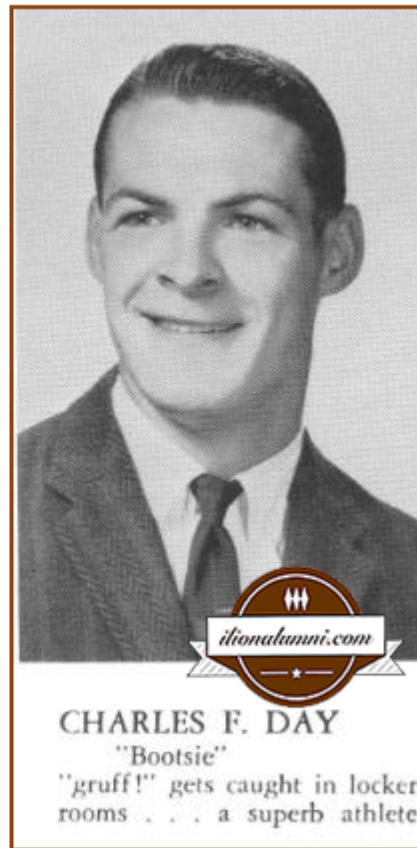
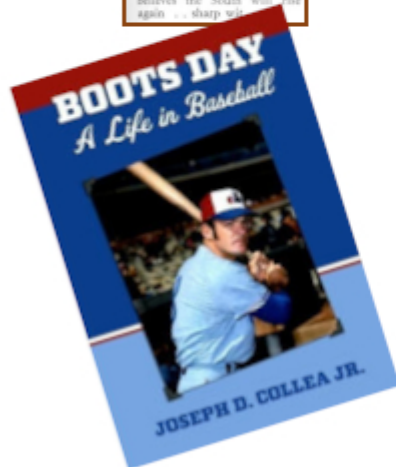


Boots Day: a Life in Baseball

By Joseph D. Collea Jr.

August 2022



Share 0

For those who grew up in Iliion during the decade from 1955 to 1965, the name "Boots Day" was synonymous with the best in local baseball. From his play as a midget league Yankee to that of a Babe Ruth - level Elk to his exploits as a "Golden Bomber," he was always an exemplary player. Whether as a dominating pitcher on the mound with his devastating curve or an outstanding hitter when standing at the plate and wielding a potent bat, he consistently led his teams to victory. His superior talent was not hard to recognize. As Bob Turley - former

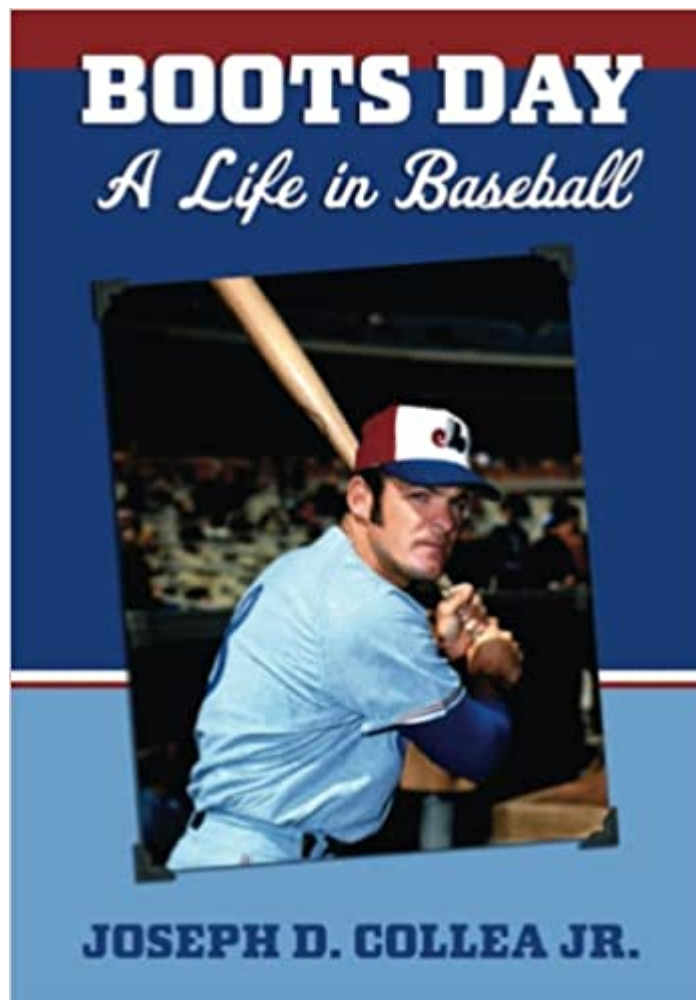
Ilion athlete, teacher, and coach who had once been a teammate of Boots - said: "We always knew that we had the best player on the field."



Photograph courtesy Joe Collea Jr.

With the firm grounding that he received in the fundamentals of the sport, Boots' natural talent did the rest. After signing with the St. Louis Cardinals, he progressed upwards through the organization's minor league system in four years, spending one season at each level. Then, in his fifth year as a professional, Boots reached the majors. Following short stints with Cardinals and Cubs, the lefthander hit his stride with the Montreal Expos.

After a playing career that lasted a combined fifteen years between his major and minor league placements, Boots chose to stay the course and remain in baseball. As he candidly admitted, "Baseball is all I knew. If I couldn't play anymore, then I decided that there were other aspects of the game to which I could contribute." With that, he would at various times fill the role of scout, coach, or manager for a variety of teams, once again at both the major and minor league levels.



Book Cover courtesy Amazon.com

Eventually, Father Time caught up with him, but not until Boots had put together an amazing fifty-five year string of working in a sport that he had loved since childhood. *Boots Day: a Life in Baseball* chronicles the story of this humble, unassuming man who is a fine example of an individual who maximized his athletic abilities to their fullest and, when they began to wane, found ways to remain connected with the game in satisfying ways that lasted a lifetime.

The book was written by Joe Collea - IHS Class of '65 - who knew Boots as a friend, teammate, and classmate. Through an extensive series of interviews with the recently-retired, now septuagenarian ex-ballplayer himself, talking to his family and friends, and digging into newspaper archives, Joe was able to trace Boots' life and create an interesting, detailed biography. This book follows Joe's recent publication titled *Our Town - Ilion, New York: A Selective Look at 300 years of History* and precedes a work-in-progress that will be a second, companion volume to *Our Town*. All of his books are available through [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com).

BACK

Created and maintained by [Aileen Carney Sweeney](#) - Class of 1974

Digital Image Copyright & Copyright © 1997 - 2022 ilionalumni.com
August 6, 2022

[Alumni Home](#) | [Class News](#) | [General News](#) | [District History](#) | [Search](#) | [Traditions](#)