

I am a Military Brat

I am an Army Brat. My hometown is nowhere, my friends are everywhere, and if I haven't been someplace yesterday, I am sure to go there tomorrow. I grew up with bugle calls and artillery salutes and the knowledge that home is where the heart is and the family--with no dependence on the dwelling.

Mobility is my way of life. I have found security and happiness in motels and guest houses, in duplexes and apartments around the world. Some would wonder about my roots, yet they are as deep and strong as the mighty oak's. I sink them quickly, absorbing all an area offers and hopefully giving enrichment in return.

Like all Army dependents, I can say "Hello," "Good-bye," and count to 20 in five languages. I can tell of the shores of Maine, the marketplaces of Mexico, the Buddhas of Japan; and my knickknack shelves look like those of an import shop, for my memories span the globe.

Travel has taught me to be open. By age nine I had seen more of the world than most people do in a lifetime; I had touched many and allowed their cultures to touch me. Shaking hands with the universe, I found a brotherhood in all men.

Just as there is joy in meeting, so is there pain in parting; and although practice makes perfect, there is no way to perfect "Good-bye." Farewells are never easy. Yet, even in sorrow comes strength and an ability to face tomorrow with anticipation. And if when I leave one place I feel that half my world has been left behind, I also know that the other half is still waiting to be met.

As an Army Brat, I go out to others extending hand and heart. Friendships are formed in hours and kept for decades. I will never grow up with someone, but I will mature with many, and the help that I offer today will be returned farther down the road. Be it inevitable that paths part, there is constant hope that they will meet again.

I feel fortunate to live in a society of tradition drawing from the past to enhance the present - where silver baby cups announce life, horse-drawn caissons pronounce death and the living in between is dedicated to the service of God, man and our nation.

Love of country, respect and pride fill my being when Old Glory passes in review. As I stand to honor that flag, so also do I stand to honor all soldiers, most especially to the man whose life created mine -- my father. Because of him I have shared in the rich heritage of Army life.

Now, as Army wife and mother, I have passed on that legacy to my children. I wish for them a wealth of experiences and knowledge and love, so that their lives will be blessed as mine, and I pray that one day they will join me in boasting, "I am an Army Brat!"