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## Tribute to Hal McCarney

Written by [Susan W. Smith](#) posted on September 15, 2008 22:33

The Thousand Islands' fine friend, Hal McCarney died on September 16th in Kingston General Hospital. He was 81. The Kingston Whig Standard immediately published on their website: "one of the most loved and respected persons in the history of Queen's University football and an exceedingly successful Gananoque businessman, passed away yesterday."



**Photo courtesy of Chris McCarney**

It is true that Hal was a valued member of the Queen's community - and his greatest love was promoting Queen's Football. The Queen's community will pay tribute in their way, but Hal was also one of the great promoters of our region.

Already published on TI Life is the following article about the installation of the Statue of St. Lawrence. [Click here](#). However Hal was the prime initiator of other important projects. He is also a principal shareholder of the Gananoque Boat Line. The list of organizations to which he was a member and trustee is too long to compile in a short time. But suffice it to say there has hardly been a person living in the Gananoque region that has not benefited from Hal's enthusiasm, wisdom or financial support.

Hal was a founding member and the greatest supporter of Gananoque's Festival of the Islands - an annual 9-day extravaganza. He

helped build Gananoque's Arthur Child Heritage Museum and was a continual promoter to save Gananoque's Airport. He supported his church, schools and community programs. He also published a novel: Chess with Violence: Rum Running in the 1000 Islands, and wrote many lyrics relating to the Islands which he put to music.

Hal was a "doer". A story which illustrates that quality concerns the three exquisite large scale ship models proudly on display in Gananoque's Arthur Child Heritage Museum. Apparently he had been watching a documentary on CBC Television about an elderly gentleman, William Morrison who had spent years crafting these models to the highest imaginable standard. He was considering downsizing to a smaller home and discussing what he might do with them. One went to the Canadian Museum of Civilization in Ottawa but three others remained.

Hal missed the rest of the show while he frantically searched for the man's phone number and within minutes had successfully presented the case that the ships' best home would be Gananoque. He further arranged that Morrison would periodically share his knowledge and passion with the public at the Museum.

Most would have let the opportunity pass or not even seen it, but thanks to Hal's quick thinking and instant action, he was able to find an ideal home for them as well as a new friend while acquiring an important display that will be enjoyed by the community and its visitors into the future.

A wonderful doer. The Thousand Islands community has lost a great friend.

by Susan W. Smith and Ian Coristine

*Susan W. Smith served on several volunteer boards with Hal McCarney, the most recent was the Arthur Child Heritage Museum. She also worked with Hal when he was a volunteer for Queen's University and Susan was the Senior Development Officer at Queen's School of Business, Queen's University.*

Previously published article in *TI Life*: A new sight for sight-seers is the statue of St. Lawrence recently sculpted and erected in Canadian waters by "The Admirals," who passed the hat among club members for the project.



The Admiralty of the Thousand Islands Navy is comprised of "admirals" on both sides of the border. The organization, founded in 1938, is largely social in purpose, having two meetings a year. The group has acquired shoals and small islands to protect them from development. Members contribute to payment of annual taxes on the properties. Hal McCarney of Gananoque was prime mover in the St. Lawrence statue campaign.

Photo by Ian Coristine © [www.1000IslandsPhotoArt.com](http://www.1000IslandsPhotoArt.com)

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## Comments



**Comment by:** Ewart R Richardson ( *Gananoque* )  
**Left at:** 9:26 PM Monday, February 2, 2009

Happy to be the first to comment but I can't understand why. Hal was a great customer as I entered the business world and a greater friend as time went on. How fortunate we were that he took the gamble and built the Provincial Motel, The Thunderbird Motel, 1000 Islands Wild Kingdom, expanded the Gananoque Boat Line, and poured his energies into many other projects that made Gananoque better than it was before he came on the scene.

Thanks for the ride Moose.

Ewart



**Comment by:** Susan W. Smith ( *Sagastaweka Island* )  
**Left at:** 10:39 PM Monday, February 2, 2009

Thanks so much for your comment. We did not have comments when this was first posted. (December issue) So, we are only getting comments, now when people go back and see a previously posted article. We re-did the whole magazine in December with a new look and now have a comment section. I agree that Hal was a special member of the Gananoque community and we have a great deal to thank him for - He was also a special friend to many. All the best and see you in the spring!

Susan W. Smith  
 Editor  
 (Sagastaweka Island, Admiralty Islands).



**Comment by:** Bill Jennings ( *Clarence Center NY* )  
**Left at:** 11:19 PM Friday, July 2, 2010

I never met him, but my grandmother always spoke well of him. He purchased a Garwood boat from my grandparents and refurbished it. He named the boat Kateri, which won an award in 1980 as the best Canadian Garwood, triple cockpit 25'. My grandparents proudly displayed a photo of Mr. McCarney at the helm, a picture still framed and on display at our cottage on Kerry Point to this day. I would welcome any information to track down the boat, many memories of it as a child and would like to see her again. Please contact me with information on the craft at davislovell@roadrunner.com



**Comment by:** Pietro Maviglia ( *Ottawa* )  
**Left at:** 10:42 PM Saturday, October 23, 2010

I first met Mr. McCarney in 2000 and I showed him a photo of a model of the Andrea Doria I had just finished. He asked me to make him one smaller than the original and I did. Subsequently, I built other models for him but he always said his favourite was the Andrea Doria. We were friends until he passed away. I loved his sense of humour and I can fairly say that he was a grand gentleman and that I have missed him since his passing. As we say in Italian "May he have angels"



**Comment by:** anthony farrugia ( *malta* )  
**Left at:** 3:20 PM Wednesday, December 1, 2010

I was born in Vittoriosa where there is an old church which was erected as a parish since 1090 and it is dedicated to SAINT LAWRENCE. I am very devoted to Saint Lawrence thank you for erecting the statue of Saint Lawrence even my son is called Lawrence. Have a look on VITTOTIOSA SAINT LAWRENCE MALTA.

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