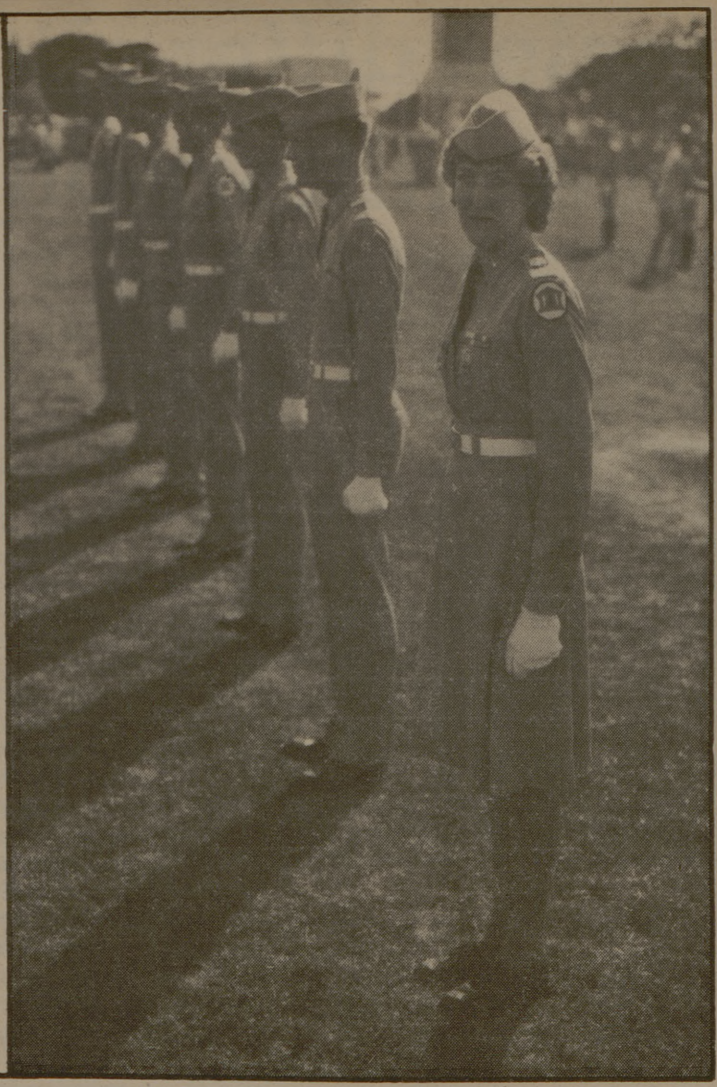


"It hurt  
not being  
accepted but  
you have  
to overcome  
that and sell  
yourself."

— Mandy Schubert



From last page

joined for that reason, with an Air Force scholarship to A&M supporting her. Hedgecock said she knew nothing about the Corps until she arrived and some things were kind of a shock.

"I didn't know anything about it," she says. "I never knew anyone who was in the Corps or what it was like. But I said I'd never quit anything before and I'm not going to quit this."

Among the shocks were the uniform and dress regulations. Aside from the uniform itself, cadet's hair must be worn short or put up and the only jewelry they are allowed are ear studs, small rings and necklaces which don't show. Make-up must be worn conservatively and tastefully and even the use of nail polish varies between the units.

Hedgecock jokes that one benefit of the uniform is never having to worry about what to wear to class. Another benefit is the pride she says she feels when she wears it.

"At first I thought it was ugly but now I'm proud to wear it," she says.

Schubert says from 70-80 women wear the uniform this fall, many of whom are joining to acquire leadership skills, with no thought to joining the service after graduation. The women joining now are a little different from the original women members too, she says.

"Maybe in the past, the type of girls it took to withstand all that harassment was a little different," she says. "They had to be really tough girls to put up with it. Now we get more well-rounded girls — cheerleaders, dance team and student leaders."

One woman member of the Corps was a little more well-rounded than others last spring. Laurie Hazen was not only a member of the Corps and former guidon bearer for her outfit, but she was also the mother of a 3-year-old daughter with a son on the way.

Hazen joined the Corps as a freshman day student after she moved to College Station with her husband and baby. Although she had her second child last May, she stayed in the Corps the entire year before the birth. It is a sign how much things have changed that even being a mother and/or pregnant in the Corps has caused few problems.

"I stayed in uniform as long as I could, until about October, because they don't make maternity uniforms," she says.

While pregnant, she continued to participate in all Corps events including cuts for bonfire and drills.

"I think they were very protective of me when I was pregnant to the point where I'd pick up a box and they'd run to help," she says. "But when it came to performing

my duties, or any of my official functions, they weren't at all, it made no difference."

Hazen says the Corps is helping her reach her goal of being a commissioned officer in the National Guard. She says the organization is overlooked by a lot of women it could help because women are afraid of the image they might get if they join.

"I think a lot of girls are worried about that macho image," she says. "If that's something you're concerned about, you probably won't join the corps but you probably won't do a lot of things in your life either."

Hazen says that in the Corps, women are treated according to the way they act. As one of only two women in her outfit, Hazen says she's had to know when to be one of the guys and when not to. Women have to adjust themselves to a little rougher language and a few off-color jokes and not be offended or, if they are, learning not to show it.

Hazen is also one of the only women ever to play in the men's intramurals football league with her outfit.

"I got knocked down and bruised a little playing football with the guys," she says. "But if we go to the MSC or somewhere, they also open doors for me and pull out chairs for me. I like being a woman and I like being treated like a lady." □

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