards, 1395 Main Street, for two years before joining the City of Winnipeg as a recreation supervisor with the Parks & Recreation Branch in 1963.

Interestingly, in both the Winnipeg and Athens newspapers they refer to Bill's plans to work with the New York State Police after the 1959 season. However, there is no record that he did in either his Winnipeg Police employment file or with the New York State Police.

Big Bill Hangs Up Spikes. Winnipeg Free Press, July 24, 1962

By 1963, the face of baseball had changed in Winnipeg. The Northern League was re-classified to Class A, which became the lowest level except for a rookie league. While the Winnipeg fans continued to throng to Goldeyes games, by 1964 the Cardinals relocated its Winnipeg affiliate to Ceder Rapids of the Midwest League and the Northern League was reduced to four teams, eventually folding in 1971. The Goldeyes returned to the Northern League for one season in 1969, as an affiliate of the expansion Kansas City Royals, but did not return in 1970. The Goldeyes name was resurrected in 1994 when the independent league Rochester Aces of the newly reformed Northern League relocated to Winnipeg.

Whether or not Carpenter worked for a period with the New York State Police, he told his wife his dream was to be a police officer. As an American citizen, he could not realize this dream in Canada until he became a landed immigrant and was granted the right to live here permanently by immigration authorities. Carpenter subsequently received his status and was hired by the Winnipeg Police on January 9, 1967, attending Recruit Class #66 later that year.

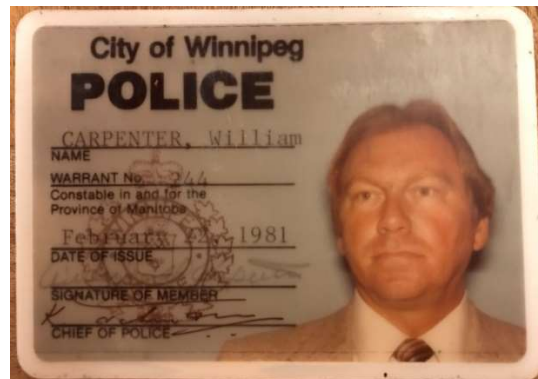
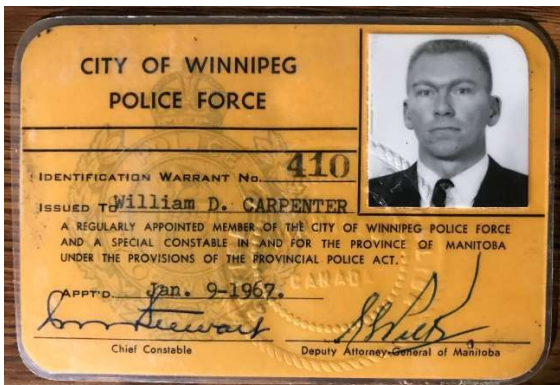
While Carpenter retired after seven seasons of professional baseball, he didn't give up on his passion for the game. After taking a year off he spent the next 13 years (1964-1977) playing for the Souris Cardinals in the Manitoba Senior Baseball League (MSBL). While he did pitch at

times, his primary role with Souris was as a first baseman. In 1966, Carpenter tied for the MSBL home run lead and in 1970 he was the league batting champion and a first-team all-star. He won the “triple crown” that year with a .385 batting average, five home runs, and 25 RBIs (runs batted in) in 65 at-bats, winning the Barry Moffat Memorial Trophy.



Bill Carpenter throwing a demonstration fastball to a group of young baseball players in Portage la Prairie. Undated picture courtesy of Bill’s daughter, Terri Dueck

Carpenter retired from the Winnipeg Police as a Sergeant on April 8, 1988, after 25 years of service with the City of Winnipeg. He spent several years of his career in the Juvenile Division after its initial formation in 1969 and the last eight years of his career in the Training Division.

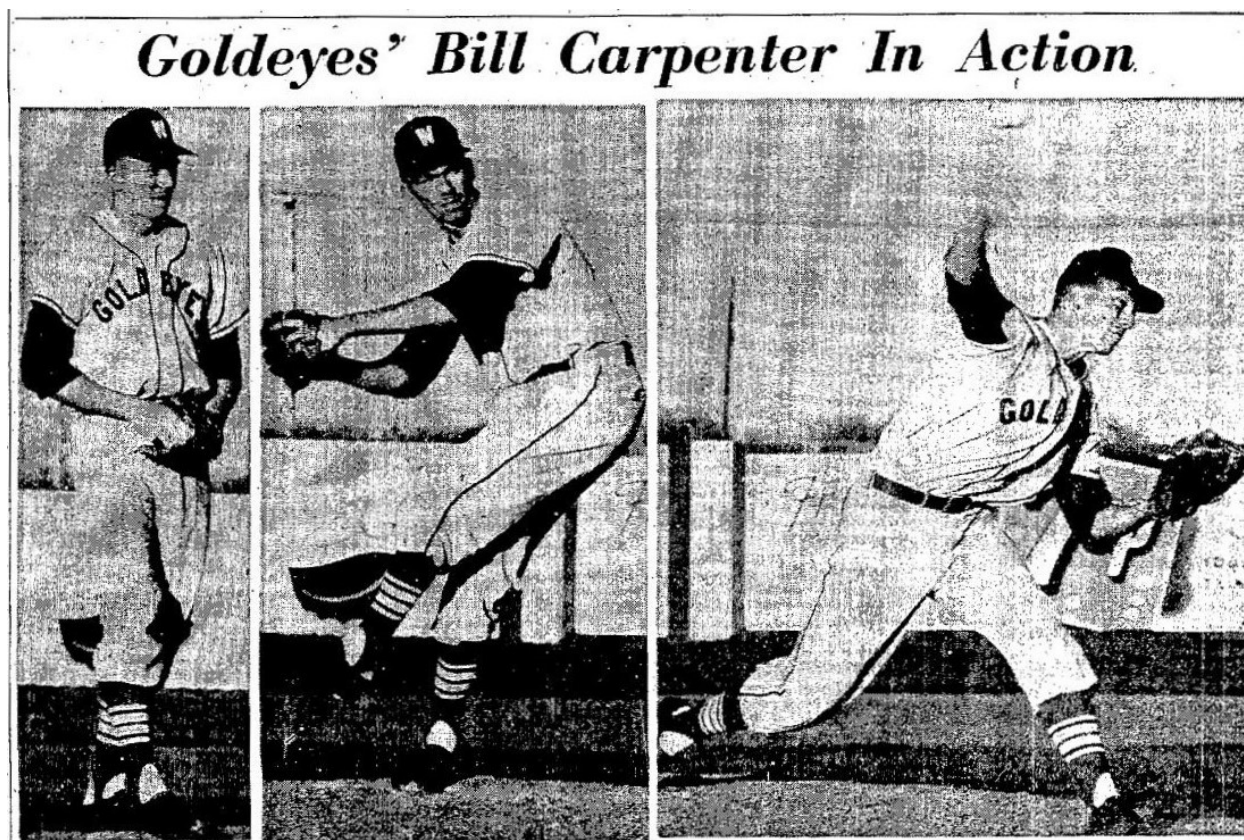


Carpenter was inducted into the Manitoba Baseball Hall of Fame in 1998 as a pitcher and coach.¹ On August 7, 1999, the Goldeyes had their *Turn Back the Clock Night* where they recognized the 1959 Goldeyes championship team, in which Carpenter threw out the first pitch wearing a replica of the teams cream coloured uniform.

Carpenter died in Gimli on December 6, 2001, at the age of 64. He was survived by his wife, Doreen, and three daughters. I am grateful to his daughter Terri for several of the pictures included here.

When asked to select Manitoba's best ever all-star team for Bob Elliott's book, *The Northern Game* and Manitoba's Baseball Hall of Fame, Canadian Baseball Hall of Famer Gladwyn Scott (Carberry), Gerry MacKay (Brandon) and umpire Sam Tascona (Winnipeg) selected Bill Carpenter at First Base.

In 2019 Carpenter was posthumously inducted into the Manitoba Sports Hall of Fame for baseball, along with the 1957, 1959 and 1960 Winnipeg Goldeyes baseball teams.



Bill Carpenter In Action. Winnipeg Free Press, May 22, 1959.

¹ In addition to Bill Carpenter, there are at least two other members of the Winnipeg Police Service who were inducted into Manitoba's Baseball Hall of Fame. Those members were Joseph (Joe) Teres #5, and Andrew (Andy) Boehm #1481, inducted into the Hall of Fame in 1999 and 2011 respectively.