



A HELICOPTER WAS RECENTLY RESTORED to its original military colors by several veterans and their families. The helicopter will be put on display at the Salmon Creek American Legion Post 176.

## Vets return helicopter to former splendor

About forty veterans and their families gathered at the Battle Ground home of Bruce Barker to help return a "Huey" helicopter back to its original military colors.

After working Oct. 9 and 10, the red and white paint that had covered the helicopter was gone and replaced with a new coat of military green.

The helicopter will be part of the *Veteran's Day* parade, which is slated for Nov. 6 in Vancouver. After that, it will be placed on static display at the Salmon Creek American Legion Post 176. The helicopter will be mounted on 12 foot high cement pedestals and will look as if it is flying, Barker

said.

Restoration of the helicopter was spearheaded by Battle Ground resident Gary Klein. Klein served as a crew chief and gunner on one of the helicopters in Vietnam.

Restoring the helicopter, Klein said, brought back memories for several of those helping with the task.

"As it transformed from red and white to military green, it brought back memories of when the guys were in the service—some of the happy, some of them sad," he said.

The helicopter was originally purchased by the city of Vancouver as surplus. The city gave it to the Vietnam Vete-

rans of America, who in turn donated it to the American Legion as a memorial for veterans.

This particular "Huey" was used by the United States Marines, the Navy and the Army. It was used for three years in Vietnam and was wounded over a dozen times before being returned to the United States and used to train pilots at Fort Rucker, AL.

The helicopter ended its military career with the Wyoming and Kentucky National Guards. Most recently, it had been used by the Washington State Department of Natural Resources.