



71st Special Operations Squadron  
Reactivation and Assumption  
of Command Ceremony  
Lieutenant Colonel James L. Cardoso

May 20, 2005  
58th Special Operations Wing  
Hangar 2002  
Kirtland Air Force Base, New Mexico



# *Sequence of Events*

Welcome

Arrival of Official Party

National Anthem and Invocation

Remarks by Colonel Paul R. Harmon

Unfurling of  
71st Special Operations Squadron Flag

Assumption of Command Ceremony

First Salute

Remarks by Lt Colonel James L. Cardoso

The Air Force Song

Departure of the Official Party

Dismissal of Troops

*Reception immediately following ceremony  
in honor of Lt Colonel & Mrs. Cardoso*



## *Colonel Paul R. Harmon*

Colonel Harmon graduated from St Francis College, Brooklyn, New York in 1975 with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Managerial Science. He entered Officer Training School in 1980 and graduated from Undergraduate Helicopter Training at Fort Rucker, Alabama in January 1981. He then qualified in the HH-3E at Kirtland Air Force Base.

Colonel Harmon served as HH-3E pilot in the 71st Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron in Elemendorf Air Force Base and the 38th Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron at Osan Air Base, Republic of Korea and then was assigned as evaluator pilot and Assistant Chief of Standardization and Evaluation for the 1551st Flying Training Squadron, 1550th Combat Crew Training Wing, the Air Force's formal training unit from 1984 to 1988 when he transitioned to the HH-53C helicopter.

In 1988 he was assigned to the 20th Special Operations Squadron, Hurlburt Field, Florida. While there, he qualified in the MH-53J PAVE LOW and was Chief of Standardization and Evaluation. As a combat pilot and mission commander, he was involved in more than 50 joint exercises and contingency operations including Operations DESERT SHIELD and DESERT STORM. In 1992, Colonel Harmon moved to Headquarters Air Forces Special Operations Command as the MH-53J Program Manager in the Plans, Programming and Budgeting Directorate. He was responsible for the \$800 million service life extension program and development of the MH-53M program bringing near real-time intelligence capabilities into the newly designated cockpit.

Returning to fly in 1995, Colonel Harmon was assigned as Assistant and later Director of Operations, 551st Special Operations Squadron, 58th Special Operations Wing at Kirtland Air Force Base, New Mexico where he directed the MH-53J qualification and training program. In 1997, he was reassigned to the 21st Special Operations Squadron as Director of Operations and took command in 1998. During his tenure as commander, the squadron participated in combat operations in Bosnia and Kosovo and supported humanitarian relief operations in Albania and Mozambique.

Following Air War College in 2001, Colonel Harmon returned to Headquarters Air Force Special Operations Command to establish a new Air Integration Division tasked to develop and coordinate special operations requirements for air operations centers with Air Combat Command. This deployable unit coordinated and synchronized special operations air and surface activities with the air component commander's campaign plan in Combined Air and Space Operations Centers worldwide. The successful standup of the Air Integration Division and deployable Special Operations Liaison concept was a key factor in special operations success during early operations in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Colonel Harmon is a graduate of Air War College, US Army Command and General Staff College and Squadron Officer School. He holds a Master's Degree in Management from Webster University and a Master's Degree in Strategic Studies from Air War College. His military decorations include: Bronze Star with one oak leaf cluster, Meritorious Service Medal with four oak leaf clusters, Air Medal with two oak leaf clusters, Aerial Achievement Medal with one oak leaf cluster, Joint Service Commendation Medal and Air Force Commendation Medal with two oak leaf clusters. Colonel Harmon is a command pilot with over 4,500 hours in the TH-55, UH-1H/N, C/HH-3E, MH-53J/M, HH-60G, MC-130 H/P and HC-130P.

Colonel Harmon is married to the former Edna Brownwell of Sunbury, Pennsylvania.



## *Lt Colonel James L. Cardoso*

Lieutenant Colonel Cardoso was born 18 December 1965 and is a native of Cherry Hill, NJ. He was commissioned a second lieutenant as a 1988 graduate of the USAF Academy, with a Bachelor of Science degree in Civil Engineering.

Lieutenant Colonel Cardoso completed Undergraduate Pilot Training at Vance AFB, OK in August 1989, and was selected to remain at the 25<sup>th</sup> Flying Training Squadron as a T-38 instructor pilot. He was promoted to Captain in June 1992, and completed Squadron Officer School in residence in October 1992. In August 1994, after being selected to transition to the MH-53J Pave Low, he completed Rotary Wing Qualification at Ft Rucker, AL in November 1994, and MH-53J Pilot Mission Qualification at Kirtland AFB, NM in November 1995.

In January 1996, Lieutenant Colonel Cardoso was assigned to the 31st Special Operations Squadron, Osan AB, Korea. While there, he held positions as Chief of Training and Executive Officer. In January 1997, he moved to the 20th Special Operations Squadron, Hurlburt Field, FL. While there he held the positions of Plans officer, Chief of Training, Flight Commander, and Chief of Standardization/Evaluation. He upgraded to Instructor Pilot in February 1998 and to Evaluator Pilot in January 1999, and in October 1998 he attended the Marine Aviation Weapons and Tactics Instructor Course at MCAS Yuma, AZ. In March 1999 he organized and deployed his flight in support of Operation ALLIED FORCE, and on 27 March 1999 led the rescue of an F-117 pilot shot down over Serbia for which he was awarded the Silver Star and the Colonel James Jabara Award. He was promoted to Major in October 1999, and was appointed Chief, Rotary Wing Division, at Headquarters AFSOC Standardization/Evaluation, in March 2000.

In June 2000, Lieutenant Colonel Cardoso was assigned to the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center, Presidio of Monterey, CA, as a Spanish student, graduating in December 2000. From January to December 2001, he attended the Command and General Staff Officer's Course at the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation at Fort Benning, GA.

After Fort Benning, Lieutenant Colonel Cardoso was selected as the Aide-de-Camp to the Commander, U.S. Special Operations Command, from January 2002 until December 2003, during which time he was promoted to his present rank. From December 2003 until December 2004 he served as Operations Officer for the 551st Special Operations Squadron at Kirtland AFB, NM.

Lieutenant Colonel Cardoso has a Masters degree from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, and is a command pilot with over 3,300 hours in the MV-22, MH-53M, MH-53J, T-38, T-37, and UH-1. His decorations include the Silver Star, Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Meritorious Service Medal, Air Force Commendation Medal, Air Force Achievement Medal, and the New Jersey Distinguished Service Medal.

Lieutenant Colonel Cardoso is married to the former Lori McClain of Port St Joe, FL. They have three children, McClain, Alexis, and Dusty.

# A History of the 71st Operations Squadron, 1943-2005

The 71st Special Operations Squadron has a rich history dating back to World War II, and has distinguished itself in combat and peacetime operating several different aircraft on a variety of missions. Originally activated as a troop carrier squadron on 9 February 1943 at Alliance Army Air Field, Nebraska, flying the C-47 transport, the squadron moved to England in October 1943 and entered an intensive seven-month training period with the 101st Airborne Division in preparation for the liberation of Europe. The 71st towed gliders carrying troops of the 101st to Normandy on 6 June 1944 and flew follow-up missions later in the day. On 7 June the squadron provided much-needed reinforcements and supplies to the beleaguered airborne forces. For its perseverance and bravery in these missions the squadron received a Distinguished Unit Cross and the French Croix de Guerre with Palm.



71st Emblem 1943-1968



C-47 taking off towing a Waco Glider

The 71st supported the break-out at St. Lo in July 1944 and provided supplies to the Third Army during its drive across France. The squadron next dropped airborne troops into the assault area and towed gliders with reinforcements during Operation Market-Garden in Holland, September 1944. It also resupplied troops at Bastogne in December 1944 during the Battle of the Bulge. After a move to airfields in France in February 1945 the 71st participated in the airborne assault across the Rhine dropping paratroops on the east bank on 24 March 1945. Finally, after evacuating allied prisoners of war from Germany to relocation centers in France and Holland, the 71st returned to the United States in the summer of 1945 and trained with C-46 transport aircraft before inactivation on 31 July 1946.



C-46 "Commando"



A C-119 of the 434th Troop Carrier Wing

Yet the 71st would not long remain out of the action. Activated as a reserve squadron on 15 March 1947 at Stout Field, Indiana and redesignated as a troop carrier squadron (medium) at Atterbury AFB, Indiana on 1 July 1949, the 71st was once again on active service from 1 May 1951 to 1 February 1953 flying C-46s from bases in Indiana and Georgia during the Korean War. The squadron joined the active force once again for the Cuban Missile Crisis on 28 October 1962 but resumed its reserve status a month later. It continued to serve in the reserves as part of the 434th Troop Carrier Wing at Bakalar AFB, Indiana, flying the C-119 transport from 1962 and redesignated a tactical airlift squadron on 1 July 1967. A new challenge, however, lay ahead for the 71st.

In 1967 the 7th Air Force in Vietnam requested extra gunships for base defense. Air Force headquarters selected the C-119G for gunship conversion as the Gunship III project. (Gunship I produced the AC-47 and Gunship II the AC-130.) To expedite the deployment of AC-119s into the Southeast Asian theater, the Air Force took aircraft and personnel from the Air Force Reserve, specifically the 71st. Placed on active duty on 13 May 1968, the squadron was redesignated the 71st Air Commando Squadron and relocated to Lockbourne AFB, Ohio on 15 June 1968. The 71st once again began the process of accepting and maintaining a new aircraft, and training for a new mission.



71st Emblem 1968



71st Emblem 1968-1973

While redesignated yet again as the 71st Special Operations Squadron (SOS) on 8 July 1968, the Gunship III program faced many problems that delayed the 71st's deployment. Finally, on 11 October 1968 the Air Force accepted the AC-119 and ordered the 71 SOS to South Vietnam on 27 November 1968. The first aircraft of the squadron arrived at Nha Trang on 27 December 1968, all arrived in theater by 1 March 1969, and 7th Air Force declared the 71st combat ready on 11 March, even though the squadron flew its first combat mission on 5 January 1969. Operating from Phan Rang and Tan Son Nhut, along with Nha Trang, the 71st defended friendly ground troops in danger of being overrun, searched for troop concentrations, and interdicted supply routes, flying over 6,000 combat hours without ever suffering a fatality or losing an aircraft. Awarded a Presidential Unit Citation for their actions, the squadron's crews turned their gunships over to an active duty squadron, departed South Vietnam on 5 June 1969, and left active service on 18 June. The squadron carried out reserve training at Grissom AFB, Indiana until its deactivation on 1 October 1973.



AC-119 (Darby Perrin, "Rolling In.")

Fourteen years to the day of its deactivation, the squadron returned to the Air Force Reserve, this time at Davis-Monthan AFB, Arizona, on 1 October 1987 for search and rescue. While initially flying CH-3E helicopters, the first was tail number 63-9676, the famed "Black Maria" now on display at the National Museum of the Air Force, the squadron soon transitioned to MH-3Es. Despite carrying out its fourth mission with its fourth aircraft in just over 40 years, the 71st continued its tradition of service by scoring the Air Force Rescue Coordination Centers' 10,000th save on 24 July 1990 when it plucked four people from floodwaters near Tucson, AZ. Besides service to the community the 71st also served the nation when it was called to active duty for Operation Desert Shield and Desert Storm on 20 December 1990.



"Black Maria"



MH-3E

The 71st Special Operations Squadron departed the United States on 10 January 1991 for King Fahd International Airport and had its first helicopter ready for service four days later. Besides search and rescue alert, the squadron performed its first tasked mission, a reconnaissance of a burning offshore oil platform, on the night 25 January. The 71st attempted its first rescue on 2 February and took part in a special operations mission on 6 February. On 16 February the squadron accomplished a daylight special operations mission and performed a medical evacuation on 24 February. In all, along with search and rescue alerts and environmental damage assessments, the 71 SOS carried out eight missions in support of special operation forces. The squadron began its redeployment on 16 March 1991 and arrived in the United States on the following day.



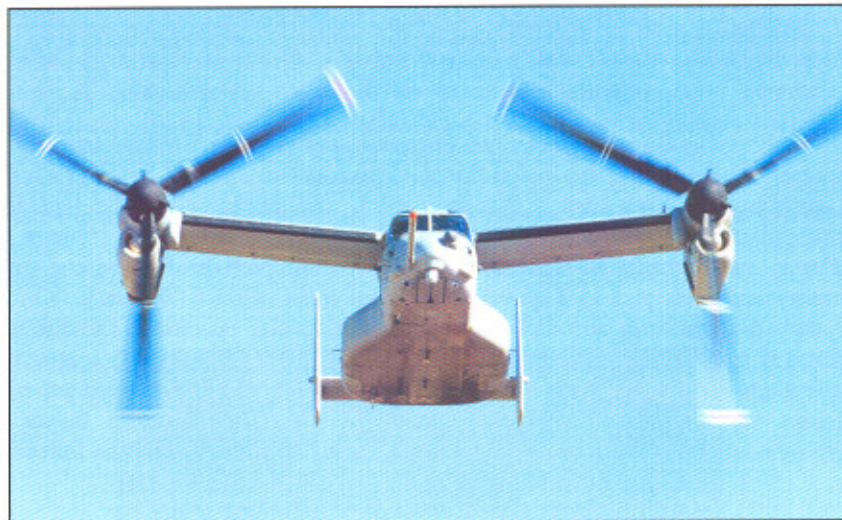
71st Emblem 1987-1994



MH-60G

The citizen-airmen of the 71st took-up their civilian lives on 21 April 1991 when the Air Force released the squadron from active duty. Beginning in August 1992 the squadron, still in the reserves, received the fifth aircraft in its history, the MH-60G helicopter. The 71st continued to support the active force, deploying to Turkey for Operation Provide Comfort II from August 1993 to February 1994. Finally, with the reorganization of the Air Force in the early 1990s

and the transfer of the search and rescue mission to the Air Combat Command, the 71st Special Operations Squadron left the roll of Air Force squadrons for the third time on 1 March 1994. Yet, as before, the absence of the 71st proved to be temporary. In May 2005 the 71st Special Operations Squadron will be activated to serve as the CV-22 training unit for the Air Force, the squadron's fifth mission and sixth aircraft in its 62-year history. The 71st is, in other words, right where it has always been.



CV-22



71st Emblem 2005