

## **CAMDEN MILITARY ACADEMY IS A COMMUNITY**

*In its rural setting, CMA is an integral part of the wider community of Camden and beyond.*

Day-to-day routine of a CMA cadet may seem hectic and confusing to the outsider who is unfamiliar with life at a military school. It is a life of bugle calls, formations, inspections, orderlies and, of course, classes. Cadets learn that there is a time and a place for everything — to march, to study, to listen, to talk, and to have fun.

The where and when of community organization is obvious: cadets are assigned to companies, groups which function together for housing, for dining, for marching, and for unit competition. A student officer-of-the-day insures events happen on time, attendance is checked, etc. The dining hall staff serves meals and the infirmary assures good health. Companies maintain their barracks and assigned areas, guaranteeing a litter-free campus.

Beyond the CMA facility itself, lies the historic town of Camden which provides fast-food delicacies, rollerskating, bowling, movies, shopping, girls, and the myriad offerings of small-town America. Deeper contact with the community lies in cadet participation in the annual Camden Christmas parade, in Veterans Day observances, in little theater productions, etc. For both Carolina Cup and Colonial Cup steeplechases, cadets post race results and take part in trophy presentations. Cadet George Ferguson has signalled posttime on his bugle for six years, a clarion call heard not only in Camden but also broadcast as far as Europe.

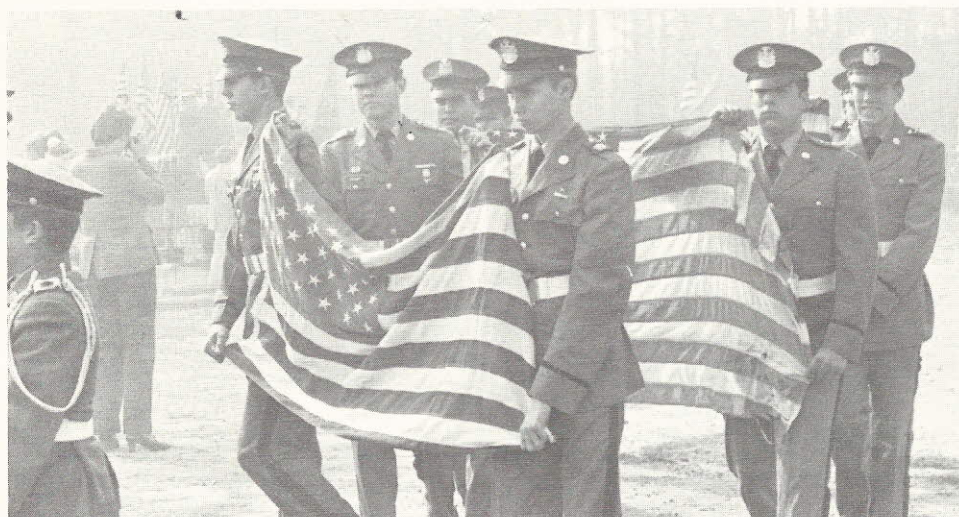
Different notes of the bugle declare a time each Sunday for school buses and vans to effect a campus exodus, transporting cadets to church. Many Camden congregations have highly organized church "parent" arrangements. Close, meaningful, and lasting relationships frequently result, and youth group activity ranges from Hallowe'en parties to weekend ski trips to North Carolina resorts.

Later on Sunday, a single bugle call transforms the chaos of more than 200 rifle-toting, uniformed youths into the order of an entire battalion on parade. Members of the larger community watch almost awestruck as individual cadets march as one, the entire corps in formation. Even the occasional taunting redneck, racing his hotrod past the parade field on adjacent US Route 1, is expressing a misbegotten form of respect, paradoxical though it may be, for well-groomed, smartly turned-out, disciplined individuals who are unified in the cooperative effort of an ages old Dress Parade.

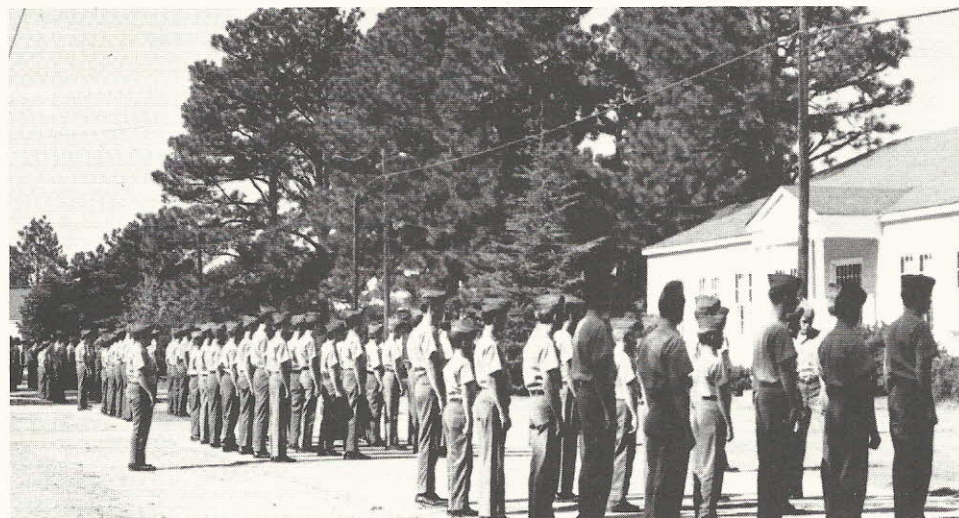
Beyond military formality at CMA, people live together, relaxed in a near self-sufficient community. The closely knit campus is also the field where seeds of friendship are planted, nurtured and cared for, ripen and flourish. So much so that cadets return years after graduation to witness a parade, to talk to a "new boy," and to remember the good times that were had here. The people, the place, the services combine to provide a place apart, but very much a part of Camden and beyond.



Lenny Arrington, honored at his Seventeenth birthday party.



Cadets Taylor, Stewart, Cain, K.L. Scott, Cifuentes, and Hyder present old flags to be destroyed at 1981 Veterans Day ceremonies in Camden.



Battalion formation before supper.