

SISTERHOOD

I am an Army Wife - a member of that sisterhood of woman who have had the courage to watch their men march into battle and the strength to survive until their return. Our sorority knows no rank for we earn our membership with a marriage license, traveling over miles or over nations to begin a new life with our soldier husbands.

Within days we turn a barren echoing building into a home, and though our quarters are inevitably white walled and un-papered, we decorate with the treasures of our travels for we shop the markets of the globe.

Using hammer and nail, we tack our pictures to the wall and our roots to the floor as firmly as if we had lived there a lifetime. We hold our family together by the bootstraps and raise the best of "brats," instilling into them the motto, "Home is togetherness," whether motel, or guesthouse, apartment or duplex.

As Army wives, we soon realize that the only good in "good-bye" is the "hello again." For as salesmen for freedom, our husbands are often on the road, leaving us behind for a week, a month, an assignment. During the separation we guard the home front existing till the homecoming.

Unlike our civilian counterparts, we measure time, not by age, but by tours ~ married at Knox, a baby born at Bliss, a promotion in Missouri. We plant trees and never see them grow tall, work on projects completed long after our departure, and enhance our community for the betterment of those who come after us. We leave a part of ourselves at every stop.

Through experience we have learned to pack a suitcase, a car, or hold baggage and live indefinitely from the contents within; and though our fingers are sore from the patches we have sewn and the silver we have shined, our hearts are always ready to help those around us.

Women of peace, we pray for a world in harmony, for the flag that leads our men into battle will also blanket them in death. Yet we are an optimistic group, thinking of the good and forgetting the bad, cherishing yesterday while anticipating tomorrow.

Never rich by monetary standards, our hearts are overflowing with a wealth of experiences common only to those united by the special tradition of military life. We pass on this legacy to every Army bride, welcoming her with outstretched arms, with love and friendship, from one sister to another sharing in the beauty of our unique, fulfilling Army way of life.

