

From the Falconer, NY centennial booklet (1991)

A Special Profile and Centennial Tribute

Lory L. Lodestro

1896-1977

Lory Lodestro (nickname Larry Peel) was one of the most colorful residents and a volunteer coach to many hundreds of young people for 54 years in the village. During this centennial observance, it seems fitting to present this profile and a special centennial tribute to an outstanding volunteer.

Lory was an immigrant from Italy as a 4 year old. He went to school until 12 years of age and then had to leave school to seek employment to assist in supporting his family, which consisted of: mother, father, 5 brothers and a sister.

In America, and specifically in Falconer, Lory became a very proficient baseball player. He served in the United States Army in World War I.

Following his service overseas, Lory came back to Falconer and became an outstanding baseball player. He played professional baseball with many minor league teams. Among the pro clubs with which Lory played are Newark and Syracuse of the International League; Saginaw and Kitchner of the Michigan-Ontario League; Hagerstown of the Blue Ridge League; Petersburg and Rocky Mount of the Virginia League; Lancaster of the Mid-Atlantic League, and Lowell, Massachusetts of the New England League. He was in pro-ball from 1918 to 1929. He almost made the major leagues.

Locally he became a player, coach and manger with several area baseball teams. He served as a volunteer teaching baseball and football to many hundreds of youngsters over 54 years.

As a volunteer, he coached six Junior American Legion teams to five county championships and district titles. He coached three county association teams and the Falconer town team as well as coaching Babe Ruth teams. He spent countless hours coaching and teaching young people in the village and area to play sports, and always insisted on sportsmanship rather than winning.

Many young athletes in the village had their start and consistent polish through coaching by Lory. On the first PONY League team in Jamestown, several players were athletes who had been coached by Lodestro.

He also played semi-pro football with a team from Falconer called the Falconer Merchant eleven. One of the members of that team was Henry Mosher who lost his life in World War I and for whom the Henry Mosher Post #638 American Legion is named.

In 1977 Frank Hyde, then the Post-Journal sports editor wrote:

"Fellows like Lory Lodestro, the old furniture factory worker, come along periodically during a lifetime. Often their talents and their great personalities are overlooked until they pass on. Then their true character is appreciated and missed. That was Lory Lodestro, who played sports and the game of life with the gusto of a true champion."

As several resident of the Village of Falconer and the area who were coached by Lory Lodestro, and several who played under his managementship on the teams that went on to championships in district play, and others who were spectators recalled:

"He taught us well, and he died without an enemy in the world: he was low pitch, easy-going, a strong man with plenty of courage and a dislike for any reference to star status."

The family of Lory Lodestro still lives in Falconer and the area. Lory was married in 1923 and his widow, Grace, lives on West Avenue in Falconer. Son Lucian, an attorney, lives on Ralph Avenue, daughters Rose Marie Johnson on Cherry Street, Lorraine LaMancuso in Jamestown and Sally Gregory in Bemus Point.

Lory L. Lodestro was a superb athlete, an active volunteer, outstanding teacher and coach of other athletes and young people, a great person and a wonderful asset to the Village of Falconer for 54 years out of its 100 as an incorporated village.