

# 'Gus' Brunelle Chosen for Rotary Vocational Service Award on Wednesday

by Ron Johnson  
Midland Rotary Club presented its annual Vocational Service Award at Wednesday's regular noon luncheon meeting.  
Rod Ferguson, in announcing the award winner, mentioned, the award was going this year to someone involved in the area's major industry - tourism.  
This year's winner is Augustin Robert "Gus" Brunelle, Midland's Harbour Master. The harbour accommodates over 1,000 boats per annum, and these boaters spend an average of \$400 to \$500 during their stay in

town.  
Gus Brunelle was born in Lafontaine in 1908 and lived on a Tiny Twp. farm on the 17th Concession. He remained there, attending school until he reached the age of 16 when he shipped out on a grain boat. He remained sailing until the early 30's when the Great Depression drove him back home to his father's farm. Brunelle worked there for room and board.  
Later he managed to land a job with McNamara Construction, building cottages.  
When war broke out, Gus was initially

refused admission to the service on the grounds that his skills as in construction made him too valuable at home. He therefore stayed in Canada and worked building defence installations until such time as he was admitted to the Army, where he served until his discharge in 1944.  
Upon his return to the Midland area, he began work with Elmer Shaw's Midland Foundry. He remained with this company up to the time of his retirement at age 64. During his years with Midland Foundry, Brunelle also served as the captain of Mr.

Shaw's pleasure boat. Brunelle's retirement was not exactly that. He approached then Harbour Master Jack Blackburn, seeking a position with the Harbour Commission. When informed that the commission could not afford to hire him in an official capacity, he worked two years for no pay.  
Following the death of Blackburn in 1973, Brunelle was appointed as Harbour Master by the commission.  
Gus Brunelle's work and service to the community in his role as Harbour Master is what qualified him to be selected for this honour. It is fitting that he works for the town's harbour, in that he truly symbolizes the Rotary International theme of "Building bridges of Friendship around the world."

The following letter received by Rod Ferguson on behalf of the Rotary Club, describes very well the reasons for Brunelle's selection.  
It comes from the Small Crafts Harbour Branch of the Fisheries and Oceans Ministry of the Government of Canada.  
"I have heard through the grapevine that the Rotary Club of Midland will be honouring Gus Brunelle during the month of December.  
"The Town of Midland leases the municipal harbour from Small Craft Harbours, Fisheries and Oceans and as you are probably aware, Gus has been employed as their Harbour Manager. While he reports to the Midland Harbour Committee, I would like to relate to all those concerned the high esteem in which Small Craft Harbours holds Gus. Over the past six years we have had numerous letters from Canadians and Americans who have visited Midland and

used the harbour facilities. These people have expressed their appreciation for the way in which Mr. Brunelle received them and the fact that he was always willing to go out of his way to provide any assistance to make their stay in Midland a memorable one.  
"If we had more Harbour Managers, as a matter of fact if we had more Canadians, whose outlook on life with regard to others was similar to Gus', our tourism industry in Ontario would reflect a marked upturn in business.  
"When municipalities are contemplating leasing facilities from Small Craft Harbours, quite often we refer them to Mr. Brunelle to obtain a first-hand indication of what they might expect. Gus has always done his utmost to advise these people, not only of the benefits but of the pitfalls involved in managing a Federal facility. This is just one other instance that Mr. Brunelle has provided an extra service for this office.  
"It would be ap-

preciated if, when you are honouring Gus, you would relate our feelings and affection for him and hope that he will spend many more years as the Harbour Manager at Midland."



**Rotary service award winner**

Augustin Robert Brunelle was named recipient of this year's Rotary Vocational Service Award. Better known as Gus, he received the coveted award because the club thought he best symbolizes their International

Rotary theme of "Building bridges of friendship around the world." Brunelle, right, is seen here receiving congratulations from Rotarian Rod Ferguson.

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