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Celebrated combat search and rescue helicopter finds new home at Robins

By Becky Purser - bpurser@macon.com



Danny Gilleland/The Telegraph

An MH-53 Pave Low helicopter takes off from Robins Air Force Base Monday afternoon. The helicopter is being retired from the Air Force's active inventory and will go to the Museum of Aviation.

[Helicopter finds new home at Museum of Aviation](#)

Danny Gilleland/The Telegraph

An MH-53 Pave Low helicopter takes off from Robins Air Force Base Monday afternoon. The helicopter is being retired from the Air Force's active inventory and will go to the Museum of Aviation.

For Air Force Col. Brad Webb, the "Super Jolly Green Giant" helicopter he flew Monday to Robins Air Force Base as a gift for the Museum of Aviation has special significance.

Tail No. 1626, the wing number for this particular MH-53J/M Pave Low IV, was the helicopter Webb piloted as squadron leader for the 20th Special Operations Squadron at Hurlburt Field, Fla.

Now commander of the 1st Special Operations Wing at Hurlburt, the 46-year-old Webb said it was his privilege to fly his "mistress" to her new home.

The move also has special significance for Robins, which was responsible for the 37-year-old aircraft's maintenance and upgrades through the years.

The aircraft is a veteran of special military operations in Vietnam, Bosnia and, most recently, Iraq, among other locales.

One of the significant missions that Webb flew in the aircraft was a noncombat assignment in the mid-1990s. The aircraft was used to evacuate 2,100 people for several days from the U.S. Embassy in Monrovia, Liberia, during political unrest.

While flying the helicopter in Africa, Webb earned the 1996 Cheney Award, an aviation honor given annually by the Air Force for valor and self-sacrifice in a humanitarian effort that is not necessarily combat-related.

Webb, who has been flying his new aircraft, a CV-22 Osprey, for the past six months, said Monday he was glad to know that the helicopter that kept him safe through many missions will be retired in a manner due its history of service.

He considers the aircraft probably the most sophisticated helicopter ever flown by the Air Force.

The colonel said he plans to visit the 1626 at its new home at the Museum of Aviation when it is ready for display.

Bob Dubiel, spokesman for the museum, told Webb that the addition of this powerful and technologically advanced helicopter now brings the total of aircraft at the museum to more than 90. The museum, which celebrates its 25th anniversary next year, draws about one-half million visitors every year, Dubiel said.

The helicopter eventually will be towed down Ga. 247 from the base to its place of honor at the museum, he said.

Meanwhile, Webb and his crew will fly back on another MH-53J/M Pave Low IV, Tail No. 1629, which means it was three down on the Sikorsky Aircraft Corp. manufacturing assembly line from the 1626.

The Air Force is retiring these helicopters in October, with the last mission being in Iraq. The pilots of this particular aircraft are now either in combat or returning from combat, Webb said.

To contact writer Becky Purser, call 923-3109, extension 243.



http://www.wmgt.com//index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1981&Itemid=103

Veteran Helicopter Takes Final Flight

Written by Aundrea Cline-Thomas

MONDAY, 11 AUGUST 2008

The Robins Air Force Base is celebrating the last flight of the "Pave Low" aircraft.

It's being called one of the most technologically advanced helicopters. The aircraft with the 1626 tail number, has served in combat missions from the Vietnam War to Iraq.

It's currently assigned to the 20th Special Operations Squadron based in Florida, but has been maintained at Robins Air Force Base.

"The cost to maintain the helicopter has gotten to the point where it requires a but of maintenance because stuff is worn out," explains Corlonel Marshall Webb, Commander of the 1st Special Operations Wing.

The thirty-seven year old aircraft will retire to a hangar at the Museum of Aviation.



<http://www.fox24.com/article.asp?pkid=13261> *follow link to watch video

New Helicopter Addition to Museum of Aviation

By: Matt Jolley
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New Helicopter Addition to Museum of Aviation

It's one of the largest most powerful and technologically advanced helicopters in the Air Force and it's now the latest edition at the Museum of Aviation.

The Sikorsky MH-53 pave low, which flew in the Vietnam War and most recently Operation Iraqi Freedom, was flown in from Hulbert field in Florida. Soon the big 53 will be on display in a hangar at the museum.

Col. Brad Webb / USAF:

"A lot of great history in this airframe. And certainly the attachment to Warner Robins...the folks who have worked on this bird for years. We think it's very fitting that it's going to end up in the museum here in Warner Robins".

The Museum of Aviation is open 7 days a week and admission is free.



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