The American Soldier requires and deserves a uniform he can wear with pride. We must offer a uniform that is military, distinctive and dignified," GEN Matthew B. Ridgway said in 1955. With many Soldiers deployed to Southwest Asia — and wearing desert tan uniforms, because they provide the best camouflage for the environment — one might wonder why the Army's traditional Class A, or "Army Green," uniform has survived for 50 years.

New Uniform

When World War II ended in 1945, there was no Army green. America's eight million Soldiers returned home in olive-drab, or OD, uniforms. Wartime dress soon became peacetime work clothing and, because of that, there was no uniform that expressly represented the Army.

Postwar Soldiers wanted — and recruiters needed — a new uniform. The waist-length OD wool jacket became an interim solution when the 1946 Doolittle Board made officer and enlisted uniforms similar to those of the Air Force's new uniforms. Scientists and fashion experts alike recommended a color for rifle units back to Revolutionary green, and green was adopted style, similar in cut to the officer's semi-fitted coat.

A decade would pass before the Army green uniform made its debut. It was made in 1955, issued in 1979 and worn until the wearer's promotion in 1980. — Courtesy SPC Alan T. Bogin (Ret.)

A timeless design would ensure that Army green became a tradition. To better represent the modern postwar Army, a bold new semi-fitted coat became the adopted style, similar in cut to the officer's tropical worsted semi-dress uniform, first introduced in 1942.

The breast and skirt pockets of the old service coat remained, but the defined waist and flared skirts of the belted officer's blouse were gone. Combat veterans reclaim their green. Vietnam veterans exchange khaki uniforms for Army green uniforms in December 1967.

A Green Army-44 wool serge coat showing its service. It was made in 1965, issued in 1979 and worn until the wearer's promotion in 1980. — Courtesy SPC Alan T. Bogin (Ret.)

Army green is one of the longest-surviving uniforms in Army history. The winter AG-44 wool serge became all-season AG-344 poly-woven tropical in 1964 and AG-489 poly-woven serges by 1990, with the tan-46 cotton shirt now the AG-415 poly-cotton with shoulder marks.

The men's service cap left by 1978, along with the 1962 women's service hat and the 1972 black beret. Even when the new black beret replaced the old garrison cap, the uniform remained Army green.

Army green is a tradition for generations of Soldiers. For 51 years, it's been the uniform image of the U.S. Army.

Even "The King" wore Army green. SGT Elvis A. Presley was discharged from the Army at Fort Dix, N.J., on March 5, 1960.

Women's Uniform

Women in the Army weren't initially issued Army green. The Uniform Board of 1949 had provided different uniforms for women, recommending a more fashionable ensemble that would attract new female recruits.

In 1951 Hattie Carnegie designed new winter Taupe-121 wool serge uniforms in the up-to-date style of calf-length skirts, accented waists and brimmed hats. But in 1959 female Soldiers also began wearing Army green.

Women in the Army weren't initially issued Army green. The Uniform Board of 1949 had provided different uniforms for women, recommending a more fashionable ensemble that would attract new female recruits.

In 1951 Hattie Carnegie designed new winter Taupe-121 wool serge uniforms in the up-to-date style of calf-length skirts, accented waists and brimmed hats. But in 1959 female Soldiers also began wearing Army green.

A Female Soldiers began wearing the Army green uniform in 1959.

Women's Uniform

Women in the Army weren't initially issued Army green. The Uniform Board of 1949 had provided different uniforms for women, recommending a more fashionable ensemble that would attract new female recruits.

In 1951 Hattie Carnegie designed new winter Taupe-121 wool serge uniforms in the up-to-date style of calf-length skirts, accented waists and brimmed hats. But in 1959 female Soldiers also began wearing Army green.

Women's Uniform

Women in the Army weren't initially issued Army green. The Uniform Board of 1949 had provided different uniforms for women, recommending a more fashionable ensemble that would attract new female recruits.

In 1951 Hattie Carnegie designed new winter Taupe-121 wool serge uniforms in the up-to-date style of calf-length skirts, accented waists and brimmed hats. But in 1959 female Soldiers also began wearing Army green.

Women's Uniform

Women in the Army weren't initially issued Army green. The Uniform Board of 1949 had provided different uniforms for women, recommending a more fashionable ensemble that would attract new female recruits.

In 1951 Hattie Carnegie designed new winter Taupe-121 wool serge uniforms in the up-to-date style of calf-length skirts, accented waists and brimmed hats. But in 1959 female Soldiers also began wearing Army green.

Women's Uniform

Women in the Army weren't initially issued Army green. The Uniform Board of 1949 had provided different uniforms for women, recommending a more fashionable ensemble that would attract new female recruits.

In 1951 Hattie Carnegie designed new winter Taupe-121 wool serge uniforms in the up-to-date style of calf-length skirts, accented waists and brimmed hats. But in 1959 female Soldiers also began wearing Army green.