



MEMORIAL



DEDICATION CEREMONY

RCAF Memorial Museum, CFB Trenton, Ontario.

24th June, 2001

Mr. Lyle Vanclief, PC, MP, Minister of Agriculture,



The 408 Squadron Memorial Committee

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The 408 Squadron Memorial Committee is a Committee of the 408 Squadron National Association.

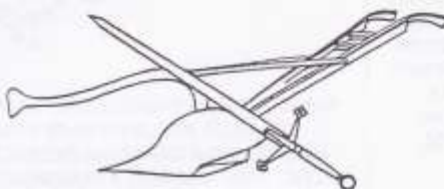


"...BUT THE MAN WHO
CAN MOST TRULY BE
ACCOUNTED BRAVE IS HE
WHO BEST KNOWS
THE MEANING OF WHAT
IS SWEET IN LIFE
AND WHAT IS TERRIBLE,
AND THEN GOES OUT,
UNDETERRED, TO MEET
WHAT IS TO COME..."
PERICLES

SUCH WERE THE 936
CASUALTIES OF
408 SQUADRON
IN WORLD WAR II
1941 - 1945

THIS MONUMENT HONOURS THOSE WHO SERVED WITH
408 (GOOSE) SQUADRON DURING WORLD WAR TWO
AND SALUTES THE SQUADRON'S UNIQUE POST-WAR
CONTRIBUTION, AT HOME AND ABROAD, AS DEPICTED
ON EACH FACE OF THE MEMORIAL.

CE MONUMENT HONORE TOUS QUI ONT SERVI DANS
L'ESCADRILLE 408 (GOOSE) DURANT LA DEUXIÈME GUERRE
MONDIALE. IL SALUE AUSSI LA CONTRIBUTION UNIQUE DE
L'ESCADRILLE DEPUIS LA FIN DE LA GUERRE, CHEZ NOUS ET
À L'ÉTRANGER, COMME L'ILLUSTRE CHACUNE DE SES FACES.



"...AND THEY SHALL BEAT THEIR
SWORDS INTO PLOWSHARES..."

ISAIAH 2,4



FEW AIRMEN IN THE
HISTORY OF PEACETIME
FLYING OPERATIONS HAVE
UNDERTAKEN AND
ACHIEVED THE ARDUOUS
AND DEMANDING SERIES
OF TASKS REQUIRED TO
COMPLETE THE AERIAL
PHOTOGRAPHY AND
GEODETIC SURVEY
NECESSARY FOR THE
COMPLETION OF THE
MAPPING OF CANADA.

TO THE GROUND AND AIR
CREWS OF 408 SQUADRON
1949 - 1957
SALUTE
PER ARDUA AD ASTRA

ESCADRILLE 408 SQUADRON



DURING THE COLD WAR,
WHEN OUR NORTHERN
REACHES WERE REGULARLY
SUBJECTED TO SOVIET
PROBES, 408 SQUADRON
MAINTAINED A CONSTANT,
VISIBLE PRESENCE
THROUGHOUT THE
CANADIAN ARCTIC.



408 SQUADRON PROVED ITSELF IN WAR, PRODUCED
THE MOST ACCURATE MAPS IN THE WORLD,
MAINTAINED A CANADIAN PRESENCE IN THE HIGH
ARCTIC, THEN ASSUMED A TRANSPORT CLOSE SUPPORT
AND AREA RECONNAISSANCE ROLE. IN 1970 IT BECAME
A TACTICAL HELICOPTER SQUADRON.



408 SQUADRON
STANDS READY TO
AID THE CIVIL POWER
AND ASSIST IN
PEACEKEEPING ABROAD.
IT HAS SERVED IN
HONDURAS
SINAI HAITI
BOSNIA KOSOVO



THE LEGACY CONTINUES...

FOR FREEDOM



Purpose

By Major General Clifton M. Kinney, (ret), CMM, CD.

Our purpose in meeting here this day is to dedicate this Memorial and in so doing honor the members of 408 Squadron, past and present, for their outstanding service to not only the nation which gave them birth but to the many nations in the community of democracies which 408 has served so well.

The faces of this Monument vividly portray the four incarnations of the Goose--her beginnings as a bomber squadron during the last World War and the heavy burden that we bore; the post war years in which the Goose did such spectacular service to the nation in the aerial survey and photo mapping of the second largest country on the planet.

The hard work of the SHORAN crews and their sacrifices in such a job well done is beyond praise. The hard work of the ground crews and aircrews in doing the photo work is also beyond praise. Their contribution to the nation has seldom, if ever, been paralleled anywhere in the world.

While the mapping of Canada defined the borders in the Northern Reaches of this great land 408 was busy ensuring that those borders were patrolled in the face of Soviet incursions during the tense days of the Cold War.

Since becoming a Tactical Helicopter Squadron, 408 has served the nation during catastrophic forest fires and floods and then has gone on to serve the United Nations and NATO in many peacekeeping duties. The faces of Canada abroad have often worn a 408 shoulder patch.

No other Canadian Squadron has served the nation so well in so many varied ways.

Our purpose today is to honor the many accomplishments of the past and present members of the squadron; those who died while serving and those who served so well and then went on to live out their lives in a well earned retirement, and share in a proud heritage.

408 Squadron we salute you!



Chapter One

The first incarnation of the Goose Squadron--June 1941 to June 1945

From June of 1941 until June of 1944--36 long and difficult months--408 Squadron joined Bomber Command to be a part of the only arm of the Allied Forces which could carry the war to Hitler's Germany. Then, after the invasion of Europe, until the war was over, they continued the Battle in the night skies. The Germans had built up a formidable defence system against Bomber Command and exacted a terrible price for the continued pounding of their homeland. Of the 120,000 aircrew who were lost serving with Bomber Command 936 belonged to 408 Squadron.

....but the man who can most truly be
accounted brave is he who best knows
the meaning of what is sweet in life and
what is terrible, and then goes out
undeterred to meet what is to come..."

Pericles

Such were the 936 casualties
of 408 Squadron in
World War II.
1941-1945



The Beginnings

Page three

By Air Commodore Nelles Timmerman, DSO, DFC, MiD, CD.

In the very dark days of World War Two the light of Freedom and Democracy had been extinguished in much of Europe and the prospects for the future looked bleak indeed as our eyes gazed over the English Channel toward the Nazi juggernaut which had enslaved so many nations.

With the Battle of Britain behind us the British Government took a keen interest in exploiting the use of the only arm of its military power which could take the war to Hitler's doorstep--Bomber Command. They were fighting the Battle of the Atlantic but this was not waging war on the German heartland. Bomber Command alone could do this. And do it they did. "The Bomber Command Offensive was the most gruelling operation of war ever carried out. It lasted for some 2,000 days and nights and served as the only effective weapon at the throat of Hitler's Germany for four years".*

As the Bomber Command crescendo built up the Goose took her place in the van of the fleet of avenging squadrons which brought home to Nazi Germany the death and destruction which they had brought to so many countries and places.

408 Squadron delivered more tonnage to the enemy and had greater casualties than any other Canadian squadron. The place of these gallant men in history is assured.

I am proud to be able to join you in honoring these heroes on this memorable day. This Monument describes them as they were, in the words of Pericles, they knew what was sweet in life and they certainly knew what was terrible and yet they went out undeterred to face what was to come. Their bravery is a heart warming tribute to the nation which gave them birth.

* British Official War History.





The Beginnings--An Airwoman's View

By Molly "Mother Goose" Rayner

It was my happy privilege to be among the first airwomen posted to the newly formed 408 Squadron at Lindholme in the summer of 1941. The Squadron's growing pains were certainly there but were overshadowed by the joy of being one of few women in the mass of blue uniforms which were active on the base. We were soon joined by other girls and we became a happy family of cooks, drivers, clerks, hospital staff and so on.

Working as a cook gave me a chance to become acquainted with the young aircrew who were very busy with their training exercises needed to get the squadron ready for operations. They were a hard working, fun loving crowd of young men who always had a lot of nonsense for us girls in the kitchen. The station was alive with noise of aircraft taking off and landing, night and day.

When the squadron became operational and we began to see these young men as they returned from their bombing trips into Germany we began to understand the deadly seriousness of the tasks they were doing. Especially did this come home to us when the first of the squadron aircraft failed to return. How sad it was that these fine young men so bravely went out to their aircraft and then failed to return from their operational trips. We often thought of their families and the sorrow that this war was causing. We took to going down to the runway sometimes as they were taking off and then, of course, would see them in the kitchen as they came in for their bacon and eggs after the trip. But all too often we were saddened by the recollection of the faces now missing.

I could never get accustomed to the ever lengthening roll call of these missing faces and we always hoped that their names might turn up as prisoners of war but few of them did. As the twin engine bombers were replaced by the four engine ones the casualty rates rose more quickly. As the months turned into years the roll call of the missing climbed into the hundreds until at last it was all over. Freedom comes at a terrible price which should never be forgotten. The memory of our 408 Squadron boys should be kept evergreen in our hearts.

I'm so very happy to be able to join you all in remembering the accomplishments as well as the sorrows of those days.



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Dedication

By Flight Lieutenant Walter W. Kasper, (ret),
CD, B. A., M. Sc. (Econ),

Of the 9,919 Canadians who died serving in the Royal Air Force Bomber Command during World War Two, 936 were 408 Squadron casualties; just fractionally under ten percent of the total sustained by the 14 Canadian bomber squadrons which served.

TOMORROWS

They gave all of their tomorrows
So that your tomorrows could be free,
Asking only that in your tomorrows
Lovingly remembered they would be.

What gifts have been found in your tomorrows
That have been paid for with their lives;
The lilting laughter of your happy children,
And the warm caresses of your wives.

These and a thousand others filled your days
And filled your years. Many joys, and a few sorrows,
A land alive with opportunity, their gift to you,
Paid for by giving us all of their tomorrows.

Their watchword was FOR FREEDOM,
And FREEDOM was their greatest gift to you,
To make your life as you would have it be,
And do the things that they would never do.

So bow your head and heart in prayerful thanks,
Keep evergreen the thought so true,
The memory of the courage and devotion
That sent them out to fight and die for you.

We have, in our Reunions, and in the days and years between, kept their memory shining brightly in our hearts and minds, and now, with this monument, we re-dedicate ourselves to this task.



The Rockcliffe Years

The Photo Mapping

By Squadron Leader Morris Konick, (ret), CD.

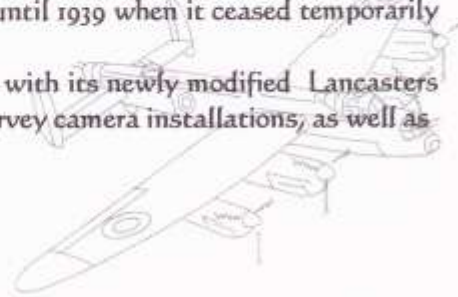
As a former Photo Officer with 408 (Photo) Squadron, and you will note I purposely emphasized Photo Squadron, because I wanted to differentiate it from its original inception as a Bomber Squadron, and its subsequent endeavors to which it gravitated in its long and illustrious history. This being said, I wish to make the point by stating what a pleasure it was for me to be engaged with the squadron in this position, when it assumed its new Peace Time role of flying survey photography. This was at a time when Topographic Air Navigation maps of Canada's northern Regions of any stripe was a distant dream, and where the only existing maps were blank sheets of paper devoid of any topographical features.

The absence of air navigation maps first became a serious problem during the Second World War, when the Japanese threat presented itself. The Americans, in defending Alaska, immediately started to reinforce their bases there and prepared for the eventuality of an invasion of that part of the world. The major impeding factor in performing this function effectively was the lack of Air Navigation Charts. To fill this void, the US Army Air Corps set out to photograph the areas they would use to transit to Alaska. This was done with what was then a new innovation of acquiring photography of large tracts of land that could be used to provide emergency navigation charts. They employed three cameras equipped with 6 inch Metrogon lenses positioned in an aircraft in such a way that they were able to take a swath of territory from horizon to horizon, and known as Trimet coverage.

It is appropriate here to mention that because of the urgency for such maps, the Army Air Corps flew photography in all kinds of weather including low cloud conditions. The resultant accuracy of their maps therefore, was not to the same standards as that produced ultimately by 408. This is of course, understandable because of the equipment and techniques available and used in our operation.

The Government of Canada was equally concerned with this deficiency for sovereignty reasons, and took action to acquire four B-25 Mitchell Aircraft in 1944. Three of them were equipped with cameras, modified by our National Research Council to survey standards that would permit the photographic coverage obtained to be translated into accurate Topographic Air Navigation Charts. This was the prelude to the reactivation of the map making project, which the Air Board and the RCAF started in the early 1920s, and continued until 1939 when it ceased temporarily because of the war.

Enter now the activation of 408 Squadron with its newly modified Lancasters to accommodate both the Trimet and Vertical survey camera installations, as well as



Airborne Shoran equipment. At this stage, under 22 Photo Wing, 408 with companion Squadrons 413 and 414, the monumental task of acquiring photographic coverage of the entire reaches of Canada for mapping purposes began in earnest.

Much has been said here about the activities of 408 Squadron in setting up and completing a Shoran system across the length and breadth of Canada. This was an essential component of the overall mapping function, and was performed in concert with the photography taken by 408 to produce the required maps. Both were massive complementary tasks, because one without the other would have been a useless exercise. The fact is, that unless one is able to accurately position the photographic coverage to its actual geographic position on the ground, all this effort would have been for naught. As you have heard it said here to-day, a photograph provides one with a pictorial display of the terrain covered, while shoran shows where it is located geographically.

During the mid to late 50s, with the cold war upon us it became 408s responsibility to maintain a constant surveillance vigil of our northern reaches because of the possible infringement of our sovereignty by the USSR. This required camera installations totally different from those used in our mapping role. This additional responsibility placed a difficult challenge to the squadron, because while we were heavily involved in performing the survey role from early spring to late fall, we were required suddenly to change our emphasis to that of a Reconnaissance organization in the winter. Therefore, in addition to a different range of camera equipment in our Lancasters, we had to design and prepare a film processing capability that could be deployed to remote northern bases in the event such became necessary.

We were very successful in acquiring coverage of Russian activities on the northern ice islands that were so detailed we had a delegation from US Intelligence visit us to determine how we were able to obtain such excellent coverage. And finally, I would be remiss if I did not mention and praise those magnificent men who were our Camera Operators during the many years acquiring valuable imagery whether it was for Mapping, Shoran or Reconnaissance purposes. The important part they played deserves special praise and appreciation. They were a group of dedicated, hard working personnel who performed their job in a most commendable and professional fashion. I wish to recognize this publicly, and emphasize how proud I am to have worked with such devoted people.



The Rockcliffe Years SHORAN

By Colonel Morris D. Gates, (ret), OMM, CD.

In the next few minutes I shall speak only briefly on some of the main features of the SHORAN Survey Operation. A more complete description will be found in an Annex in your program.

The RCAF Aerial Photo Program as explained by Morrie Konick, provided pictures of the ground features but it did not establish the position of those features on the earth's grid with any degree of accuracy, nor in relation to other geographical points. The traditional method of Geodetic survey, though accurate, was extremely difficult in Northern Canada, and totally impractical in Arctic Canada, such methods would have required about 200 years to complete the task. Canada had a national requirement to accurately survey much of its 3.8 million square miles and a new technique had to be developed to accomplish it.

Following WWI, Dr. Ross, the Dominion Geodesist, asked the RCAF to explore the possibility of validating the accuracy of aerial photography by the use of radar. 413 Squadron, the National Research Council, The Department of Mines and Technical Surveys, and the Dominion Meteorological Service developed a method of employing a wartime blind bombing radar, SHORAN, that permitted an aircraft to accurately measure the distances between two such radar equipped ground stations. When multiple stations are deployed, a grid composed of many triangles is established and by measuring the sides of these triangles the location of the triangle apex can be accurately positioned on the earth's grid. When started from a known position, this process provided a means of achieving a survey of the accuracy required for accurate map-making.

With the process proven the SHORAN survey task was given to a newly formed 408 Squadron. The first 'Line Flying' began in 1949 from a baseline just south of Winnipeg and, over the following two summers, progressed westward and joined with the existing ground survey near Edmonton. The accuracy achieved in joining the two surveys confirmed the practicality of the SHORAN process.

Because radar is a line of sight system, it was necessary to locate the ground radar stations on a high point of land whose position was to be established. This required transporting a SHORAN Station crew and their 4000 pounds of equipment to a suitable landing site near the selected position. Ski and float equipped aircraft were used for this task and the equipment was then manually carried to the selected site, installed, and put into operation.

It is important to note that the Canso, Norseman and the Otter aircraft, and later in the high Arctic, the ski equipped Dakotas, frequently faced hazardous conditions, especially when landing sites were on the ocean. The crews helped with installations but did enjoy some excellent fishing on occasion.

Once installed, and the aircraft crew had departed, the SHORAN Station personnel -usually two or three men- got to share their location with mosquitoes, black flies and wild animals for approximately six weeks. The installation process was then reversed and the station leapfrogged to the next site. On average there were five to ten crews in the field at any one time. One of the most difficult installations was the Mount Ruth site on the East Coast of Baffin Island. It was 915 meters high and seven miles from the Canso landing site. The crew wrestled their equipment ashore, carried it the seven miles, then to the top of the hill. That site also experienced a July ice storm that wrecked the antennae and the tents and had to be renewed before operations could begin.

It was common for these crews to live in the bush for three to three and a half months with re-supply of fresh food on occasion. Conditions were not luxurious and they saw no USO shows. They did their jobs for often very lengthy days until the weather got cold and it was time to quit for the winter.

As the operation moved northward to arctic locations, the black flies and mosquitoes were no longer constant companions, but winter conditions increased the hardship for the crews. The Shoran crews were a very hardy group of servicemen who, for too long have remained in the shadows of Canada's mapping operations. They deserve greater recognition for their contribution.

But these stations were not just placed anywhere. The year previous to operations a Geodetic team carried out the selections. While they did not have enormous loads to transport, the team did have to suffer the flies and rough living for most of the summer months.

The task of flying the "lines" was not an easy one for the Lancaster air crews, weather reports were not particularly reliable because of widely spaced reporting stations, navigation was difficult because of very limited aids and flying the lines demanded excellent coordination between navigator, SHORAN operator and pilot to achieve the required accuracy with the aircraft flying at 20,000 feet or more. The air temperature structure had also to be measured at 1,000 foot intervals prior to measuring each line as this was a necessary ingredient for the Geodetic Survey analysts who completed the calculations when the Lancasters returned the results to the base each evening. These civilians, from many scientific disciplines, shared the poor living conditions that were often the norm at some northern bases--and very often they got to work most of the night. In all it was a complex task for everyone involved and a tribute to all that the error in measurements was about 25 feet in 100 miles.

The aircraft maintenance crews were often faced with primitive facilities but still did an outstanding job keeping both aircraft and systems operational for the long flying days the aircrew put in when the weather permitted. Much was asked of these men during those nine years and they responded with enthusiasm and professionalism. They were among the best.

SHORAN operations began from Winnipeg in 1949 and finished at Resolute Bay in 1957. 191 Shoran station installations were made and 501 lines were measured twice. In all 17,548 hours were flown by the aircrews without the loss of a single crew or aircraft notwithstanding flying conditions that were probably the worst ever experiences during peacetime operations. It proved to be a formidable task, but was now complete.

The value of the survey to Canada was enormous and has enriched our lives by the economic benefit that has flowed from the subsequent exploration. At the time it was also a highly visible declaration of Canadian sovereignty.

One expert, at the time the survey was completed in June, 1957 summed up matters as follows: "The camera shows you what a place looks like, SHORAN tells you exactly where it is." Accurate maps would follow and a once common expression by the navigators "we drew a map on the way out so we could find our way back", became a memory only and a significant comfort for many aircrews that were to operate there in later years.

In recognition of the work done by the Squadron, the prestigious McKee Trophy was presented to the 408 Squadron Commander, Wing Commander J. G. Showler, in 1957 to honour an outstanding contribution to the advancement of aviation.

Per Ardua Ad Astra most appropriately describes the achievement of this task by the officers and men of 408 Squadron. It was their duty, well done!





The Rockcliffe Years The Northern Reaches

By Wing Commander F. Ronald Cleminson, (ret), CD, B. A., M. A.,
 LL.D. (Hon. U of Waterloo), LL.D. (Hon. U of Victoria).

When 408 Squadron completed the prodigious task of the aerial survey of Canada, from coast to coast to coast, the Squadron was assigned a new responsibility – that of the reconnaissance of the Northern Reaches of Canada. Their operations were to take place routinely above the 70th parallel into the Canadian sector of the polar basin, and occasionally beyond.

The Soviet imperialism of the Cold War was looming large on the horizons of many countries, including Canada.

Designated as 408 Arctic Reconnaissance Squadron, in 1957, it was given three specially modified Mark 10 Lancaster aircraft with lengthened bodies and an array of electronic equipment to make it "mission specific". The aircraft were festooned with antennae which seemed, all too often, to have a rather short life, since seldom did one of these Lancasters return from a mission to the Northern Reaches with its antennae intact.

Electronic equipment ranged from the pre-war Royal Air Force R 1155 low/middle frequency radio receiver to the United States (advanced for those days) radar detecting UPD 501.

On the photo/reconnaissance side, the Lancaster 10 (AR) carried a sophisticated array of cameras. Based on the 3 camera horizon to horizon trimetragon and the F-52 vertical camera of the survey days, the 10 (AR) carried a forward firing, fast cycling 20-inch camera and a similar rear-firing 7-inch camera. With a low level S7A (sonne) completing the camera suite a Lancaster provided a formidable capacity to accomplish its photo recce mission from altitudes ranging from 20,000 feet to 200 feet. It is fair to say that in those days we knew as much about the Soviet Arctic activities as anyone on the Allied side.

The 10 (AR) with a greater all up weight than the 10 (P) was both a "darling" and a "dog" to fly. Fully loaded with 2954 imperial gallons on board, take-offs from the single short runway at Rockcliffe (the squadron insisted that it was 4,408 feet in length) were seldom uneventful. For safety reasons, fully loaded departures were increasingly discouraged and the standard operating procedure was to fly from Rockcliffe to Uplands for "topping-up" purposes. With the propensity for the aging Lancaster, once on the ground, to become unserviceable, crews occasionally found themselves returning home at the end of the first day by taxi having only accomplished, as the first leg, the trip "across town".

Nevertheless, with these mission-specific modified aircraft, and more importantly with the dedicated, specially trained personnel, both air and ground crew, 408 (AR) Squadron created a reconnaissance profile for Canada which was unparalleled in terms of Arctic activities. With the retirement of the 10(AR) from

service, in 1962, this unique national capacity for Arctic reconnaissance was lost. Other squadrons, with more up-to-date aircraft attempted to fill the void, but without great success.

As a matter of interest, a number of Lancasters, 10(P)s and 10 (AR)s amongst them, continue to serve the nation today, in a manner of speaking; as lonely sentinels mounted on top of concrete pillars across the country.

Few of the good folk of the nation who see them stark against the evening sky as they stroll through their communities will ever know of the stalwart crews who manned those aircraft, who braved the daunting, long hours of flight through the most forbidding territory on the face of the globe as they searched the Northern Reaches for signs of incursions from the north in the Cold War days of the last century. These were brave men who proudly wore the 408 crest in serving the nation. Their modesty and lack of recognition should not obscure the very real service that 408, once more, has given to the nation.

Per Ardua Ad Astra





Chapter Three The Rivers Years

The third incarnation of the Goose Squadron--February 1964 to April 1970.

The Squadron is transferred to Mobile Command and prepares to exercise the Air Transport support, area survey/photo reconnaissance and Tactical Fighter Support functions needed to assist an army in the field. New aircraft are provided and the training for the crews begins. They are soon involved in war games exercises which will outline the capacity of the Canadian units to function on the field of battle.





The Rivers Years

By Squadron Leader Noel Funge, (ret), CD, B. A.

408's arrival at the Canadian Joint Air Training Centre (CJATC), Rivers, Manitoba, on 1 April, 1964 was to test its already legendary adaptability. Originally equipped with photo Dakotas and T-33 aircraft, on May 1st, the Squadron assumed control of the Centre's Transport Support Flight with its C-119 aircraft and was redesignated 408 Tactical Support and Area Reconnaissance Squadron. W/C R.G. Orpen remained as Commanding Officer.

The Squadron's roles encompassed survey photography with the three Dakotas, paratroop operations in support of CJATC courses, and transport operations with four C-119's, photo-recce operations with four of the eight T-33 aircraft, and close air support with the remaining four.

Commencing in May, 1965 the C-119 aircraft were replaced by four C-130 B Hercules from RCAF Station Namao. Originally intended to be reconfigured for the area photo-reconnaissance role, the aircraft were never modified, and simply replaced the C-119s in the tactical airlift and transport roles. The T-33 flight supported many Army exercises at Camps Gagetown and Wainwright and many others on both coasts, as well as in Alaska. On the 22nd August 1965, W/C Orpen was replaced by acting CO S/L Bissky.

In early 1966, the Transport Flight of Hercules aircraft was involved in the NATO exercise, Winter Express, deploying and redeploying men and equipment between Sola (Stavanger) and Bardufoss, Norway. It was to be the last major operation for the 408 aircraft.

On March 15th 1966, CFB Rivers was transferred to the newly formed Mobile Command. The Hercules aircraft of 408 Squadron remained in ATC as a detachment of 435 Squadron under the command of S/L T. M. Hall. S/L H.A. McKay remained as the T-33 Flight Commander.

On the 2nd May, newly-promoted W/C McKay was appointed Commanding Officer, becoming 408 Squadron's first fighter CO. The T-33 flight had another very active year taking part in 13 exercises across the country. The three Dakotas also had a busy time in what was to be their last year with 408. On November 8th the last Dakota was flown into storage, making 408 a single aircraft type squadron for the first time in many years.

Early in 1967, the decision to have Canadair build Northrop F-5's for the RCAF was announced. 408 was chosen to provide contact training for pilots who were to become instructors on the new aircraft. The number of T-33 aircraft on strength was increased to 18 during April. After familiarization flights in an F-5 by Northrop test pilots, everyone looked forward to the day when they could get their hands on the new fighter!

A dozen military exercises were supported by 408 during the year, and pilot training in the reconnaissance and ground roles continued at an intense level. Squadron strength ballooned from 35 at the start of the year to 183 at year's end due to the fact that all technicians employed in the aircraft related trades were brought under the Squadron administration.

On February 1st, the unified Canadian Forces officially came into being and the RCAF passed into history. In July 408 turned over three of its T-33s to newly activated 434 Squadron which was chosen as the Operational Training Unit (OTU) for the C-5.

By September it had become obvious that it was not feasible for all Squadron pilots to maintain maximum proficiency in both the reconnaissance and ground attack roles. The training program was therefore changed to permit pilots to become specialists in one of the two roles and maintain the minimum Mobile Command standard in the alternate role.

On the 1st October, 1968 L Col McKay relinquished command of 408 Squadron to LCol Bob Mortimer. The Squadron became part of 10 Tactical Air Group (10TAG) and was redesignated as 408 Tactical Fighter Squadron.

The unsophisticated but practical and effective photo-reconnaissance techniques used by 408 measured up well when compared to the state-of-the-art equipment used by the USAF reconnaissance squadrons. During one joint exercise the same tasking was delivered to both the USAF and CF units at the same time. While the USAF team fed the information to their computer and waited for it to produce a mission plan, the 408 pilot was preparing his map and heading for his aircraft. Enroute to the flight line he was being briefed by the Squadron intelligence Officer. He was then able to fly his T-33 to the target, conduct photographic and visual reconnaissance and return to base before the USAF RB-57 was even ready to take off. As a consequence the CF Intelligence Officer was able to hand in a complete mission report, complete with relevant photographs, well before the USAF aircraft had landed from its mission.

In 1969 the Squadron reached 25 years of service, which made it eligible to receive its Standard. At that point only two squadrons had been so honored, 412 Squadron in Ottawa, and a reserve squadron in Hamilton. 408 would become the first CF squadron to receive its Standard. Planning for the ceremony began late in 1968, and it was soon learned that the governing factor in its presentation date would be the actual time needed to produce the Standard itself. Because of this it was decided to schedule the presentation for mid-1970. At the same time much planning was going on concerning the conversion of squadrons from T-33s to the new CF-5 aircraft. For a variety of reasons, it was decided that the two CF-5 squadrons to be formed would be 433 at Bagotville and 434 at Cold Lake, and that 408 would be disbanded, on 1 April 1970.

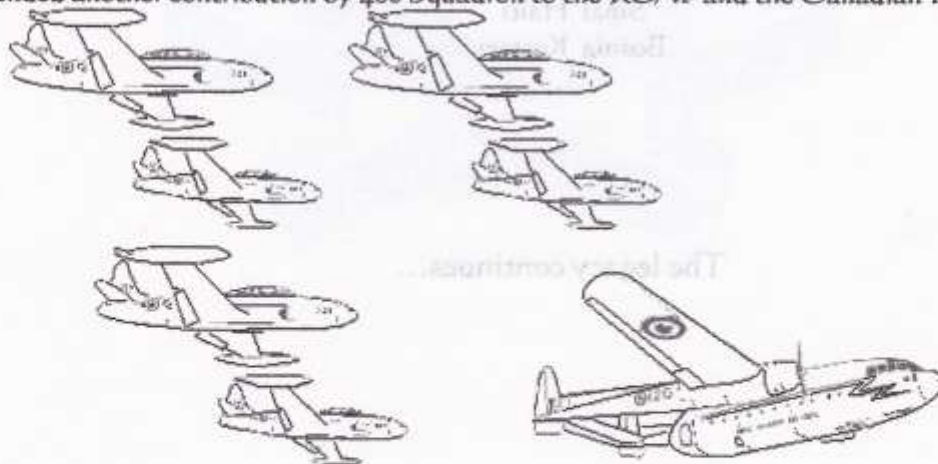
Because of the time consuming nature of producing the Standard, concern was expressed that it would not be ready in time. Fortunately the incumbent Chief of the Air Staff at that time was General FR Sharp, the last wartime Commander of the Squadron. When word of the problem reached the CDS's office LCol Mortimer was advised by the Director of Ceremonial that the Standard would indeed be ready by the selected date, March 20th, 1970.

As this was only the second squadron standard presentation to a regular force squadron, there existed very little ceremonial precedent. Captain Dave Lett, a Squadron officer, was assigned the task of developing the parade and ceremonial presentation. His thorough research produced an outstanding ceremony that has undergone little change since.

Fortunately for the RCAF personnel involved, unification had not progressed to a point where all Squadron members had been issued with the new green CF uniforms. It was therefore decided that, in view of the historical nature of the parade, it would be appropriate for former service uniforms to be worn.

After the ceremony the Squadron was about to be disbanded and a suitable location was sought to lay up the Standard. The public location chosen to display the Standard was the Western Manitoba Centennial Auditorium in Brandon. It remained at that location until the squadron was reactivated a year later and the new CO, LCol Paul Argue, took it to its new home in Edmonton, CFB Namao.

Three weeks before the Standard presentation, a very casual event was held to mark 408's demise, attended by members of 434 and 414 Squadrons in CF-5 and CH-113A aircraft to fraternally assist the Goose Squadron to "celebrate" the occasion. So ended another contribution by 408 Squadron to the RCAF and the Canadian Forces.





Chapter Four The Edmonton Years

The fourth incarnation of the Goose Squadron--1 January 1971-

With the re-formation of 408 as a Tactical Helicopter Squadron and its location in Edmonton it was tasked to be Western Command's air support unit. In addition to support of military activities in Mobile Command it soon found itself providing aid to the civil power when forest fires broke out and floods ravaged the Manitoba region. Peacekeeping assignments were given to the Squadron and soon became an adjunct duty.

408 Squadron
stands ready to

aid the civil power
and assist in
peacekeeping abroad.

It has served in
Honduras
Sinai Haiti
Bosnia Kosovo

The legacy continues...



The Edmonton Years

Colonel J. M. Duval, CD.

The bright sunshine of New Year's Day 1971, ushered in a period of intensive training for the new crop of helicopter pilots posted in to the re-formed 408 Squadron in Edmonton. This group, led by Lt Col Paul Argue, were ready for their first Twin Huey's arrival in June. The squadron conducted its first field exercise in the fall and when the cold weather arrived found itself doing its first winter exercise at Wainwright, enjoying temperatures of -45 C.

The hot summer of 1972 brought the squadron face to face with the "aid to the civil power" concept as they found themselves fighting forest fires in the Fort McMurray and Cold Lake regions of Alberta. This experience would stand them in good stead as they became increasingly involved in this role in the years to come.

They also found time to retrieve their colours which had been laid up in Brandon, Manitoba, after the latest disbanding of the squadron. In a ceremony attended by the Chief of the Defense Staff, General Fred Sharp, the last wartime commander of the Squadron, they proudly displayed the standard for the military personnel on the base and a large crowd of civilian guests.

A change of command in 1973 brought a period of intensive training for winter time flying as Lt Col Fentiman led them to their forward base at Churchill where they were welcomed by -45C temperatures.

Next spring brought another drought ridden time of terror for the people at Whitecourt and Slave Lake, in Alberta, and 408 was again pressed into service in its aid to the civil power posture helping to fight devastating forest fires.

It's "aid to the civil power" reputation was greatly enhanced as the late spring of 1974 brought the terrible Red River floods once more to Manitoba and 408 helped rescue more than one thousand people from the surging, water-ravaged region. Many of the victims of the flood expressed their deep gratitude to the crews of 408 for their tireless and timely help in this nearly unparalleled catastrophe in the province.

The summer of 1976 brought a new task for 408 as they were asked to send a component of the squadron to assist in the security and support for the Montreal Summer Olympics. Based at St. Hubert, Quebec, four Hueys and six Kiowas were kept busy throughout the games. The face of terrorism had already been seen in other places and the Canadian authorities wanted the games to proceed without similar interruptions. And proceed they did.

In January, 1977 the planning staffs at Headquarters arranged for the squadron's helicopters to rotate through depot level inspections and provide the "birds" with some new "teeth". The Hueys got 7.62 mm and 0.50 calibre door guns

and the Kiowas got 7.62" Mini-Tat" Gatling guns. When you recall that the Hampdens, Lancasters and Halifaxes, in war time Bomber Command had .303 calibre machine guns as their offensive armament these "teeth" in the helicopters seemed to have an impressive "bite". But that would be for another time and place.

The summer of 1977 brought a "royal" visit to Calgary with the arrival of Prince Charles and 408 was given the responsibility for transporting the Prince and his entourage. Later in the same month, July, 408 rendered a similar service to His Royal Highness Prince Andrew, the Duke of York, on his visit to the Northwest Territories.

In August of that year Lt Col MacGowan assumed command of the Squadron. The squadron members were pleasantly surprised when, some weeks later, the Mapping and Charting Establishment announced that a body of water in northern Canada had been named "408 Squadron Lake" in honor of the survey and mapping work which had been accomplished some years before.

In January of 1978 the Soviet satellite Cosmos 954 fell out of orbit, crashed in the Canadian Northwest Territories and scattered radio-active material over a 15,000 square mile area. Part of the clean-up tasking fell to 408 Squadron and they flew more than 2000 hours in the Hueys and Kiowas helping to identify the necessary clean up sites and assisting with the clean up of the waste material itself.

This activity was rapidly followed by the development of a very drought ridden year in Northern Alberta and Saskatchewan and the outbreak of many forest fires which again required 408 to respond to its mandate of providing aid to the civil power. At the same time, some elements of the squadron were pressed into service to help the Mapping and Charting establishment redo some aspects of the survey of the Yukon territory west of the Alaska Highway.

The large scale military exercises which had become a significant feature of the Mobile Command structure continued with the first divisional level exercise held at Galetown. More of these large scale training exercises took place with 408 being assigned specific casualty evacuation and inspection team transport duties..

In June 1982 Lt Col A. M. Lee took over the helm of 408 during a brigade level exercise being held at Wainwright. Once completed and back at Namao, a 408 veterans committee was established to prepare for the coming 1984 Reunion. Two years of planning and hard work resulted in the largest ever reunion in 408's history with ex-408ers attending from as far away as New Zealand and Australia, South America, France, Germany, England, Scotland and Wales, every province in Canada and many of the American States. CWO Joe Drouin did an extraordinary job of creating the first 408 Squadron Museum on the CFB at Namao.

In August of 1985 the Squadron was once again pressed into service to provide transport support for the Duke of Edinburgh and his 24 person entourage in a visit to Banff.

In March, 1986, after a brokered peace was reached between Israel and its Arab neighbors, 408 sent nine Hueys and 79 personnel to El Gorah in Egypt's Sinai region. Their mission included resupply, patrol insertion and extraction, recce, casevac, and rapid reaction force standby. These were busy and trying times for the 408 group, but the peace held. Beginning in April, 1988 another group of 80 "Goosemen" were rotated for similar duty in the Sinai.

Each year military exercises became a regular part of the squadron's activities involving them at brigade and division levels. In addition the squadron helped support Canada's rapid reaction force, assisting NATO in guarding its northern flank in Norway.

Accidents seem to be an unavoidable, concomitant result of flying operations and in the years since 408 first took up its role as a Tac Heli Squadron there have been three casualties: Captain J. G. Benedict, Lt J. C. Y. Gregoire and Lt D. Wellman. The service of these three gallant men merit our remembrance and our prayers on this day of dedication.

In 1996 the squadron began its transition to the Bell Griffon from the Hueys and the Kiowas, which had done such notable service in exercises, in forest fire disasters and floods. Considering the length of service and the performance of the Hueys and the Kiowas, they performed well - and that performance was a sincere tribute to the skill and dedication of the ground crews who kept them flying.

The previous summer had seen the developing trend to service abroad. The Sinai was well established and the next foreign adventure was the support of the UN Mission in Haiti. This was followed by the 1998 peacekeeping mission to Bosnia and another to the war ravaged area of Kosovo.

Currently, a second tour in Bosnia maintains a Canadian presence abroad and again, as so often before, the face of Canada on foreign soil proudly wears a 408 (Goose) Squadron shoulder patch.



The Legacy continues...



Benediction

By Brigadier General David C. Estey, (ret),
OStJ, CD, B. A., M. Div., Chaplain (P)

Blessed and glorious God, by whose power and wisdom and love all things are sanctified, enlightened and made perfect; be merciful to us and bless us this day as we gather here before you to dedicate this 408 (Goose) Squadron Monument as a Memorial to those men and women of courage and sacrifice who have given their lives in service to freedom. We remember before you today those members of 408 (Goose) Squadron, RCAF, that great cloud of witnesses, who have laid down their lives in war and peace in pursuit of that true peace which endures. May what we do here today please you, O God, and show forth the honour of those of our number who have gone before. Let their work shine upon us your servants, and may your glory through them appear unto our children and their children's children. Let the beauty of this Memorial be a reminder to all generations of the sacrifice made by the few for the freedoms that we enjoy. Suffer not our thoughts for them to grow weary, and grant for the sake of generations yet unborn, the nations of the world may live in abiding peace.

Look in mercy, O God, on all those who are called to tasks in the air. Give unto them the assurance of your protection when they are amidst the clouds and wonders of the sky, that, whether in calm sunshine, or surrounded by darkness and storm, they may feel your Spirit and presence ever around them. May they be called today to serve only for the maintenance of order and peace around the world.

Hear these our prayers which we bring before you in the name of Christ. Amen





Prayer of Praise

Major Monsignor Roger J. D. Morin, CD, P. A., Vicar General.

Benediction

All praise and glory are yours,
Heavenly Father, Creator of the Universe,
we give you thanks for calling us to be
your people and for giving us your Son
as our Lord and Saviour, and your Spirit
to guide our lives and our prayer.

Bless us and the members of the
408 SQUADRON as we gather together
on the occasion of their 60th Anniversary.
Open our hearts to the action of your
Holy Spirit and teach us to pray and
give you glory each day.

Father, we praise you for all the
spiritual and temporal benefits
you have bestowed upon us and
upon our country and countries of
the world and we pray especially for
all departed comrades who were
associated with the 408 SQUADRON
during the time of war and peace.

Bless us and bless all those who fly in
their mission of peace around the world.
May they all move about with ease and
without danger as messengers of peace
who give glory to God by their good works
of mercy.

We praise you through Christ our Lord.

Amen.





Benediction

By Rabbi Reuven P. Bulka

We are gathered here today to dedicate a monument, to eternalize the memory of a group renowned for being monumental in their dedication.

To pronounce benediction, it is critical that we understand what is a benediction. A benediction can be one of a number of things, all good. Benediction can be an expression of good wishes. Benediction can be the invoking of a blessing. Benediction can be something that promotes goodness or well-being.

Benediction as something that promotes goodness and well-being is so appropriate today, since it best characterizes 408 Squadron. This Squadron has excelled in the defense of freedom and human dignity.

It is a freedom we so much enjoy, but could not have been retained without the dedication and sacrifice of 408 Squadron. The Squadron's goodness has helped in our well-being.

Anything which is by definition good, and promotes goodness and well-being, is timeless. It was therefore inevitable that 408 Squadron would come back to life even after being disbanded in 1945.

Our survey of their accomplishments reveals a group with a unique higher perspective of Canada, a heavenly perspective that derives from looking down from above, seeing and mapping the whole picture.

408 Squadron stands tall in our hearts as a squadron-ning to do good deeds, and to promote well-being, as peace keepers, as fighters of forest fires or the ravages of floods.

408 Squadron is a teaching squadron. The message of its teaching is that armies are here primarily not to fight wars, but to preserve peace and to promote and preserve the well-being of all humankind. This they have taught and continue to teach, by their noble example.

We come back to the first understanding of benediction, as the expression of good wishes. We Canadians, who are in your eternal debt, and who stand in awe of your achievements and your tenacity, express our warmest wishes to you, for your health and vigour, and in continuing fulfilment in all you do.

We conclude with the second sense of benediction, as the invoking of a blessing.

We fervently hope and pray that the legacy of 408 Squadron will be an eternal gift to us and the entire world. The granite monument that we dedicate today puts a tangible face on this legacy.

As you get on in years, your achievements grow in significance. Your number may diminish, but what you have done for all of us becomes magnified.

408 Squadron refuses to die. It continues to find ways to be of service to our country and to the world. Because you and what you do are so good, you are continually and monumentally perpetuated.

Your gift to us is more than the freedom we enjoy. It is the gift of giving, of always looking for more ways to help and to inspire. That gift, like 408 Squadron itself, soars to the heavens in its impact and profundity.

We salute you, we venerate you, we humbly thank you for the course you have charted, we wish you well, and we wish that your legacy remains vibrantly eternal.

You have been, are, and hopefully will continue to be a blessing, a living monument and testimony to the transcending capacity for greatness inherent in all of us, a capacity which you brought into the open.

The divinity which inspires us all brings times in our lives, as individuals and as a nation, when challenges are thrust before us. What we should be thankful for at this dedication time is that God has always given us the men and women who rise to meet those challenges and overcome the obstacles so that we can maintain the freedom in our lives and our faith in God.

May your dedication be a living example to our country - today, tomorrow, and forever. Amen.





Valediction

By Major General Clifton M. Kinney, (ret) CMM, CD

We have been privileged to be members of a proud organization that has contributed so very much to Canada.

So often the face of Canada abroad, in war and peace, has had a 408 Squadron shoulder patch emblazoned on its tunic. The portrait of a squadron that we have just had outlined for us has been the recounting of an amazing saga of hard work and courage in the face of so many obstacles. Ladies and Gentlemen, we should never forget that in being members of this squadron we have done great deeds together, and in the doing have helped build a new and better land for ourselves and our children.

Now, sixty years after 408's beginnings, the shadows lengthen and we can take home with us the memory of this day and of this Monument to our heritage which you have made possible. Let us remember in these later days of our lives the splendid achievements of this squadron in Canada's history, and those many comrades who have gone before us. It took all of us, with our hard work and dedication, to build the proud heritage which we celebrate today.

It is not likely that we shall meet again in such an assembly so I would ask you to keep the memory of your days and your accomplishments in this squadron ever fresh and green in your hearts and minds in the days ahead as we slip into the quiet years of our lives. Share those memories with friends and families and know that some where out there, there is a 408 Squadron presence standing guard over this heritage.

I would especially like to pay tribute to the 408 wives who have so often borne the burden of home and children while husbands were away on duty.

There has been so much of that in 408's history, and so few expressions of thanks to the courageous and silent ladies of 408 for a job so well done. Without your hard work and sacrifice the splendid history of 408 Squadron, which we celebrate today, would not have been possible. Every expression of thanks, gratitude and commendation that this Monument brings to the men of 408 belongs equally to the ladies of 408. You have shared in the good days and the bad and you should now share in the tribute which declares:

"Well Done Thou Good and Faithful Servant of the Lord".

FOR FREEDOM.

The Legacy Continues....



A Brief History of 408 Squadron

Wartime.

Formed on the 24th June, 1941 as Canada's second wartime bomber squadron, 408 went operational two months later from its then base at Lindholme. Flying twin engine Hampdens they kept increasing their operational strength and moved to Syerston and shortly after to Balderton as the new bases were being upgraded.

Their first Commander, Wing Commander Nelles Timmerman, DFC, had been in the Royal Air Force since 1936. Between his first operational sortie in April 1940 and his 50th in March, 1942, when he was repatriated to Canada, he was awarded the DFC, DSO and had been mentioned in despatches (MiD). The new squadron commander, W/C Pitt Clayton, DFC, was also a Canadian in the RAF. Shortly after Pitt Clayton was posted away and the first RCAF officer comes in as squadron commander. W/C Jack Twigg came to 408 from Coastal Command, and shortly after his arrival, led the squadron on the first of the three one thousand bomber raids that 408 would participate in. This gifted commander would be the first of three to be killed in action during the war.

In September of 1942 the Squadron began its conversion to the first of the four engine bombers they would fly during the war, the Lancaster Mark II. (the Halifax Mark 5 and the Canadian made Lancaster Mark 10 would follow).

When the war ended W/C Freddie Sharp led the squadron in their 'fly-home' to Canada where they began their preparations to join the Allied "Tiger Force" to go to the Pacific and help defeat Japan. The action at Nagasaki and Hiroshima ended all that and 408 was disbanded.

Peacetime

Canada's growth after the war showed the political authorities the very real need for excellent mapping for Canada, for economic growth in the northern regions as well as for accurate boundary definition in the face of the Soviet probes into these northern territories as the Cold War grew colder.

413 and 414 squadrons had been doing some developmental work in aerial survey technology but they were earmarked to join the burgeoning Air Division in Europe and the task was turned over to a reincarnated Goose squadron in 1949. The aerial survey techniques were developed by 408 and the squadron then set about doing the geodetic survey of all of Canada and the photo mapping flights to photograph all of Canada, north to south and east to west. This prodigious task was completed with an error tolerance of 25 feet in 100 miles, a record never equaled. But the work demands on the ground crew and the aircrew working in the detachments was awesome and the Shoran operators deserve special mention. Having to spend months away from home in isolated locations with black flies and mosquitoes as their constant companions,

not to speak of wild animals, living on hard rations much of the time. Their service to 408 Squadron, to the RCAF and to the nation was beyond praise.

The mapping was completed in 1957 and the Soviet incursions into Canadian territory required a measured response and again the task was assigned to 408. These Northern Reaches of Canada went deep into the Arctic regions and the dangers that went with the long hours of these flights in the intense cold, especially in winter, can easily be imagined.

In 1964 the Rockcliffe years came to an end as The Goose Squadron was reincarnated as an Army Support unit and became engaged in Air Transport support; area survey/photo reconnaissance and Tactical Fighter Support to the Canadian Land Forces. This continued until 1969 when 408 was again disbanded only to be reconstituted as a Tactical Helicopter squadron in 1971 and moved to Edmonton, Alberta to take up its new home and responsibilities there.

As a Tactical Helicopter unit to provide support for the Western areas of Canada they were not long in finding that the civil power required their help in fighting forest fires and helping with the terrible destruction caused by flooding. During one of the Red River floods in Manitoba they rescued more than one thousand stranded people.

As the United Nations peacekeeping demands on member nations increased 408 found itself being tasked increasingly and to date has done duty in Honduras, Sinai, Haiti, Bosnia and Kosovo. Most recently 408 has sent another group to do a second tour of duty in Bosnia.

The outstanding performance of this squadron continues. During the war 408 Squadron delivered more tonnage than any other Canadian squadron and sustained more casualties than any other squadron-936. The post war accomplishments as a photo/mapping squadron have never been equaled by any other flying unit in the world. The commitment and dedication of 408 members has built up a reputation which is the envy of every other Canadian squadron. This legacy of service to the nation and devotion to duty is unsurpassed and continues as the years unfold.

408 Squadron made a fearsome reputation flying under the banner of the motto emblazoned on its crest--

FOR FREEDOM.

THE LEGACY CONTINUES

