

Biography – Colonel (retired) Keith Maxwell, OMM, CD

Colonel (retired) Maxwell joined the Canadian military in 1968 at the age of sixteen, initially serving as a reserve soldier with the British Columbia Regiment in Vancouver. He then transferred to the regular Canadian Army as an Infantry soldier in 1970 and was commissioned as an officer in Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry in 1973. He served with that Regiment for seven years before transferring to the Air Force.

Colonel Maxwell then served as an Air Weapons Controller (fighter controller) and operations staff officer in a number of positions and locations in the North American Aerospace Command (NORAD). Tours of duty included North Bay, Ontario, Tacoma, Washington, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, Winnipeg, Manitoba and Anchorage, Alaska. His final posting in NORAD was in Colorado Springs where he worked in the HQ NORAD Cheyenne Mountain complex. He was the director of the Air Defence Operations Centre and was a member of the crew in the NORAD Command Post providing early warning of SCUD missile launches from Iraq in the 1991 Gulf War. During his time in NORAD Colonel Maxwell flew as a Mission Commander and Battle Commander on Airborne Warning and Control System aircraft over a period of fifteen years. These duties included the interception of numerous Soviet aircraft operating in the vicinity of North American airspace.

In 1993 Colonel Maxwell was posted on promotion to Colonel, to the Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE), in Mons, Belgium as the head of the Air Command and Control Branch in the Operations Division. He retired from the Canadian Forces in September 1998, and joined the NATO International Staff in the NATO Air Command and Control System Management Agency (NACMA) in Brussels, Belgium. He was the Chief of the Requirements and Architecture Division for that Agency for ten years.

Colonel Maxwell has a History degree from the University of Manitoba and is a graduate of the Canadian Forces Staff School, the US Air Force Air War College and the Canadian Forces Senior Defence and Security Studies Programme.

During his time in Europe Colonel Maxwell lived within an hour's drive of many of the Canadian battlefields of both World Wars. With that proximity he started a serious study of the battles and battlefields where so many Canadians had fought and died. He began conducting battlefield tours in the mid-1990s for a variety of Canadian groups interested in furthering their understanding of Canada's history in Europe; his tour groups have included several NATO Staff College groups, the Canadian National Defence College, the Minister of Veterans Affairs and the Minister of National Defence. He also helped organize several tours for Canadian Veterans returning to Europe for commemorative occasions.

Since retiring from NATO and moving back to Canada in 2009, Colonel Maxwell has written *"Swift & Strong – a Pictorial History of the British Columbia Regiment (Duke*

of Connaught's Own)” with two co-authors. He is also an instructor for the Capilano University Eldercollege program and has presented courses on Canadian History and International Security.

Colonel Maxwell has written several articles on Canada's role in both wars. He is now retired and lives in Sechelt BC. He was appointed to the Order of Military Merit in the grade of Officer in 1989.