

REMEMBRANCE DAY

Don't mess with the daughter of an RMS

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Remembering our local heroes

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Special pullout section



War buddies and longtime friends Jack Vidler (left) and Harry Apted look over some of the old documents as they reminisce about times gone by. The two belonged to the Royal Canadian Electrical and Mechanical Engineers, (R.C.E.M.E.s) and serviced equipment for the fighting soldiers during the war. After the war ended they lost contact with each other but decades later renewed their friendship when they discovered they both lived in Halton Hills.

Photo by Ted Brown

War buddies renew friendship decades later

TED BROWN
Staff Writer

When one thinks of veterans serving during the wars, we usually think of the fighting soldiers, ones who served in harm's way, with death or dismemberment waiting around every corner.

We think of the infantrymen, the sailors, the airmen—all who looked into the face of death every minute they spent in a war zone.

But there is another group of veterans who also fought their own style of war, and who also served in harm's way, every minute of their tour of duty.

With the increase of mechanized equipment during the

Second World War, there arose a need to have one corps dedicated to service and maintenance of the equipment. Trucks were the primary means of transportation, armoured vehicles had replaced cavalry, and the weapons and artillery were becoming more complicated, as well as the addition of radios and radar—someone had to service this equipment.

The Royal Canadian Electrical and Mechanical Engineers were that group—technicians, from various trades in the civilian world, brought together to keep the fighting armies fighting.

Usually referred to as R.C.E.M.E.s (pronounced Ree-meess), two Georgetown residents spent their time overseas, still dodging bullets and buzz bombs, but not able to shoot back. Instead, they fought their own battles in another manner.

Harry Apted and Jack Vidler were two R.C.E.M.E.s who

served together during the Second World War, with the 3rd Division.

They were good friends who watched out for each other, and moved with their armies across Europe as the war progressed.

And both have lived in Georgetown a relatively short time.

But the irony of their moving to Georgetown was the fact that neither knew the other was living there.

They had parted company at the conclusion of the war, and had managed to touch base with one another only once in the late 1940s.

But after that, they lost touch—until they moved to Georgetown.

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