

The Ottawa Group of Radar Veterans is pleased to report that the Canadian War Museum has established an exhibit about the Canadians who were trained by the RCAF and allocated to the RAF to serve in every war theatre to maintain the secret radar systems that made a significant contribution in winning WWII. We were very disappointed in 2005 when attending the official opening of the new Museum to discover there was no reference to the important role that radar played. At our national reunion which was held at the same time the Ottawa Group was in agreement it would undertake to establish our radar story at the Museum. Publications and DVD's were produced that covered our recruitment, training, and service maintaining the numerous radar systems. This material was provided to a number of museums across Canada.

In 2011 we contacted the Canadian War Museum for a meeting to consider a proposed radar exhibit. This was achieved by Museum officials agreeing to develop an exhibit even though space had to be established and resources were limited. Some months of communications and development planning took place. Finally an exhibit was completed and opened for the visitors at a reception attended by Radar Veterans and guests on September 7, 2012. The Museum planners, due to space limitations were not able to include statements on the role radar played or provide a video setup to show DVD's. We are pleased there now is an exhibit to inform the visitor that Canada played an important role in providing trained recruits in answer to Britain's request for assistance in 1941. We hope that the exhibit can be enhanced which we believe is possible by design changes to the current wall area above the radar exhibit, when resources can be established.

Two photos are provided, one showing the radar exhibit and the other showing its relationship to the wall display. Also provided is the text used on the display and information about the radar stories available on the vocal segments.



CANADIAN WAR MUSEUM'S WWII RADAR EXHIBIT COMPLETED 07-09-12

composite picture



## Canadians on Radar

During the war, approximately 6,500 Canadians served as Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) radar technicians, most of them with Britain's Royal Air Force.

In 1940, the United Kingdom asked Canada to provide technicians urgently needed to install, maintain, and repair radar equipment. Initial efforts obtained some Canadians with radio experience, but to meet the demand, many more technicians had to be recruited and trained. Although members of the RCAF, they were often assigned to British units, and represented at least half of the Royal Air Force's radar technicians. The vast majority served overseas, in virtually every theatre of the war.

### Radar



Radar was one of the most important technologies of the Second World War. Surrounded by secrecy, it saw widespread and increasing use on land, at sea, and in the air. Using radio signals, radar could detect aircraft, vessels, and terrain. Modified, and combined with related technologies, it was used for navigation and to help identify targets. Skilled technicians and operators were essential to its success.

### Mobile Radar Station



War artist Paul Goranson painted this mobile radar station supporting Allied forces landing at Anzio, Italy. Canadian radar personnel served in locations around the world, installing, maintaining, and repairing many different types of equipment. Some were part of units such as this one, which kept watch for enemy aircraft and helped direct Allied planes to intercept them.

*Radio Direction Finder Set, Anzio*

Painted by Paul Goranson in 1944 (reproduction)

Beaverbrook Collection of War Art

CWM 19710261-3780

### Canadian Radar Experiences (Vocal segment)

Listen to dramatizations of Canadian radar technicians describing their experiences, including some of the wide range of duties they performed in locations around the world.

1. "All the maintenance was done outside."

Les Card (1:20 minutes)

2. "...our station's signals became vital to numerous raids..."

W.G. Robson (2:00 minutes)

3. "The main purpose was to monitor our patrol aircraft..."

Mickey Stevens (1:07 minutes)

4. "We once measured the temperature in the radar observer's compartment at noon, it was 140°F!"

William Hilborn (1:20 minutes)