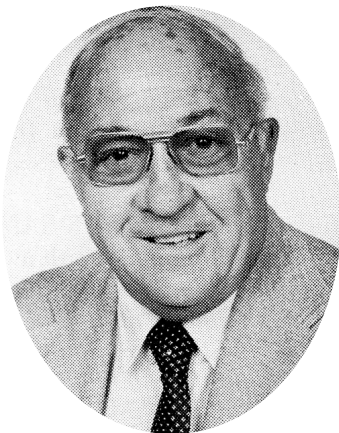


## *Bill Ireland*



**W**illiam D. “Bill” Ireland was a three-sport star in high school and college. Ireland, a pitcher with a good assortment of pitches and excellent speed, started his career on the mound in 1936 with coach Ferrol B. Green’s Norwalk High team. He pitched, played shortstop, and occasionally the outfield. Among his teammates were Jack Cronin, Fred Janci, Tommy Scarso, Jack Sutton, Mike Errico, and Jerry Salvio.

Ireland was a mainstay on the local high school baseball team for two additional years until his graduation in 1938.

During his three years at Norwalk High, he played forward on the basketball team and was an end on the football team under Mike Wilson. His ability carried over to Wilbraham Academy in Massachusetts, where he was the tailback on the football team, forward on the

basketball squad, and pitcher/outfielder on the baseball team.

From Wilbraham, Ireland entered Syracuse University in 1943. He played in the backfield of the Syracuse freshmen football team and again went to the mound during the baseball season.

As a member of the Air Force in 1945, he pitched to Hawks of Greensboro, NC, to third place in the national amateur tournament for military baseball teams at Wichita, KS. Major Leaguers abounded in the tournament, with a total of 136 taking part, including Grady Hatton, Max Lanier, and Jim Castiglia. Chuck Bednarik, later to become an NFL great, also took part. The tournament was the forerunner of the current college tourney, still played annually at Wichita.

On his return from the service, Ireland spent another year at Syracuse and then joined the 1946 Potato Chips, helping them to the City championship. His teammates included Mickey Connolly, Jay Callahan, Lou Bottone, Mickey Russell, Norm Sculley, and Bob Callahan.

From 1950 to 1957, he coached the Home Oil Co. team in the Babe Ruth League.

Ireland is married to the former Helen Sayre. They have two children and six grandchildren. A plumber by trade, he is associated with County Supply, Inc.