

October 31, 2008

Retired chopper lands at Maxwell

A new static display will be set at Maxwell Air Force Base soon.

An MH-53 Pave Low helicopter is sitting on a runway ramp until a final parking spot is chosen -- either the Air Park or the Officer Training School complex.

The aircraft was delivered over the weekend, as the entire MH-53 fleet is being retired and their being sent to various bases for historical use. The chopper delivered to Maxwell came from the 20th Special Operations Squadron.

During Vietnam, the aircraft was involved in the assault on Koh Tang Island in May 1975 that followed the seizure of the U.S.S. Mayaguez and its crew by Cambodian Khmer Rouge forces. It was also the last helicopter to leave Cambodia as it carried out the final load of Marine guards from the American embassy in Phnom Phen during Operation Eagle Pull. Its final mission was in Iraq, according to the Maxwell Dispatch.

The Historic Air Park was established in the early 1980s by then Air University commander, retired Lt. Gen. Charles Cleveland, a Montgomery resident.

--Jenn Rowell
