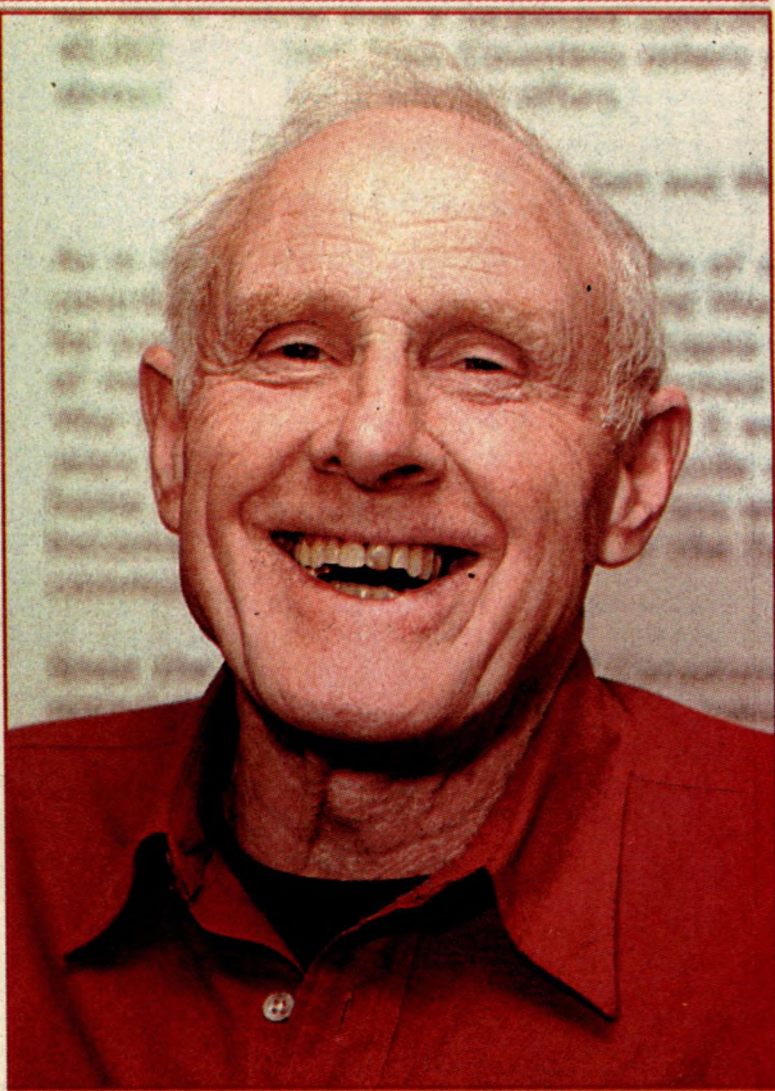


# Arts & Entertainment

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Photos by Peter C. McCusker

Jane McGillivray, left, Ken Cutmore, above, and William (Bill) Cook all had their war stories to tell at the opening of the new exhibit at Oakville Museum, titled *Shadows of War: Not So Long Ago in the 20th Century...*

## Remembering Oakville's part in the World Wars

By Sheila Creighton  
SPECIAL TO THE BEAVER

**S**hadows of War: Not So Long Ago in the 20th Century... is a new exhibit at the Oakville Museum featuring the participation of Oakville residents in the First and Second World Wars.

Countless Canadians served their country at home and abroad in both World Wars. Yet nowadays, many young people have no concept of what it means to live in a country at war, even though scarcely a family in Canada remained untouched by the human tragedy from those two wars that scarred the first half of this fleeting century.

As in the rest of this country, residents of the Town of Oakville did duty to defend its citizen's right to freedom and peace. Per capita, Oakville men and women stood first in Canada

for participation.

In the First World War, more than 600,000 Canadians served overseas with more than 65,000 giving their lives. Canadians serving in the Second World War surpassed one million with approximately 45,000 killed in action.

Countless others supported the war effort from their work here at home.

Deborah Hudson, curator of *Shadows of War*, says, "This exhibit is special and different because it became more community focused. If it's successful, it's because the community responded. So many people came forward with their stories and photographs. I think the photos make the exhibit."

*"What is kind of neat is quite a few people, especially younger ones, have been inspired to delve deeper into their family's participation and are busy tracking down family photos for their own sense of history."*

Due to an overwhelming response, Hudson will continue to collect and add to the visual records for the exhibit, which will become a valuable resource for school programs and visitors alike.

"I hope that it continues to grow. I'll just keep expanding the story," Hudson explains.

The photographs collected for the exhibit came from all sorts of places. Some were even found inside the wall of a historic home on Navy Street.

"What is kind of neat is quite a few people, especially younger ones, have been inspired to delve deeper into their family's participation and are busy tracking down family photos for

their own sense of history," Hudson adds.

"Everyone who served in the war did equally important jobs whether they were here or abroad. For instance, not too many people know about the number of Canadian ships lost in the St. Lawrence, sunk by German submarines. Halifax was a very busy place during the war effort, it was a leaving point for convoys."

For this exhibit, Hudson had an opportunity to look through people's photo albums with the albums' owners narrating their stories as she went along. "Those are the true historic documents - anything that comes after, whether it be an exhibit, a book, or whatever, pales in comparison and is more removed than the real experience," she says. "People bring the war to life when they're talking about it. I just got the best education of World War II that I could ever have - they're real, that is what oral history is (See 'Freedom' on page C2)

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