

Laura Frommer  
Oral History

This is an interview about living on the NIH campus in the Public Health Service officer housing neighborhood known as "The Station." Laura Greenwald Frommer lived there with her family from the early 1980s into the 2000s.

Nagy: Hello. I am Kate Nagy and I'm with the NIH Office of History and Stetten Museum. I am here to conduct an oral history with Laura Greenwald Frommer. It is October 12, 2023. I'm going to ask you some questions specifically about your life on the Public Health Service Quarters here on the NIH campus. You said earlier that you moved here in 1981.

Frommer: In 1981 my dad (Peter Greenwald, M.D., Dr.PH) became the Director of Cancer Prevention and Control at the National Cancer Institute. We moved from Albany, New York, and we moved right on campus. I have to say that I was 10 years old, and the first thing I saw was a playground, right in the center of it all. It was almost like an oval, and there were all the duplexes around, and I was most excited to see that playground. It was very colorful; it was yellow, blue and red. I think later they had to take it down for lead paint.

The houses, you might know more, but I think they were built in the 1930s. They were red brick. I don't know the style – was it federal style, colonial...I'm not sure. But they were all duplexes, so we all had neighbors. And then up on the hill was Mrs. [Ruth] Wilson's house. I understand that her family gave the land for NIH. I was really lucky. Dr. Stetten (DeWitt Stetten Jr., M.D., Ph.D.) lived next door, and later Dr. Koop (U.S. Surgeon General C. Everett Koop, M.D.) and there was the Wilson family up on the hill, Dr. Brandt (Edward Newman Brandt, M.D., U.S. Assistant Secretary for Health) up on the other Hill. So there were lots of interesting families that were living there.

Nagy: Which house specifically were you living in?

Frommer: You'll have to confirm with my dad, but I thought it was 15A32. My mom wrote a history. Do you have that? I mean, I know exactly where it is. If I look at it, it was on West Cedar Lane. And I think Dr. [Mortimer] Lipsett was our neighbor when we first moved in. They were duplexes, so they were two houses in one. But mine was on West Cedar Lane. It was 5206 West Cedar Lane.

Nagy: Did you interact a lot with the Wilsons or with the Stettens?

Frommer: I did. We did. We were lucky. We went to dinner at the Wilsons' a few times. I know my mom was really friendly with Mrs. Wilson. They called the house a little bungalow, and it was up on the hill. And unfortunately, it was torn down when they expanded the Clinical Center. And I met Dr. Stetten and then his wife, Mrs. [Jane] Stetten, a few times. They were pretty elderly then. I know he was blind. I met Mrs. [Mary] Pratt, who was across the way, and I used to volunteer to read things for her. She was in a wheelchair. I think [that] was Mrs. Pratt.

And then there was the [Drs. Herb and Celia] Tabor family, and then the Kirschsteins. Ruth Kirschstein was up on a hill too. Then it was the von Eschenbachs. I met Madeline von Eschenbach later. I know my mom was friendly with all of these families.

I remember Dr. Koop coming over and me being really excited because he was the Surgeon General. He came over to dinner and it was just really exciting to meet him. He was very charismatic. And it was fun, you know, to meet with all the scientists.

I had an internship in the summer up at the Clinical Center helping with the Alzheimer's research. This was in the 1980s. And then I also worked in the preschool program for people who worked at NIH. I was in high school, and I worked with the nursery school in the summer. It was fun. We made puppets with the kids, and now I'm like "These kids are in their 30s now!" I took art classes on the campus, too. They had some art classes when I was in high school – painting. I took that class with my dad. And then I took a judo class – there was the NIH judo club. I think it was at the Stone Ridge School, the girls' school, but it was the NIH judo club. So there definitely were activities.

Where the Children's [Inn] is, there used to be just a forest there. And of course, no gates. Everything really changed after 9/11, [and campus] felt more like a fortress. But when I moved in, it was just in the 1980s, and Bethesda wasn't really built up in the same way that it is now. I went to elementary school, Ayrilawn Elementary School, which was really just up the street. It closed a year later, after we went there. It was such a small little school, but I loved it. They had a cafeteria, which was something big. In Albany, we didn't have a cafeteria, but this had a cafeteria with hot food. And our bus stop was right on the corner of the Clinical Center to go to school. It was exciting for me.

It was very pleasant. I used to walk around NIH campus, go on bike rides. There was a little creek by Building 10, and I would try to find frogs. I don't think I ever found any frogs. And then there was a little hill near our house and in the wintertime, kids would come sledding there, and that was right in front of Dr. Brandt's house. There was also the Fogarty Center. One year we went somewhere, we traveled, and we put our goldfish in the pond there and then they grew really big.

Another big change was having the subway stop put in, the Medical Center stop. That was put in while I lived there, too. And then I was able to just walk to the subway and get into DC if I wanted to, or anywhere, really. So I mean, there were a lot of changes that occurred to NIH over the years, being built up.

Nagy: While you were there, did you have a sense of how important some of the people that you knew were? Your father was the Director of Cancer Prevention and Control for the country; basically, you were hanging out with the Surgeon General...

Frommer: I saw Dr. [Anthony] Fauci a few times. I knew he was important, because at the time it was AIDS. I had a sense that they were these very accomplished doctors, and I would see them in the news. But it was pretty exciting to see Dr. Fauci, you know, if I were walking to my dad's office. I don't think I knew the extent [of

people's importance] because I was only maybe 10 or 12. But I knew that they were on the forefront of research in the country.

My dad had this beautiful office overlooking NIH, and he was very happy in his work. Everyone was so friendly when I would come and visit, and I think it influenced my brother and sister too, because my brother became an oncologist and went into medicine, and both of them worked in labs, as well, at NIH. So I know that just being in that environment was something very unique. And a lot of my classmates in the public schools, their parents worked at NIH, or in the government in DC.

All our health care was right at the Naval Hospital right across the street. We also went to the dentist on the campus in Building 10. There was a dentist, Dr. Wieber or Weber. [But] after 9/11, everything became kind of a fortress. But at that point, I was already out of college, really. So it was different, but it was nice growing up there.

Nagy: It sounds like there was a whole infrastructure of things for families that were local there and in the surrounding area, like the art classes and the judo club, that were free to the people who worked at NIH and their families. Was it just for the families on campus, or was for it everybody's families?

Frommer: I'm not even really sure. I think it was for anyone who was affiliated with NIH. There was also a fencing club in Building 10. Later, in college, I was on the fencing team, and I remember coming back and going to Building 10 and fencing in the club there too. So there were activities.

I know my parents really felt a sense of community, and we had dinners with the different doctors that were there, and my mom and dad were close to some of them, and there were some new people coming in. Pam Anderson and her husband, Norm Anderson, I think he was head of Psychology – I don't remember the exact division --

Nagy: I remember him.

Frommer: She was close with my mom, and so I still every now and then keep in touch with her. The Brandts – I think they've since passed away, but I know my mom kept in touch with them. She was very close to Dr. Ed Brandt, and his wife, Pat. They had this nice dog named Casey that we would sometimes babysit, or I guess dog-sit or something. But it was very much a sense of community. And I definitely remember meeting all the scientists. I know Dr. Stetten was very impressive, and I just knew, I could just sense that, but I was pretty young. I could see Dr. Koop in the news, too. So I had a sense that these were all scientists that were doing important research and work. I definitely had an idea.

I knew that in the Clinical Center they were doing research, as well. That was right up the street, that hospital, and they did a huge expansion with that, too. And the Children's [Inn] is where they have the kids with cancer, right? And their families get [to stay] there. I remember them building that, too. It must have been built in the 1980s [the Children's Inn opened in 1990]. I mean, it used to be a bunch of trees, but I remember them building that, too.

Nagy: I'd like to talk for a minute about the house itself. When you walk in the front door, what's there? What's in the basement? What's in the kitchen. What was it like in the house?

Frommer: Well, there was a nice sunroom. My mom called it the Blue Room. Some of the houses had garages, but some [garages] had been converted into a little room. Ours was converted into a little room. I know that my mom was one of the first to ask to have a fence put around the patio, because we had a dog. We all had little patios, and I think we were the first to put up a little fence around, and then a few of the other homes, they put a little patio.

You walk in, there's a little kitchen to the left. Then you go through and there's a living room, a dining room, and then three bedrooms upstairs. I mean, it wasn't huge, but it was definitely adequate. I always felt like it was enough room. And then there was a basement, too. It was finished, and it had a laundry room there, and it had a family room, kind of. We had a TV down there and then another little bedroom there as well.

I do remember [that] if something broke, there was always somebody to come and fix it, which was nice. And there were gardeners there. I mean, now I'm so much more aware of gardens and everything. Back then I wasn't [as] aware. But I know that there were people that came and fixed up the gardens, and I know my mom had some flowers and liked flowers, so there was always somebody helping to maintain the gardens there.

There [was] a fenced-in patio. It was sunny. And we were always friendly to whoever was next door. I think when I first moved in, it was Dr. [Mortimer] Lipsett. Then he passed away and then I think it was the Andersons. There was another family, and I'm trying to remember their names – they were there for a long time – but I can't. At Halloween, I would go around to the different [houses to collect] candy. I do remember Mrs. Wilson, I have vague memories, and I know that she was an important person there because of her family background and pretty much giving the land to start NIH. I was sorry to hear they had to take down their little house.

Nagy: That was a real shame.

Frommer: Yeah. And there was another building, too, where they took that down. I think the saddest part was after 9/11 where they really had to increase security. It was hard to get on the campus to see my parents and to explain that we lived here, because a lot of the [NIH] security people didn't understand that people actually lived there. I moved back to Maryland after college for a few years, until I moved here to New London, Connecticut in 2005. But there was a time [between] 2000 and 2005 that I was there, and it was just very hard to get on campus and off because of all the security, and we had to have all these IDs. And then people started moving away and [NIH] turned [the houses] into offices. Right. Houses are becoming offices?

Nagy: A lot of them. Yeah, most of them.

Frommer: I mean, does anyone even live there anymore? Probably not.

Nagy: Good question.

Frommer: I don't even know if the Tabors are there.

Nagy: Not that I'm aware.

Frommer: Most of them have passed away?

Nagy: Yeah, and I think that like you say, getting on and off [campus] and having your friends come on and off is an ordeal, and a lot of the houses locally are bigger.

Frommer: Yeah. It was hard to find a house at that time when they moved in. It was nice to have all the maintenance taken care of, and they just wanted to get started with school. I mean, they might have looked, but they didn't see anything that they liked in that area.

Once [the campus] became like a fortress with all the fencing, and hard to get [into], it became hard to live there. I can't imagine living there in that situation. I liked it when it was all open, and [there were] trees, and a community where [you could] walk onto [the campus or] onto West Cedar Lane. But, towards the end there, I would just see this black fence – this iron fence. So it wasn't as nice.

Nagy: Your father doesn't live there now, does he?

Frommer: No. They moved here to be close to grandchildren. My sister, at the time, lived in Newton, Massachusetts, Boston area, but she since moved. They moved up here – it was around 2008 or 2009 when they got a house. I have four kids, so they really wanted to be near the twins, and the grandkids, all of them. They moved here after they were born, which was 2010, and then permanently left [Bethesda] probably in 2011 or 12, something like that. My dad pretty much worked up until he was about 80. He's going to be turning 87 in November.

Nagy: Wow.

Frommer: Yeah. My mom had kept in touch with Victoria Harden [Ph.D., Director, Office of NIH History and Stetten Museum]. She's still in Maryland. There was a lady named Mrs. [Ophelia E.] Harding, who I always remember too because she ran the all the maintenance help in the 1980s. She lived in that little building right off the Clinical Center – I don't know if [she lived there, but she worked in that building [Building 20]]. That was torn down to expand the Clinical Center.

[After 9/11], not only did NIH become a fortress; the Naval Medical Center became a fortress, too. We used to go to the Exchange there, and it was really interesting. There was a McDonald's there. There was a swimming pool. But yeah, all of that changed really after 9/11. It would be really hard to have people living there after that.

Nagy: So going back to the 1980s, it sounds like you interacted quite a lot with the other kids who lived on the Station. Were there a lot? Did you hang out with them?

Frommer: There weren't so [many children] our age. I think they were older, like the Brandts had some children, but they were all older than us. There was one little girl that lived [on campus] – her dad worked at the Clinical Center, and she lived in that little building next to the Clinical Center. She was on my bus stop, and we went to AyrLawn and then we went to Wingate Elementary School and then Tilden [Middle School]. There weren't a lot on NIH campus. I feel like we were the only ones that I can remember. But there were lots of kids right across the street right in that neighborhood who went to my schools. There were definitely lots of kids, you know, but no – I can't remember anyone our age that [lived on campus].

Nagy: This was in the 1980s. I know that in the 1950s and 1960s, there were a lot of young kids and teenagers.

Frommer: That sounds more right.

Nagy: Yeah, by the time you got there, there were kids in the neighborhood, but not so much on the campus.

Frommer: Right. Yeah, I don't remember any kids. I'm trying to think. There used to be a little basketball court where we used to go play. And then after a while there was nothing like that. The nets were taken off. There was the playground, which I guess was taken down because of lead paint or something, and then a little bit off to the right was the basketball court – a small one. I mean, it didn't have any markings, but it had two nets. It was really fun. And then up the hill was Mrs. Wilson's house. It was really a nice place to be.

Nagy: Did your friends come to the NIH campus often?

Frommer: Not too much; mostly just to go sledding. That's what I remember. And maybe a few times to play in the playground. I do vaguely remember a bunch of animal protesters up on the hill. PETA? Yeah, I kind of remember. I remember that happening a few times.

Nagy: That was certainly happening even in the 1990s. I remember that.

Frommer: I remember nearby up on the hill there were protesters there.

Nagy: Did you see a lot of protesters?

Frommer: I just remember maybe two or three times, hearing them on the hill.

Nagy: You mentioned Dr. Fauci and AIDS. Did you see those protests?

Frommer: Not too much. No. I just remember seeing Dr. Fauci walking around campus. And he looked kind of similar to how he looks now. He doesn't look like he's changed very much.

Nagy: No. I've exchanged collegial nods with him occasionally around campus.

Frommer: Yeah, he was walking a lot around campus. And my dad used to walk to work. It was really nice and convenient for him. He liked to walk up 10 flights of stairs [to his office in NIH Building 31A].

It would definitely be worthwhile to talk to my dad, you know, because he would remember a lot. He's very with it mentally. I'm sure he has a lot that he can share. I can help set that up, and he would definitely be able to tell you about his experience in the NIH in the 1980s. I'm sorry my mom...you know, you couldn't...She also knew a lot about everything.

Nagy: Did your mother work outside the home during the day, living there?

Frommer: Later. When we were in high school, she started working for the NIH Alumni Center, and she did the newsletter. She met Vicky Harden, and that's how that came about. She was really happy to be working on the NIH Alumni Association. It was in an office right up the street, right on the corner of West Cedar Lane and Old Georgetown Road. She would put together a newsletter, and she really enjoyed being in touch with all the alumni of NIH. She did that part-time once we were in high school. That would have been the 1980s, because I had started high school at Walter Johnson High School in 1984. So 1984 to 1989. I'm in the class of 1989. Then I went off to college at Johns Hopkins. I wasn't too far from home – just about a 45-minute drive to Baltimore, so I could go home a few times on the weekends if I wanted to, and my parents would visit. She definitely was very involved with NIH community and working at the Alumni Association. I don't know if it's still around. Probably not. I don't think so.

Nagy: I have no idea. I mean, it should [be] if it's not, because so many people have gone through here. How were holidays celebrated? Were there big NIH-wide celebrations at the time, or even just within your community there? Or was it mostly just sort of house by house?

Frommer: House by house. I don't remember a whole big thing. It doesn't mean that it didn't happen, but I don't remember a whole lot. I do remember kids trick or treating at our place. But I don't know how many people were aware that there were actually houses there and that people lived on campus. Sometimes people were surprised. "Wait, you live on campus? Really?" So I don't remember anything big like that.

Nagy: Were they still putting up the Christmas tree in the middle of the oval?

Frommer: I don't remember seeing that. Did they used to do that?

Nagy: Yeah, back in the 1950s.

Frommer: That's kind of cool. Maybe they did in some of the buildings. There used to be a cool little gift shop and cafeteria in Building 10 A that I would sometimes go to, and they had little stuffed animals. They might have had decorations in some of the buildings. I vaguely remember that, but definitely not in the center of the oval. Yeah, because there was a playground there. But I guess they took that out. I don't remember that in the 1980s.

Nagy: It sounds like you had the run of the campus. And you mentioned going in to visit your dad in Building 31. Were you able to just walk into research labs and say, "Hey, what are you doing?" or did it just not even occur to you [to do that]? Or were there strict rules?

Frommer: There were rules. My brother or sister could tell you more; my brother did some research [in a laboratory on campus]. But I [couldn't] just walk into a lab. One summer, I did a little research with Alzheimer's, and that was in Building 10, but I had to have permission. I [wasn't] able to just like walk in freely. I had to set it up. But my brother or sister could talk about some of the research that they did, especially my brother, because he ended up going into medicine, and I think that that experience was really valuable and shaped his desire to become a doctor. Initially he was thinking, oh, you know, economics or something, but then he had an internship [at NIH] and he really liked it. He got into William and Mary, did really well there, and then got into Stanford Medical School. Now he's an oncologist in Santa Barbara. That experience really shaped him.

He and my sister were both EMTs [Emergency Medical Technicians]. They had a program with the EMTs – it wasn't really part of the NIH, but that was another influence on them. I think my sister was a candy striper, too, in the hospital. I was more interested in arts and music and piano, but I enjoyed being in the Children's Center, too.

NIH, it seems so big, but at the time, I could remember where all the buildings were. I remember the Fogarty Center being a beautiful building, and it had that pond at the end. It's so long ago – the 1980s – that I wish I could remember it more. But you know, I'm 52 now. Back then I was 12. So, yeah, 40 years ago.

Nagy: What sort of Alzheimer's research did you do?

Frommer: It was interviewing families about their relatives. I don't remember too much more. I just remember making phone calls and talking with them about the symptoms and everything.

Nagy: Do you remember who you worked with?

Frommer: It was a lady. I don't remember her name, but my dad might know. My brother would definitely know who he worked with because I think he might even keep in touch with them, and my dad might know as well. But it was so long ago, I don't remember.

Nagy: Did your dad recommend people for you to reach out to?

Frommer: I think so. [Also,] we were really fortunate to go on some of the trips that he took. He did some cancer research in China in 1982. I got to go to China for a month. I was just a sixth grader, but I got to go with him. He had a lot of meetings, and they did some research together with the Chinese. Then he went back in 1985, and I got to go again, with my brother. And then he had a meeting in Hungary in 1987, I think, and I was able to travel with them. So I was really lucky to be able to travel with him sometimes to the meetings. I became really interested in Eastern European Studies and ended up learning some Hungarian for fun. I really enjoyed that time where we got to go to Budapest. It was before the [Berlin] Wall came down because this was in 1987 and 1988.

Nagy: Did your family spend long periods of time [overseas]? Or was your mom back on the Station keeping the house together? Or did you close up the house, or did you rent the house?

Frommer: Never rented. Sometimes she would come – she came with us to China, and I think a relative came in to watch my siblings.

Nagy: Were they all younger than you?

Frommer: No. One was younger, one was older. Sometimes they would go too, but maybe my dad's mother came and stayed with us. I think the time in the summer when we went to Finland for a meeting, my mom stayed back because our dog had five puppies. We had a Shar Pei dog; Shar Peis were more unique at that time. But she always wanted a Shar Pei, with the wrinkles. So [the dog] had puppies, but [my mother] ended up selling all of them. I think two went to somebody who worked at NIH, Miss [Linda M.] Bremerman, I think she got two of them. Then there was another we kept, and then somebody got another one. But yeah, sometimes she stayed back.

Nagy: This is probably a very obvious question, but do you feel like your family life was positively or negatively affected by living where your parents worked?

Frommer: I think definitely, positively. I mean, just being in that community, and now looking back and realizing all the work that they [did] – you know, my dad in cancer prevention, [or] Dr. Koop and how outspoken he was against smoking. And now to see Dr. Fauci with COVID. I feel like, wow, I interacted with these people. I know that my brother and sister being able to have the internships and being in that environment shaped their interests as well: my sister became an immunologist and got a PhD, and then my brother, of course, is in medicine, so I think that living there was a good thing.

Also, Bethesda had really good schools. We went to public schools the whole time, but they were really, really good, and we got a great education there. And it was a good place to raise family. Looking back, it's gotten so much more populated now, and the prices have gone way up. The cost of living there is, it's just...I come back, and I didn't even recognize Bethesda, because it's just so built.

But when I was growing up, I had really good classmates in schools. I was happy with Walter Johnson High School. It's a big school though, looking back, I mean, 2000 kids, but now that we have Facebook, I still keep in touch with some classmates. The opportunities for just raising kids to do different activities like piano and gymnastics, or whatever art, they are more available than if we had stayed in Albany, New York. Maybe the schools were better in Bethesda. Because we're so close to Washington, DC, we could go into DC and see the museums and the National Gallery, and to Georgetown.

Nagy: Did you go into DC a lot?

Frommer: Sometimes. I remember going to the National Gallery of Art many times. And the Air and Space Museum. Yeah, that was always fun. So I did go in sometimes. But I don't really recognize Bethesda now when I come back. It looks so different. It's so built up. At the time, going to Chevy Chase or Friendship Heights was a big thing to do – to go to that mall there. And there was Montgomery Mall and White Flint [Mall]. I guess that closed down too, but that used to be a big mall.

Nagy: Were you part of that whole mall culture?

Frommer: Not too much. But it was fun to go to. There was a Borders Bookstore. We used to go and that was fun. My mom loved going there. I didn't go too much because I wasn't big into shopping. But I just remember going there and there was a movie theater there. But yeah, Bethesda's changed.

So definitely it's very positive. It seems like something unique to say that "Oh, yeah, I grew up at the National Institutes of Health on the NIH campus." And that won't ever happen again because I don't think people will live there anymore. I think it's just turning into offices. I hope they don't tear down those buildings, because they are historic – and beautiful, the red brick. The way they look is beautiful.

Nagy: I think they are listed on at least the state registry because the style of the actual community is a very good example of something...which I knew at one time. [Note: The homes on the NIH campus are an example of the Radburn Principle, a type of community design in which the backs of houses face the street while the fronts face inward, toward a common green or lawn.]

Frommer: I know. I forgot, too. My mom would have known right away, but they're attractive and they shouldn't tear them down. I hope.

Nagy: Did you interact a lot with the people who lived in the apartment?

Frommer: The one up on the corner next to the Clinical Center? Just Mrs. Harding, who managed all the properties. She had this really southern accent. But she was pretty elderly back then, so I'm sure she's not alive now. Ophelia Harding. That was her name. And then there was just one little girl that was my friend because her dad worked at the hospital. Yeah, so I remember being in the bus stop with her, and she went to my school. I'm not in touch with her anymore. But there were a lot of kids kind of across the street in the neighborhood right there. So I mean, I went to the bus stops, and there were a lot of kids in the neighborhood growing up there. So overall, it was a positive experience.

Nagy: [Discussion ensues about the logistics of interviewing Dr. Greenwald] What was the best thing about living on campus?

Frommer: I did appreciate that sense of community. My mom seemed to have some close friends, and my dad, too. Right in that community [where they] were all scientists – I think that was really stimulating to live there, to be around all these great scientists. They would be near the forefront of research.

Nagy: And you didn't fully grasp, but kind of knew that these were very smart people. Did they talk about their research while you were there?

Frommer: Not so much with me, because I was pretty young, but when they came to dinner or something they did with my parents, so I was exposed to that.

Nagy: Did you ask them a lot of questions?

Frommer: I mean, I would always hear about some of the things [my dad] was doing. He helped me with one of my physics projects or a science fair project on pulleys. He helped me set up a pulley system. My sister had a science project about fiber and cereal. It was something like measuring how much fiber different cereals absorbed. He definitely influenced us to think about these things. And definitely, of course, never smoking. That was a big no-no. And having a healthy lifestyle. All those things, we got from my parents.

I was just too young [to appreciate] talking with Dr. Koop. I mean, it was more social. They might have talked about some things, but I don't remember a whole lot, because I was probably only 12 or 13. But definitely my dad talked a lot about what he was doing, and [that helped] picking topics up for my schoolwork related to that.

The pulley system wasn't exactly related to cancer, but he was very involved. Both [our parents] were involved with us and helping us, and because he lived so close [to his office], it was nice. He could come home for lunch because he always walked to work, and it was right up the street. So that was really nice for him. Very convenient.

And being able to travel with him to some of these meetings was a huge influence on my world experience, just being able to see different cultures. There were Chinese doctors that always went around with me when I was there, and they were teaching me some Chinese words. It was just really special to see China in that time. It was not developed at all. I'm sure I wouldn't recognize China today, and I haven't been back since 1985. So I was a child, but I think that to be able to see China in that time, I was really lucky.

Nagy: Where in China were you?

Frommer: We went all over. We went to Beijing and Shanghai, Kunming, Guilin, Guizhou. We went to a place in the south where they really had not seen any Westerners before. So they were coming up to us and touching my hair and looking at us. There were tin mines there, and people would be in the tin mines, and they got cancer – they had esophageal cancer. That's research [that] my dad can be more specific about. But that's what I remember: they were smoking in the tin mines, plus something related to their diet as well, and they had higher incidences of esophageal cancer. That's why he went to these places. But we got to see the Great Wall of China, and the Ming Tombs and different museums – the Summer Palace, I just remembered that experience -- the Forbidden City, and we got to have nice Chinese meals and food, and we went to Japan on the way. I don't think I would have had a chance to travel to those places if he didn't take us along on some of these meetings.

Nagy: Is there anything else that you'd like people to know about growing up on the Station?

Frommer: It was a very pleasant area. I wish I would have paid attention to gardens and birds, but it still was very pleasant to live there and a nice community, and [it was] good for kids to grow up there. And the schools were good, too. So I'm sad that it's all changed and it's not there anymore. I wish that it would be, because it was special and it's too bad that it became like a fortress. I understand about security, but I don't think that it'll ever be the way it was, unfortunately. But it was a good experience.

Nagy: Thank you. This has been really interesting.