

Welcome Home Contest Winner - IN THE HEIGHTS comes to UNCP

I was born in Clarksville, Tennessee yet I call home a country on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean. My dad proudly served 24 years in the Army and was stationed approximately 15 years in Germany! He met my mom in Germany, married and had two sons (in Wuerzburg) before being stationed back in USA where they gave birth to my sister and me before returning to Germany. We moved every 2 to 3 years, yet we were very fortunate to remain in the beautiful European country which I remember being composed of clean sidewalks, fresh smelling bakeries and butchers, and a place where pedestrians had the right of way. The mornings began with opening windows, allowing the crisp cool air to enter and refresh the softest feather blankets and pillows imaginable. People left their windows open and walked cobblestone streets with baskets to purchase fresh brotchen (from the bakeries) and brats (from the butchers) for the day. Dogs accompanied their owners on leashes as they rode their bikes (or some walked) to various stores and waited quietly and patiently outside for their owners to return with their shopping in hand. Walking home you would witness the owners of stores sweeping the already cleaned sidewalks in front of their stores greeting you with a "Gruess-Gott" or a nod of the head while saying, "Guten Morgen!" Looking up, you would see geraniums of different colors overhanging on balconies, while little figurines, orchids and violets graced the windowsills of the lower windows. Curtains existed in windows, yet not to block the sun from entering. They were transparent and like a skirt on smudge free glass window. Pride was apparent in every lot of land, where even the smallest of property had dirt freshly turned over, grass watered and flowers at the prime of their season. Beautiful, welcoming, courteous and respectful, the thought that a place still exists is truly interesting, and I am genuinely grateful to know that not only have I lived there, but those several towns in Germany are where I call home!

Melissa Rich Edwards