



June 12th, 2011
For Immediate release:

Celebrating the 70 Anniversary of “417” Combat Support Squadron.

On June 14th at 9:00am we will be welcoming one of 417 Squadron’s Griffon Helicopters to the Alberta Aviation Museum. On board will be the Commanding Officer and select personnel representing the Squadron.

This will be a great Photo/Video opportunity not common in the Edmonton area.

At 10:00am there will be a short ceremony involving the personnel of “417” Squadron and select guests of the Alberta Aviation Museum unveiling a Special Exhibit created to honour the 70th Anniversary of “417” Squadron and the Squadron’s amazing history.

Attached is a short summary of the “417 City of Windsor” Squadron now based at 4 Wing CFB Cold Lake prepared by the Alberta Aviation Museum for your reference.

We invite the media to join us in the arrival of the “417” Squadron Helicopter and the Unveiling ceremony following.

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Additional information:

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RCAF 417 “City of Windsor” Squadron History Summary (by AAMA)

Forged in the furnace of the Second World War “417” Squadron entered combat in the sand and wind of the Deserts of North Africa initially based at Egypt as a key component of the “Desert Airforce” flying Hawker Hurricanes and beginning a tradition of excellence.

Providing air cover and air support for the Allied push “417” traveled from North Africa through Sicily and at the end of the Second World War was based and operated in Italy where it was disbanded at the end of hostilities, it’s mission complete.

Post War “417” was reborn for the first time in 1947 as a Fighter Reconnaissance flying Second World War Vintage Mustangs and Harvards based in Rivers Manitoba. The rebirth was short lived in the fast changing times at the start of the Cold War and “417” was once again disbanded in the restructuring of the times.

1970 saw the second rebirth of “417” this time as the operational training unit for one of the deadliest jet fighters ever to serve the Canadian Military, the CF-104 Star Fighter. Capable of in excess of Mach 2 (twice the speed of sound or 760+ meters per second) the CF-104 was used as a high altitude interceptor, low level attack aircraft and low level photo recon aircraft both domestically and in Cold War Europe.

“417” was assigned the task of creating a generation of pilots that could take this aircraft to it’s maximum in all it’s assigned roles, where ever they were stationed and fulfilled it’s role as an Operational Training Unit until the CF-104 was withdrawn from service in 1983.

Reborn once again in 1993 as “417 Combat Support Squadron” taking over the diverse and difficult duties of “Base Flight” at CFB Cold Lake. In this capacity “417” was required to provide Air Ambulance style Medevac for CFB Cold Lake as well as combat support for ground personnel using the CH-118 Iroquois Helicopter. In addition “417” was to also provide liaison, act as air combat target trainers and an air combat adversary for fighter pilot training using the CT-133 Silver Star jet aircraft affectionately known as the T-Bird.

“417” was able to meet this diverse requirement of being not only a Rotary Wing support unit but also a high performance jet aircraft operating unit, not doubt in part to it’s history as being both a tenacious Squadron as part of the “Desert Airforce” in the Second World War and it’s proven technological capabilities demonstrated in the Squadron’s operations in being the Operational Training Unit for the multi sonic CF-104 through the Cold War.

The tradition continues today, “417” recently returning from relief operations in Manitoba using their “latest ride”, the CH-146 “Griffon” Helicopter. In addition “417” continues to provide “Base Flight” operations for CFB Cold Lake, including medical rescue, using the “Griffon”.

Congratulations “417” on your 70th Anniversary, you may be the “City of Windsor” Squadron but you are a proud Albertan now and a member Northern Alberta family.