

Cold War Artifacts – BOMARC: The Shadow of the Shield

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Support text for exhibition at W.K.P. Gallery, North Bay, December 2007

- May 8, 1937:** Thomas Ruggles Pynchon Jr. borne.
- 1945:** Boeing Airplane Company submits proposal for a ground-to-air missile to intercept bombers.
- 1949:** BOMARC missile program launched.
- Feb. 24, 1955:** first production BOMARC test flown.
- 1957–1964:** 700 BOMARC built.
- Jan. 1958:** production of W40 nuclear warhead for BOMARC missile begins.
- May 16, 1959:** site chosen for North Bay BOMARC site.
- Sept. 1959:** first U.S. BOMARC squadron becomes operational.
- Feb. 2, 1960 -
Sept. 13, 1962:** Thomas Pynchon works for Boeing as a technical writer. He is employed in the BOMARC Service Information Unit.
- Dec. 1960:** Thomas Pynchon publishes "Togetherness," an article on BOMARC safety for *Air Force Aerospace Safety* magazine.
- Dec. 28, 1961:** 446 Surface-to-Air Missile Squadron formed at North Bay.
- Oct. 19, 1962:** Delivery of BOMARC missiles to North Bay begins.
- Dec. 30, 1963:** President Lyndon Johnson signs memo authorizing shipment of nuclear warheads to Canada.
- Dec. 31, 1963:** first shipment of nuclear warheads arrives in North Bay.
- Jan. 8, 1964:** 3rd shipment of warheads arrives. 5:00 a.m.: small earthquake hits North Bay. Many residents believe a warhead has detonated.
- March 31, 1972:** 446 Squadron ceases operation.
- April 4, 1972:** removal of warheads from North Bay site begins.
- May 15, 1972:** last nuclear warhead leaves North Bay.
- Sept. 1, 1972:** 46 Squadron at North Bay shut down.
- Feb. 28, 1973:** Thomas Pynchon's novel *Gravity's Rainbow* published.
- July 14, 1982:** last BOMARC missiles test fired.
- July 23, 2007:** National Museum of the United States Air Force formally requests return of BOMARC missile displayed at Lee Park.
- Sept. 15, 2009:** BOMARC missile repatriated.