

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015
RG-50.030.0836

PREFACE

The following interview is part of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum's collection of oral testimonies. Rights to the interview are held by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

The reader should bear in mind that this is a verbatim transcript of spoken, rather than written prose. This transcript has been neither checked for spelling nor verified for accuracy, and therefore, it is possible that there are errors. As a result, nothing should be quoted or used from this transcript without first checking it against the taped interview.

SUSI FRANK ANNES

October 4, 2015

Question: This is a **United States Holocaust Memorial Museum** interview with Mrs. **Susi Frank Annes**, on October 4th, 2015, in **Palm Beach, Florida**. Thank you very, very much **Susi Annes**, for agreeing to speak with us today. We much appreciate your willingness to share your story.

Answer: My pleasure.

Q: Okay. I'm going to start with the very simplest and most basic of questions, and from there we'll develop, and we'll talk about what your life was. Okay. And I'll speak louder. All right, so tell me, what is the date of your birth?

A: The date of my birth is January 18, 1928.

Q: And what was your name at birth?

A: **Susi Marian Frank**.

Q: **Susi Marian Frank**. And where were you born?

A: In **Cologne, Germany**, in a suburb called **Ehrenfeld**.

Q: **Ehrenfeld**, okay. Do you have brothers and sisters?

A: I do. I have one sister, her name was **Rita Ina Frank**.

Q: Okay, and her – was she younger, or older than you?

A: She was three years my senior.

Q: Okay, so she had been born in 1925?

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

A: Twenty-four.

Q: Oh, '24, okay. So you were two girls in the family?

A: Yes.

Q: All right, tell me a little bit about your parents, what were – we'll start with their names. What was your mother's name?

A: My mother's name was **Caroline Rosenstamm Frank**.

Q: Okay.

A: My father was **Edgar Frank**.

Q: And were they from **Cologne** originally?

A: My mother was from the **Cologne** area, my father was from **Hildesheim, Germany**.

Q: It's not so far, yeah.

A: Not **Cologne**.

Q: Yeah.

A: Not anywhere near **Cologne**.

Q: Okay. So where was – tell me then, where is **Hildesheim**? Do you know?

A: **Hildesheim** is a small town near **Hanover**.

Q: Oh yeah, okay. And, had your parents come from families that were all originally from **Germany**?

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

A: Yes. Everybody was from **Germany**.

Q: Okay. And did they have – did you know about your grandparents and your great-grandparents, and you know, what the families were? Do you have –

A: Unfortunately, my maternal grandfather passed away the year that I was born, just before I was born. I did not know my grandmother, she passed away a year and a half later, so I have no recollection. However, my paternal grandfather had been deceased, but my grandmother was – I was involved with her in my childhood, and later on in life, she came to the **United States** and lived with us.

Q: So, did your mother have any siblings, or was she the only child?

A: No, my mother had a brother.

Q: Okay.

A: His name was **Manfred(ph) Rosenstamm**.

Q: Okay, did you know him?

A: Oh, very well.

Q: Okay, so she had – you had an extended family then, maybe not a complete, but you had a **[indecipherable]**

A: Absolutely.

Q: Okay. And from your father's side, did he have brothers and sisters?

A: He certainly did.

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

Q: Okay.

A: He had two sisters, one was **Greta Frank Spiegel**(ph).

Q: Okay.

A: One was – gotta think a minute – he had a brother by the name of – oh, gotta think – **Alfred Frank**. And he had another sister by the name of – oh, can't think of the first name, her – can't think. **Irma** –

Q: **Irma**.

A: – **Frank Wolf**(ph).

Q: Okay. Did they all live in the **Cologne** area?

A: The two sisters lived in the **Cologne** area, yes. The brother lived in **Hildesheim**.

Q: Okay. Had – and your grandmother on your father's side, where did she live?

A: In **Hildesheim**.

Q: All right. Did you have any relatives who lived abroad? Any family members who had emigrated before the war, or after World War I or before, to either **United States**, or to other parts of the world?

A: Yes. My father's sister and brother-in-law emigrated first, to **Belgium**, in 1937.

Q: Okay.

A: And then went on to – to **South Africa**, where they had children, where they had two boys.

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

Q: Okay.

A: But they went to **Mozambique**, because they couldn't get into **Johannesburg**.

Q: I see.

A: **Johannesburg** quota was closed, and so they went to **Mozambique**.

Q: Oh my goodness.

A: Eventually, they got into **Johannesburg**, after the war.

Q: Okay. But nobody from the family, let's say prior to World War I? Some people had, for example, relatives in the **United States** who had emigrated for, not political reasons, let's say either economic reasons or – or they just wanted to leave **Europe** in the early part of the century. Was that – did you have any relatives like that?

A: Yes, I – I found out lately, going through my father's papers, that the gentleman who sponsored us was the s – was a second cousin of my mother's, who was born in **Germany**, of German parents, obviously, decided to emigrate to the **United States**, in the – in very late 80s. He was like six years old. Must have been 1889, or something to that effect.

Q: Okay.

A: Yes, those were the only people that she had, or she knew.

Q: Okay. So otherwise, the family really is German for many generations.

A: They were. **[technical interruption][break]**

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

Q: Sorry about that. So, do you have any earliest memories from **Cologne**, from your child –

A: Oh, I certainly do.

Q: So, could you share some?

A: I had a wonderful childhood.

Q: Okay.

A: I was raised – my mother was a businesswoman, who had to take – very unusual for a German so-called lady at the time.

Q: Yes.

A: Her parents had unfortunately passed away, and left a substantial business, and she decided to take over, cause her brother, who was still very young, was not so inclined.

Q: Okay.

A: And my father became involved in the business, and after she lost both parents, I have papers showing that he became the sole director of the business.

Q: Really?

A: So, the business was in my father's name.

Q: Okay.

A: But it continued under the original name, of which I have the original papers –

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

Q: Oh my goodness.

A: – when – it was just given to me, in **Germany** –

Q: Okay.

A: – of when the business was created.

Q: So tell me, what was this business, and what was it called?

A: Well, it's a very unusual name.

Q: Okay.

A: Would you like it in German, or –

Q: Yes, both.

A: Okay.

Q: First German.

A: It's **Metzgereibedarfsartikel**(ph), it's all one word.

Q: Oh my God.

A: And it has to do with anything pertaining to bu-butcher's supplies, including major machinery, such as coolers, and major machinery to grind meat, and make sausages, and major things.

Q: So this would have been – in – in those days, it's interesting to think, are butchers still – you – you kind of have in your mind that they are small

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

neighborhood businesses, and what kind of machinery would they be ordering from someone?

A: Oh, they had – I remember as a child –

Q: Okay.

A: – overwhelming machines, where they would grind meat. And they had saws to – to saw the bones, and all kinds of major things. But a good part of the business, was refrigeration, which was very new.

Q: Yes.

A: And they would build walk-in ref – major refrigerations –

Q: Refrigerators.

A: – for –

Q: Now, had your grandfather – that is, on your mother's side –

A: Yes.

Q: – started the business?

A: Yes, he did.

Q: Wow.

A: I have pictures of him, the day that the – that the business was created.

Q: Now, did it ha – was there a physical plant, or was it that he was a supplier from manufacturers of different equipment?

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

A: It was both.

Q: Okay.

A: It can – we – the physical store was good sized, I would say oh, a quarter of a block, it was pretty large. And it had a showroom with major machineries, small article – knives and saws and forks and all kinds of things that butchers would use. And then we had a warehouse in back of the store, where they had the major machinery, so that people could see what it was like. But they – they had – they did buy the smaller items, but all the larger items had to be – those were sample machineries.

Q: So they had to be ordered. They had to be special or –

A: Oh, absolutely.

Q: – special ordered.

A: And the butchers they dealt with were both small, but there were also major, major butchers.

Q: Such as?

A: Downtown **Cologne**, that would have butchers, the meats on one side, and delicatessen on the other. Very, very upscale.

Q: Oh wow. Was there – well, maybe this sounds a little bit ignorant, and it probably is, but were there large department stores –

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

A: Oh yes.

Q: – in **Cologne**, that had, let's say, a huge food section?

A: No.

Q: No.

A: They did not have a food section, no.

Q: Okay.

A: But there were certainly major department stores.

Q: Department stores, okay. I'm thinking in my mind –

A: Yes.

Q: – of the one in **Berlin** called **KaDeWe** –

A: Right.

Q: – that had on its top floor –

A: It's lovely, I've been there.

Q: Yeah, yeah, and I don't know if that's a po –

A: No.

Q: – I know it was a po –

A: I do not believe we had –

Q: Anything like that, yeah.

A: No.

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

Q: So major butchers would have been – major clients would have been the ones who would be from the center of town, who'd own a large butcher shop.

A: Right, but it wasn't at the – the clientele mo – went far beyond **Cologne**. People would come in to find out new items, or what they needed.

Q: Yeah.

A: So it wasn't just –

Q: **Cologne**.

A: – limited to **Cologne** itself.

Q: Now, in the name, could you repeat it in German again? **Metzgerei** –

A: **Metzgereibedarfsartikel**(ph).

Q: All right.

A: Needed – butcher needed supplies.

Q: Supplies. What about the family name? Was there any oth – was it like **Rosen** –

A: The family name was **Rosenstamm**.

Q: Yeah, **Rosenstamm Metzgereibedarfsartikel**(ph). So the family name came before, okay.

A: I ki – I don't know whether my – I don't think my father ever changed the name.

That I – I had no way – I don't know, I'd have to go research that.

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

Q: Okay. Have you – was your father involved in another kind of work, or business, or profession before he went and became involved in what your mother inherited?

A: He was – he really wanted to become an engineer, but he never got that far, and they married very young. And he had – I think he had worked for some kind of business, prior to meeting my mother.

Q: So, does that mean he went to su – he had some higher education, but not complete higher education? Or had he finished college? Or you don't know?

A: No, he di – he – there – no, at the time there was no – there was – what was it called? It wasn't college, but it's before college. What was that called?

Q: Oh, dear.

A: It wasn't just grammar school, and it wasn't middle school –

Q: Gymnasium?

A: Pardon?

Q: Gymna – there's gymnasium, which was –

A: Gymnasium.

Q: Okay.

A: [indecipherable] yeah.

Q: Okay. So he had finished gymnasium?

A: Yeah.

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

Q: All right. And how – do you know how your parents met?

A: I really don't recall.

Q: Okay.

A: I think they met at – at a dance, but I'm not certain. They were introduced through a friend.

Q: Okay. Would you say then, that at least from your mother's side of the family, they were well-to-do, because of this business?

A: They – I didn't –

Q: Would you say that from your mother's side of the family, her family was well-to-do, because of this business?

A: I – I wouldn't use the word well-to-do. They were very comfortable.

Q: Okay, okay. And was there a family home – since both grandparents were already gone when you were growing up, did you – was there still a family home that she had grown up in, that you knew of?

A: No, my mother grew – I have no idea, but my father grew up in **Hildesheim**, small town, substantial home.

Q: Okay.

A: And major business.

Q: Oh, what was that?

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

A: And that was – that was – oh, I don't know how to say that. They – they dealt in cattle, and some horses, but cattle was their major business.

Q: So, it was the trade in cattle?

A: Yes.

Q: All right. And was it like an import-export trade?

A: No, no, no, no. Just, I guess, local. I don't know.

Q: Okay.

A: But my grandmother had a substantial home.

Q: Okay. And what did it look like, can you tell me? Do you remem –

A: I'm sorry?

Q: What did it look like? Can you tell me?

A: What did it look like?

Q: Yeah.

A: It looked like a major three-story home.

Q: Stone?

A: Yeah.

Q: Ninete –

A: I have pictures of it, stone.

Q: Nineteenth century type of build?

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

A: Probably, probably. I don't know whether they had built it or not. She must have had – oh, I don't know, it was a very formal home. She had staff for help, and even though she was widowed, lived very, very nicely.

Q: Okay. So, both sides of your family were comfortable, economically?

A: Yeah, comfortable.

Q: Okay. Okay. And, as you were growing up, did you visit her often, your grandmother?

A: No, it was to – yes, we were – my nursemaid would take us, it was quite a ride –

Q: Okay.

A: – a train ride, to get there. And we would go once in a while. But because it was such a formal lifestyle, and we, as children we were not too happy with visiting grandma. Everything had to be absolutely ultra-perfect. You had to get dressed for lunch, and dressed for dinner, and it was not our way of life, so –

Q: Okay. Things at – at your home were less – less formal.

A: Absolutely.

Q: Okay.

A: And if we didn't go with our – the interesting thing was that we were sent with our nursemaid, who was really like my second mother, so –

Q: What was her name?

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

A: Her name was **Lisbeth(ph) Mueller**.

Q: **Lisbeth(ph) Mueller**. Did you –

A: I got beautiful letters of hers.

Q: You do?

A: Yes, I do.

Q: Well, that's unusual, still to have letters from a nursemaid.

A: Yeah. As a matter of fact, when I lost my husband, years later she had written me a note saying, I can't let you live alone. You need me to help you, and however she had survived the war, and she wasn't well herself, and she wanted to come with a friend, and the two would live with me, and take care of me. But, unfortunately, which I have really regretted, that I did – I – I wasn't in a position to have two people who had never been abroad, or –

Q: You don't know who –

A: – very limited.

Q: Yeah.

A: And so – however, I did see her after the war.

Q: You did?

A: Oh, of course.

Q: Well, that's also something special.

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

A: I – in 1955, my husband and I went to **Israel**, and the only way I would consent going, if we would stop in **Holland**, and had her – I wouldn't go to **Germany**, but ha – she came to **Holland** as our guest, for three days. And so, I have lovely recollections.

Q: So you had a reunion?

A: Yes.

Q: Was your family very religious?

A: I wouldn't say very – we were traditional, and observant, yes. My mother was religious, came from a religious family. My father was very Reform.

Q: Okay.

A: So however, he had to put up with, yes, we had a kosher home.

Q: That was one of my questions.

A: Yes. And interestingly enough – and this is – is quite unusual, because we were in the business, we had two refrigerators at the time, one for dairy and one for meat.

Q: Oh my goodness.

A: And people who came to our house could not believe – first of all, we had a very large kitchen, we had help. And – but they could not – they had never seen people have two –

Q: Refrigerators. Yes, and certainly for the time. I mean, in the 1930s, yeah.

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

A: For the time. Even the 30s, to have a refrigerator was a luxury.

Q: Well, tell me about your home that you grew up in. Was it a house, or an apartment?

A: No. My parents, I think – I'm not sure whether it was 30 – I was born '28, '31, I don't know the date, but the build – there was a new building in this – in this suburb, that was very close to the slaughterhouse, which was giant, blocks and blocks and blocks. And it was – because of the slaughterhouse, it wasn't a fancy neighborhood.

Q: No, I wouldn't imagine that it could be.

A: No. And a building went up, and my father decided to move the original store to that new building, and customize the first floor of the building.

Q: You mean the ground floor, or the first floor as we're talking –

A: No, first floor over the – over the business.

Q: Okay.

A: And customized it into a four bedroom apartment, which we had, with two and a half baths.

Q: Oh my goodness.

A: And so it – it was very modern, and large. And I went to see it eight years ago, but the building has been completely remodeled.

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

Q: But it still exists – exists.

A: It does. And the lady who has half of our apartment, allowed us to come in, so –

Q: And did it look very different?

A: Totally.

Q: Okay.

A: Totally.

Q: So, it was an – a **neubau**. It was a new building, then.

A: It was a brand new building.

Q: So it would have been –

A: It had three floors.

Q: Okay.

A: And an elevator.

Q: Also unusual. I mean, for most people, the – you know, there was – when they described where they lived, if it was in the center of a town – I'm talking about people from **Germany** – often it was that they – these large, 19th century homes, that had –

A: Right, yeah.

Q: – staircases, and – and so on –

A: [**indecipherable**] a home, it was a home.

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

Q: Yes.

A: It was.

Q: Four bedrooms, that's a lot. So, there was one for you and your sister.

A: Four bedroom and two maids' room. And they had their own bath, I didn't even count that.

Q: Okay. So, large.

A: It was.

Q: And your mother – and your mother and your father, you sort of like – it was the shop of – it was – you lived above the shop.

A: Right.

Q: Okay. And they didn't have to commute very far to go to work?

A: No. And the [indecipherable] beyond the – the warehouse.

Q: Okay.

A: The front was the store, then there was the warehouse. Then there was a huge yard, quite large. I don't know how large, which had a garage for – three car garage, cause we had a private car, we had a business car. And the – our apartment was built – the building was like the front of the house –

Q: Okay.

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

A: – but it had nothing where – where the courtyard in back was. So they built a walk through, and built a part on top of – it's hard to explain – on top of the – those were the bedroom area. So there was a front of the house apartment, you had to walk through –

Q: Okay.

A: – a ki – a – a lengthy walk, like this.

Q: Like a corridor.

A: Like the little corridor. And then you went into a little guided room, when you get to the end of the corridor, it was just as – a settee with some chairs to sit down and rest, or whatever. It was nothing.

Q: Okay.

A: And then you had a guest bedroom, my mother's – father had a suite there.

Q: Wow.

A: They had a dressing room, it was incredible, with double sinks, and all in marble.

Q: Oh my goodness.

A: All in marble. And my mother had a dressing room, and their bathroom was behind all this, was big, very large. And then we had our bedroom, and another, smaller bedroom. And then there was a ne – very difficult to explain.

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

Q: That's okay, but it's fascinating.

A: The maid's rooms –

Q: Okay.

A: – were very small.

Q: Okay.

A: And they had a tiny bath. So –

Q: But they had one, that was for themselves, you know, so – just for them.

A: Then we had a very substantial bathroom for my sister and I.

Q: Okay.

A: In the hall, not – not – my parents' bathroom was –

Q: En suite.

A: – in their suite.

Q: Yes. Now, did you spend a lot of your childhood then, in the business, because you could go visit your mother, or your father, or –

A: No.

Q: No, you didn't. It wasn't like you were –

A: We used to go down and say hello, but it wasn't a business that kids would be interested in.

Q: Okay.

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

A: You know, everything was difficult, don't touch this, and the knives are sharp, and so –

Q: Okay.

A: – it wasn't a playground type things, no.

Q: Okay.

A: We didn't have to, we were too busy. We were just –

Q: What were you doing? What was –

A: We went to school.

Q: Okay.

A: And we went to school, to German public school.

Q: Okay.

A: Until I was in third grade.

Q: Third?

A: I'm not sure. 1937, we were no longer allowed to – to go to public school.

Q: We'll get to that part. I'd like to talk a little bit about – before we go to school, I still want to talk about the family a little bit. Tell me a bit about your mother's personality, and your father's personality. What kind of people were they?

A: Well, it's – it's a very interesting question, because I had a most unique mother. She was very avant-garde.

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

Q: Really?

A: Able to handle anything, with a smile on her face. She was very attractive, and she had – she was – she had a dual personality; one was business, and people loved her. And then, over the weekend, she was a totally different lady.

Q: Really?

A: She was not a businesswoman, but she was very charming, very creative woman, who had tons of friends.

Q: She sounds like a very modern person.

A: She was modern, really, to begin with.

Q: Oh wow.

A: And involved in all kinds of things. And my father was a direct opposite. He was a straight, 100 percent German. [indecipherable] perfect.

Q: Okay.

A: A gentleman of distinction in his manner, in his dress, and everything he did was perfect. There was no in-between. And it is interesting, because they were totally opposites. And I – I assume, from what I saw, that they had a lovely marriage.

Q: Well, when you said that your grandmother had a strict home, where you had to be dressed properly, and you had to – you know, the manners had to be right, it makes a lot of sense that he would also have –

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

A: He was –

Q: Yeah.

A: – [indecipherable] plus perfect. We always teased him.

Q: Well, when you're surrounded by women, you can be charmed by that, too.

A: Oh my goodness.

Q: Yeah.

A: But my mother was free and easy and fun and made everything work. And, you know, he was just, every "i" had to be dotted, everything had to be perfect.

Q: He was –

A: But he was a wonderful gentleman, he had a wonderful personality, but you had to get used to him. It was not easy.

Q: So, were – was there one parent that you were closer to than – than the other, or – or did you confide in one more, or was it your –

A: No, my mother was too – too busy.

Q: Too busy.

A: My mother was far too busy. We had wonderful times together, but she was involved, she had too many other things going.

Q: And how long – you mentioned before, **Lisbeth(ph) Mueller** was your nanny.

A: She was there until – that's another unbelievable – in 1937 –

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

Q: Well, before we get [indecipherable] let me interrupt for a second.

A: Yes.

Q: Tell me how she came into your life. Let's start from the beginning.

A: She was a – I also have her papers.

Q: Okay.

A: She was a registered children's nurse.

Q: Okay.

A: Who wore a cap I – as you saw. They had to wear a cap like a regular nurse. She was not a housekeeper. She had no duties, other than –

Q: Looking after you.

A: – the two of us.

Q: Okay.

A: And as it happened, my – when she came into our household, when I was born, my sister had her own nurse, and I – from what I heard, I don't think they got along too well, and my parents decided on **Lisbeth**(ph), who we called **Tedde**(ph) –

Q: **Tedde**(ph).

A: – that's a German name for **kinderschwester**. Yeah.

Q: And – and so you grew – you never – do you have any memories of her not being there?

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

A: Never. She was there until th- there was a law, she could no longer live with us.

If she were – was caught living with a Jewish family, she ge –

Q: She'd get in trouble.

A: That would be the end of her. So, unbeknownst to anyone, we – we had – could no longer have help in the house unless they were Jewish. And you could find very little Jewish help, but there were some. She decided to get her own apartment – or my parents, I don't know what the arrangements were. But she worked in the sto – in the office of the business.

Q: Oh wow.

A: Because she – she decided she would not leave our family.

Q: Wow. Wow. That must have meant something.

A: So, I have a letter to the effect that when my father tried to establish what had happened to the business, she wrote a major letter of what her input with the family, and what she had seen over the years, and –

Q: That must have been crucial in helping – in helping fi – you know, establish what kind of assets there were, and what had been lost.

A: Well, she – her family was practicing Catholics.

Q: Okay.

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

A: Her brother was a priest, and she was very involved. And, also unusual for a Jewish kosher home, my mother would have a Christmas tree for Christmas, in – we had two living room – two rooms, one daily living room –

Q: Okay.

A: – one special for company.

Q: It's like a – I'm sorry I'm entering, but it's sort of like today's family room, in American homes, and then the living room –

A: Exactly.

Q: – when company comes.

A: Well, the family room was every day, we ate there, everything was going on in the family room, must be like a family room, but we called it a second dining room. We had a formal dining room, and this. But my mother would have the small Christmas tree in the good living room, for the help, on Christmas eve, which was unbelievable. And I followed suit later on –

Q: Did you?

A: – because that's what I learned, and had a lot of trouble with my rabbi about it.

Q: Oh dear. Well, you know, it's – that's also part of what was lost, is that people – I mean, there were – there were all kinds of attitudes, but each individual interpreted

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

what their – the, I guess religion, or the community that they were born in, according to how their human relations worked.

A: Absolutely.

Q: You know?

A: Well, it's interesting, I – I didn't understand it at the time, but after I was married, and I had a Catholic nursemaid in my home, I realized how unusual it was for my mother – I didn't keep a kosher home. But for my mother to have a Christmas tree, that was really –

Q: That's a lot.

A: That was a lot.

Q: That's a lot, yeah.

A: So, but I didn't – you know, I didn't understand it at the time. But my mother always felt, in order to have – you have to observe everybody's preference. And as long as they were part of my family, that's what she did.

Q: That's a lovely model.

A: So I gave a lot of credit.

Q: Yeah.

A: Yeah, she was –

Q: A lovely model, truly, yeah.

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

A: She was very unusual.

Q: So, I'm trying to think now of more questions about your parents. Your father was more reserved, your mother was more extrovert. What were their – what were – how did they split their duties in the – in the business?

A: I have no idea.

Q: You don't know, okay.

A: I have no idea. I would imagine that she didn't go on the road to different exhibitions, my father did that, and I –

Q: Do you remember how many people worked in the business?

A: I have no idea, like three or four were in the office, I don't know.

Q: Okay. Let's go to school then.

A: [indecipherable]

Q: School. Let's talk about your school. You said you went to a German public school.

A: Public school.

Q: Public school. Do you remember the name of it?

A: No.

Q: Okay. And was it close to home in **Ehrenfeld**?

A: Yeah, we walked to school.

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

Q: Okay. Your sister went to the same one?

A: Yeah. However, she was three years – she then went to, like a gymnasium, you know, she was transferred. And she had to go to a Jewish school, while I was still in public school, which was nowhere near us. It was in the heart of **Cologne**.

Q: And was this for political reasons, that she wasn't able to continue?

A: Yes, absolutely.

Q: Okay.

A: And then later on, I had to go – that gymnasium had a lower school also.

Q: Okay.

A: And that's when – I transferred there, and that was a good 35 minute by streetcar. But we – we had a driver from the business, and when he showed up early enough, we would be driven to school. But it – it wasn't an every day occurrence.

Q: So, let's talk about – if you have memories of this, before all of the changes, what were your first years, grades one, two, three? Do you have any – any memories of those first years of school, what they were like?

A: Yeah, I have – I have lo-lovely memories. I had wonderful girlfriends who lived in the area, none of whom were Jewish. And I came home one day, and – from school it tears, because everybody was wearing a little brown uniform. And I wanted a brown uniform. My mother tried to explain to me that I can't have it, that

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

I'm Jewish. Well, I ki – I didn't know why – why I couldn't have what they had.

Like a brownie uniform. But this was a **Hitler** youth, and they were no longer allowed to talk to me. So, suddenly I had no friends, no one to be with, and that was a little difficult. However, then I immediately, within months, I was forced to go to a Jewish school. And so I got – had all new friends.

Q: So, you were five years old when **Hitler** came to power.

A: Yeah.

Q: Yeah. And did that – I mean, you were very little at that time, but did you notice changes? Did your f – changes happen –

A: Not really, my life didn't change, no.

Q: Okay. And your parents, in their business or anything, from five years – you know, from 1933, when he comes to power, was there anything in those first years –

A: That didn't happen –

Q: Okay.

A: – until li – 1936, when he really came into being.

Q: Okay.

A: And then the business declined greatly. I have papers attesting this. I have all – and my father kept immaculate papers, being [indecipherable] plus German.

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

Everything is documented. And how the business had to be forf – the business was forced –

Q: Okay.

A: – to be sold when it was – there were no more clients. They would not come to Jewish business people. So, they had a terrible time in '37 and '38. And it – they – he had to – later on he had to show how the business dropped, and that, and the business was sold for nothing. I have all those papers, all the attorney's papers, and –

Q: Wow, not many people have all of that document –

A: And I have everything.

Q: – documentation.

A: I have it all.

Q: And so, was it sold before **Kristallnacht**?

A: It was sold after **Kristallnacht**. Nothing was sold before **Kristallnacht**.

Q: Okay.

A: But we had – it had been plundered – is that the word?

Q: Mm-hm.

A: The – prior – I think once, prior to **Kristallnacht**, we had these giant windows, store windows, and several of them were broken, and merchandise taken, but –

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

Q: [indecipherable] was stolen.

A: – that was prior to **Kristallnacht**.

Q: Okay.

A: But after **Kristallnacht**, that was a si – totally – that really – yes, it was a major change in my life. But prior to that, we had a major change also.

Q: Tell me.

A: The year prior to, we were to have left **Germany**, and you know, you needed a number. Are you familiar with that?

Q: Tell me about it.

A: Okay. You needed a number to – to emigrate, an emigration number.

Q: From the German authorities, from the Nazis.

A: Absolutely.

Q: Okay.

A: And my mother had gotten a number, very unusual. She had gone to **Berlin** – this is difficult – because **Irving Berlin** was entertaining in **Berlin**, and my mother somehow or other, got to see him [indecipherable] ticket, an affidavit from **Berlin**, or from **Irving Berlin**, or perhaps help through someone. She had managed to – to get this, to no avail.

Q: Okay.

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

A: However, she had a number in 1937, that was quite early. She – my mother gave my father an ultimatum, I am leaving **Germany**. My father – this is interesting – had been an army officer in the first World War, as a Jew. I have his army papers.

Q: You have those still, too.

A: I do.

Q: Oh my goodness.

A: He – my mother went and got them, my – my father said, I'm not leaving **Germany**. **Hitler** will not touch me because I was an officer. My mother said, whatever you want to do, I am leaving when my number comes up. The number came up, and unfortunately my nursemaid had given my sister and I a Hanukkah present, a Christmas present of a bicycle each.

Q: Oh my goodness.

A: And we went and tried out our bicycle when there was a little snow on the ground. My sister was a little heavy and clumsy, and fell off her bike and broke her hip.

Q: Oh my gosh.

A: And at the time, you could not go to a doctor in your area unless he was Jewish. So, I don't know how my mother did this, or how my father did this, she went to the

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

nearest hospital, where she wasn't supposed to be. They set her hip, and they put her into – oh, I don't know what they – **gips**, what –

Q: Ah, into a cast.

A: Yeah.

Q: A cast.

A: From here –

Q: A plaster cast.

A: – down to her feet. And she was –

Q: She couldn't move.

A: – couldn't move. We had a hospital bed put into the fancy dining room, which looked outside, and she was there for three months, in this cast. And when she – during that time, our number came up. Well, my parents couldn't leave with a child in a cast, that doesn't work.

Q: Right.

A: And when she got out of the cast, she couldn't walk. Her hip had to be re-broken by a Jewish orthopedic doctor. It was terrible. So we missed our chance of getting out of **Germany**, because **Rita** wasn't able to walk.

Q: And do you know what the number was?

A: No. That I don't know. Possibly I might have the number, but I never –

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

Q: And it would have bi – it was one of the requirements of the German – of the Nazi German authorities that everybody be in a healthy state to leave the –

A: Absolutely.

Q: Okay. And –

A: Then she had to re –

Q: Apply.

A: – apply, with a different number. And at that time, in '37, there were millions of people ahead of her. There was nothing you could do.

Q: So, in other words, she came to this conclusion fairly early on?

A: Absolutely.

Q: Do you remember about when this would have been, '35, '36, or –

A: Oh, no, no, no, she – she applied the minute the – the numbers became available, my mother applied.

Q: Oh.

A: So, I don't know when that was, maybe probably '37?

Q: Okay.

A: Because at that time not a lot of people were interested in leaving. However, because of my sister's fall –

Q: Right.

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

A: – we could not avail ourself.

Q: You couldn't go. You couldn't go. Let's go back a little bit. I want to go back to your school, where you say all of a sudden the children no longer play with you, no longer talk to you, and you're by yourself. How soon after that – was it a period of months, or a year, or fairly quick that you no longer went to that school?

A: Oh, very quickly, within – this was all going on, but I'm a little kid, I don't understand what's going on.

Q: Of course.

A: I just want the uniform, like my girlfriends.

Q: Oh, yeah.

A: And there, within a very short time –

Q: You were not allowed to –

A: – I was transferred to the other school.

Q: Okay.

A: Because I – I wasn't comfortable going to that school, I mean, you weren't safe going to that school.

Q: And – and that's when –

A: And because we were not in a – we were in this unusual, new neighborhood, which was kind of – it wasn't real residential –

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

Q: Well, that's what I was going to – I'm trying to get a picture of it. If there's a slaughterhouse there –

A: Yes.

Q: – and it's large, then –

A: Oh, it's huge.

Q: Yeah. So, was it mostly warehouses and businesses that were in the neighborhood?

A: No – yes, there were lots of – lots of businesses, smaller businesses. A lot of things pertaining to the meat industry.

Q: Yeah.

A: So this was not a fancy neighborhood.

Q: Mm-hm. But a – a – it sounds like a lovely apartment.

A: Oh, we had a lovely home.

Q: Yeah.

A: But because of the business, it wasn't in the –

Q: Best –

A: – best suburb.

Q: Right. Was there a smell from the slaughterhouse?

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

A: Yes, there was. There was, many times, yes. Absolutely. You knew when you were coming closer, absolutely.

Q: You could smell it, you could smell it. So you would have to then travel at least 35 minutes by some kind of vehicle, whether it's a trolley car, or whether it's the driver –

A: Usually trolley car.

Q: Yeah. Did you have any experiences on the trolley cars that were –

A: Only – never, we were fine until the 10th of November.

Q: Okay, in '38.

A: That was an experience, yes.

Q: Well, tell me what happened on the 10th of November.

A: Well, we woke up in the morning, like every other morning.

Q: Okay.

A: And somehow or other, my mother, or nursemaid, I don't know who said, today you're going to be driven to school. Well, it turns out our driver didn't get there. So we had – you know, streetcars ran every 15 minutes, so we had to go by streetcar. We hopped on the streetcar. The ride took us through the main street of **Cologne**, which is called the **Ring**. And once we made the turn onto this major street, my sister and I are sitting in the trolley, and we're saying, this must have been –

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

something terrible must have happened, people must be drunk. We saw the entire street, which by the way is documented in **Germany**, they have pictures of all of it – and interestingly enough, I met the **Bürgermeister** of **Cologne** years later, who that same morning was on a streetcar also, and we exchanged – he's not Jewish, of course – so we – he said, you saw this? And I said, yeah. He said, I did, too. So, they had plundered all these shops. There was stuff all over the street: clothes, bicycles, whate – whatever the shop sold, was on this major street. And we couldn't – how could this happen? So we got to school, and the minute we got to our classroom, we were told to go to an assembly, which was outside in a courtyard. The two schools had two different buildings. And one of the buildings was on fire. And needless to say, there was a little confusion in the courtyard. And the rector spoke on a microphone and said, you are to try to reach your parents by phone. We didn't have cell phones, but there were telephones in – at school, or get on the next – find a way to get home immediately. So, I hadn't seen my sister, there were hundreds of kids, I didn't know. I didn't know my way around, or who knows, maybe I was scared, I don't know.

Q: Well, you were 10 years old.

A: And the next thing I know, my sister was – suddenly was there, and she grabbed me and she said, we have a ride home. So I went along. It turned out our saving

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

grace, that a friend of hers, whose mother was not Jewish, married to a Jewish attorney, she had heard what was going on, I don't know how. Chauffeur had come to school to pick up this little girl, and told the little girl, whoever she wants to take along, come home, hop into the limo. So there were six or seven of us. So my sister grabbed me, and I was in the limo. I didn't know where I was going, but – so we went to a lovely home, had a lovely lunch. And from that moment on, it changed my whole life, yes.

Q: So **Kristallnacht** was the key. The – you know, things had been going incrementally, but that really – let's go back a bit. Your sister, when she gets out of the cast, still can't walk, so her hip needs to be re-broken, and she's in another cast? Is that right?

A: And she suffered all her life.

Q: Oh my. From that bicycle fall.

A: Not only that, at childbirth, the first child she had, they had directions not to put her into stirrups, and they neglected it, and they damaged the hip, which had been broken twice.

Q: Oh my.

A: She suffered all her life, yes.

Q: Did it take a long time for it to heal properly, and when could she walk again?

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

A: Sh – it never healed properly, ever, until she had one of the first hip replacements, bec – she – no, gotta back up, no. She did not consent to a hip replacement, which is what they suggested, but at the time, it took a year of recovery, and the surgery was only done in **England**.

Q: This is after the war?

A: Here, yes. Later on in life. And so, she had a – I don't know what they call it, she had a pin put in. She had several pins put in.

Q: And this is at that time, in the 30s?

A: No, no, no.

Q: No, that was later.

A: This is way later on –

Q: Later.

A: – after her first child.

Q: So, going back at that time, the three months that had passed, was this in like 1937, that she had this accident?

A: She – she didn't recover until '38.

Q: Okay.

A: She was in big trouble.

Q: Okay.

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

A: And then she was fine, but she couldn't do a lot of activities, you know. She never regained full motion.

Q: Got it, got it. **[break]** Okay, so, w-we talked about your sister, and how, you know, it took a toll on her health, this fall.

A: Oh, it did. Yes, it did.

Q: Yes. I want to go back and say when – at what point did you ever notice your parents talking about what was going on in **Germany**, before **Kristallnacht**?

A: Absolutely. It was topic of conversation all the time.

Q: Really?

A: Absolutely. There, people were trying to figure out where – what possibility they had, if they wouldn't get their – their visas, their visa to the **United States**. They – my parents applied to **China**, they applied to **Argentina**, they applied to, oh, a couple of other places.

Q: In addition to the **States**?

A: Yeah, oh, absolutely.

Q: Okay.

A: We wanted to – but prior to this, I think it would be worth to tell you that my mother had two cousins in **Holland**, and – Jewish.

Q: Okay.

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

A: Married to Dutch people. And they came to – my mother wanted to get my – my sister and myself out of **Germany** in 1938, the beginning of '38. And this young man, in his early 20s, came with his car. And we were told we were going on a vacation. We had no idea. And at the – at the – what's the **grenze**?

Q: At the border.

A: At the border.

Q: Okay.

A: At the border, my sister had high heeled boots on. They took her – her heels off the boots, thinking she was hiding diamonds or something. And it turned out that we were not allowed to leave, and he ha – they would not allow us into **Holland**, early 1938.

Q: So this means that the German border guards did not let you –

A: German border guard would not allow us to leave. And it was a terrible experience. And we had it twice, we attempted twice to go. Months later, two months later, and –

Q: Did you have to have paperwork in order to get from **Germany** to –

A: Yes, and we had all the work, but it didn't work.

Q: It didn't work.

A: So –

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

Q: So you – and your father – and what – did he, at some point, change his position, or just –

A: Oh, of course he did.

Q: Okay.

A: Certainly. All his friends were – many, many people left to go to **Belgium**, or to **France**. Wherever they could find.

Q: A place.

A: Yeah, they just went, and –

Q: What about aunts and uncles, and – and people like that. Your – your father's siblings, your mother's siblings? What did – what happened with them?

A: Well, that's very interesting. My uncle –

Q: On father's side?

A: – left – my Uncle **Manfred**, who we called **Fred**, was single, very comfortable financially, he and three buddies decided to go to **Holland** on a vacation. But they never came back. They had means, and they stayed in **Holland**. And he was involved in this **Kindertransport**, which resulted finally, to save our lives.

Q: Got it.

A: So, while he – he was very involved in this movement, and I – I'd like to mention that he and the organizations that were involved, were trying to raise funds,

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

because the Dutch government, after he visited the queen, me – there was a committee who were given an audience with the queen, Queen **Juliana**, in 1938.

The queen felt, because they were already in –

Q: Negotiation –

A: – communication with **Hitler**, that politically she could not allow any Jewish children to be the – to be rescued by – by the Dutch, by the **Netherlands**. And so the committee came up with a sug – counter-suggestion, which the queen found a possibility at the time. And that was that if the children would pay for three years upkeep in **Holland**, so that the Dutch were not responsible, while they're negotiating with **Hitler**. So that is what happened. My parents paid for three years' upkeep, so we were not – not – there's a –

Q: Funded by –

A: Right.

Q: – by the –

A: By – by the –

Q: – the supporters of the –

A: – **Netherlands**.

Q: Okay.

A: Correct.

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

Q: So this i – your uncle was part of this negotiation –

A: Yes.

Q: – that went all the way up to –

A: Yes.

Q: – the queen of the **Netherlands**. Okay, so he left. What about other relatives, other aunts?

A: Okay, my father's – my father's sister had gone to **Belgium**. They were quite well off. I would say they were wealthy.

Q: Okay.

A: And their boys had gone to school in **England**, and one of them had gone to **Palestine**. The oldest one had gone to **Palestine**. Which, his sister and his brother-in-law had visited **Palestine** in 1934, and decided it was not a place for them. So they – they found refuge in **Belgium**.

Q: Okay.

A: Until they – that was no longer possible. His other sister went to **Belgium** after **Kristallnacht**, illegally, by being taken across a border by her 17 year old daughter, who came to get – came back to get her.

Q: Wow.

A: Very involved. Who just passed away last year, at the age of 91.

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

Q: Oh my goodness.

A: And his – so that was his – both sisters. His brother, who was a – I don't know, very comfortable, recognized citizen of this small town –

Q: [indecipherable]

A: – decided nobody would ever touch him. I mean, he had all kinds of connection, never – never got out.

Q: And so, what happened to him?

A: What happened to everybody else.

Q: Okay. And your grandmother?

A: And my grandmother, who was still – she happened to be in **Cologne** the night of **Kristallnacht**. She was with us, and she then went home, and she got out in 1941, left **Germany** –

Q: That late?

A: – to go to **Mozambique**. And she was on the way, different boats, for two and a half months, at the age of – she was in her early 80s, but she made this trip to **Mozambique**, wherever she had to stay, until more papers came. Most unusual woman.

Q: Most unusual, yes.

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

A: Incredible. Finally got to **Mozambique**, and finally ended up with her daughter and son-in-law, who were –

Q: Waiting to go to **South Africa**.

A: Right. They would love to have her. They finally went to **Johannesburg**, but she could not manage to live with them. So my parents finally got her to come to the **United States**, when she was 86, to live with us.

Q: And, on **Kristallnacht**, was there any activity that you heard that night, that is – you woke – you told me that you woke up the next morning, and you took the trolley, and you saw this sight.

A: Okay.

Q: Okay. What about in your own home, in your own block –

A: Okay.

Q: – what happened?

A: We never got home. We were taken to this lady's home, right, for a playdate, had a beautiful lunch.

Q: Okay.

A: And the next thing, we got a telephone call saying that this lady's chauffeur would drive us to a designated area, where my father would pick us up. And that was a night I will never forget in my life.

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

Q: What happened?

A: We – we waited until dark, to be met by my dad. And in the car was my grandmother, my mother, waiting for us. And, where are we going? My father said, we're going to some lovely people, friends of mine, who have a farm, about three hours away. And we're just going to have a little picnic – my mother had packed a lunch – we're going to have a little picnic. And little had we known what had gone on during the day at – in – in the business. We had no – I had no idea. So we drove all night, and we finally came to this town where we were supposed to be with friends. My father got out of the car and went into a pub, to call his friend and say we were close by. And the friend said, don't come. The Nazis have just come into my town, and you will not be safe here. Just keep driving. So we drove through the whole night. And when we had to relieve ourself, there – couldn't go anywhere, you went – you made do. [indecipherable] And so we never got – we were nowhere. And finally, early in the morning, we went back to our home. And that was the last time I saw my house, my home.

Q: Really?

A: And my nursemaid was there, and we had dinner, whatever, and then we rented an apartment somewhere. I don't know where. I – I have very little recollection of that time – that was November til January – because things were terrible. So, I don't

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

know whether I have blocked that out of my mind completely. However, my father, the next day that we got home, my father disappeared. Totally disappeared. And for three days, we had no idea where, how, what. The Germans had taken him, and thrown him into prison. Which was – every other man was taken off the street, for whatever reason. No reason whatsoever, just pull him. Fortunately enough, the – he had friends, an attorney, who got him out of jail. That was the first time. And after that, things were terrible, because he had to go back to the business every day to try to finalize plans. This was – then they were forced to sell the business. But what happened during that time, I can't tell you, except that my father was taken again, oh, I think right in December, somewhere in December, and never knew how my father got out of jail, until my mother was on her deathbed, and she said, I think I ought to tell you something I have never revealed to anyone. So she told my sister and myself how she managed to get my father, and I don't think I ought to tell that story.

Q: Oh, you've piqued my curiosity. Can you go around it a little bit? Is there any way –

A: Well, I – she found a way –

Q: Okay.

A: – using herself –

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

Q: Oh, dear.

A: – to engage the head Nazi in an evening. And my mother didn't drink, but she spent the night with this person at a bar. And every time she didn't feel well, she would relieve herself, and start drinking all over again, until he was – i-it's just too involved.

Q: Okay.

A: However, he signed a paper in his stupor. She said to me the best part about this story is that he invited her to go home, she's a very attractive woman. And she said she'd love to. And it got very involved. And she said, but the only way she would consent is if he would be so kind, and give his signature, so that her girlfriends, who were like herself – probably figured she was a lady of the night – her girlfriends would never believe that he invited her. So, she took out a piece of paper, which was a consent to have my father relieved from prison.

Q: Oh my gosh.

A: She had never told this story.

Q: Did you think he knew, your father?

A: I – I don't know if he ever knew. I don't know. And she – this was like just before she died, she told me. So, I would say she – she was some lady.

Q: Yes, yes. And thank you for sharing that. Thank you.

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

A: It – it was pretty difficult.

Q: Yes. It is part of what was the reality, and what somebody had to do in order to survive, and help a loved one get out.

A: I asked her, I said, how could you even think of doing this? And she said, when you're in need, you do whatever you have to. That was my mother.

Q: Amazing. Thanks. We're going to break for lunch now. Thank you. **[break]**

Okay, so **Susi**, before the break, before the break, we were talking about

Kristallnacht, and the days immediately following it, and you mentioned that after – after your – you drove around that night in the car, your father was picked up again – yet again, and you shared with us how your mother got him out. And I wanted to explain a little bit why I wanted to know this detail, simply because people should not have only a sanitized version of what others went through in order to survive. And that often, you had to make a tough decision. Now your mother told you this only on her deathbed. Can you tell me what kind of thoughts ran through your mind? How – how you reacted to it? You had said before the break that it gave you something, it taught you something.

A: Well, I – I think that by example, my mother sh – enriched my life, because no matter how difficult times were for her, it was her personality that was positive.

And any – no matter what challenges she had, she would go at it in a very positive

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

manner, and not only that, she always found a little humor in everything. I mean, she would do things that we would say would be silly, or crazy. And I'm sure that's the way she vented her difficulties.

Q: By – by finding something about it.

A: I think so.

Q: Yeah.

A: And it seemed that friends would gravitate to her, because she had this charm. I- It was so innate, it was her.

Q: And she ended up being a savior.

A: Absolutely.

Q: So when your father emerged from prison the second time, was it, or maybe the third, I – I don't recall.

A: I don't know.

Q: What happened then? How did things progress then?

A: We left. My sister and I were told we're going on a vacation.

Q: Okay.

A: I had no clue. We each had a little suitcase, and my mother said, you can take one thing that you would like. And, believe it or not, I took a doll, although I was

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

not really involved with dolls. But there's a German doll called **Kathe Kruse**, and I took my doll, which I have.

Q: You do? Wow. You still have that?

A: Yeah, it's downstairs in the locker room, but I have it. And we were – the next thing we knew, we were taken to the train station.

Q: By your parents?

A: By my parents. And they – they could not go to the train, or get us on the train. We all met, the group of children, and we were escorted in the train, and before we knew it – before I knew what was going on, I was in a train. I had no clue of, really and truly, I thought I was going on a trip.

Q: Did you know it was to **Holland**?

A: No.

Q: Now, the previous times, you mentioned two previous times you tried to go, had that been by train, or some other means?

A: No, that was by car. The – the cousin from **Holland** had come with a car.

Q: I see. So this was the first train ride – the tr – first train ride to there, you know, to try and get out of –

A: Well, I can't remember ever being on a train ever before, but I – I might have been. I don't remember.

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

Q: And when you said goodbye to your parents, was it like, we'll see you after the vacation?

A: Yeah, I think it was. See, I had no understanding of the situation.

Q: And did you know any of the other kids? Did you recognize anybody?

A: They were from all over, not just from **Cologne**.

Q: Tell me, what – what happened then?

A: Well, in the train, I guess I finally realized. Everybody was talking, and we were in a compartment with other children. And the next thing I knew, my sister tells me that I was a crybaby. I was very petite, and she was – she was very grown, very mature for her age. And so I said to her whatever, something didn't please me, and I started to cry. And I cried and cried and cried. And she said, you better stop crying, because nothing's going to help you, there's no one here to help, we're just the two of us. And I couldn't understand that, and I said, well, where's mom and dad. And she said no, we're alone. We're going on a – on a trip. She must have known, I'm sure she did.

Q: Okay.

A: But the next thing we knew, we get to the border, and the German government comes – army people come in, and they te – at random, take a suitcase, open it up and dump it on the floor, to see what – what we have in it. And just before he came

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

in, I must have had a crying jag. And my sister took one look at me, and said, if you continue to cry, you'll – they'll take you and throw you off the train. So you better make up your mind to stop crying. I think that's the last time I cried. So –

Q: Ever?

A: No. But I was not a crybaby after that.

Q: Okay, okay.

A: But I was. I was spoiled. So then we – next thing we knew, with all the stuff thrown over, all over the floor, whatever, we're trying to get – but my sister was in charge, you know. I was in a corner, or whatever. I must have fallen asleep, and the next thing I knew, we are in **Holland**, and we are greeted with hot chocolate, and a cheese sandwich, by lovely, young nurses, but we didn't know they were nurses.

Q: Do you know where this was, on the **Holland** border, or inside the coun –

A: In **Amsterdam**.

Q: In **Amsterdam**, okay.

A: In **Amsterdam**, at – at the train station. Now, that leads me to something most unusual.

Q: Tell me.

A: In 1982, after my husband passed away, I – I was invited to become a member of the Hebrew University in **Jerusalem**, which I knew nothing about. And they had a

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

trip to **Israel**, and I decided to join the trip. I had never been on a tour before. And I go on this tour, and we're invited in **Israel** to a very, very top echelon luncheon, the **Knesset**. And we are at a table [phone ringing, break] We're at the **Knesset**, and one of the ladies who had sort of taken me under her wing was our – 20 years my senior. And she is speaking to an Israeli, and suddenly the Israeli lady turns to me, and she said, I'd like to introduce myself. She says, you're not very friendly. So I looked at her and I said, you were in conversation with my friend, and I thought, why should I introduce myself? That wouldn't have been very nice. And as she said those few words to me, I said, but now that I – we said hello, are you Dutch? And she looks at me, and in perfect English said, are you psychic? And I said – she said, how would you know I'm Dutch? And I said, you had such guttural sounds, it reminded me of **Holland**. She said, what do you know about **Holland**? I proceeded to tell her. She turned ashen. She was like – I said, are you well, and she said, I'm just recalling something. And she looks up at me, and she said, did you come with the children transport in January? And I said yes. And she said, from what city? She questioned me, and I tell her. She said, I was at the train station with hot chocolate. I looked at her, and I said, you were? And she said, oh yes, she said – proceeds to tell me. She was a nurse in training, and in order to graduate, she – they had to perform a social –

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

Q: Service

A: – service. And she and two of her girlfriends decided to meet this train. And she said, we got extra credit, and we thought it would be wonderful. And I said, oh really? I couldn't be – she said – all of a sudden, she regained herself, and she said, but I have to tell you the truth. She said, the reason we went, we were 19 years old, and we heard that one of the gentleman who was responsible for, or had a part in this, was a very handsome German Jew, who was – and I said, really? She said, well, we heard he was eligible, and we wanted to meet him. And I said, oh really. She said, I'm trying to think of his name. And I said, oh, that's interesting, I said, my uncle was involved in this group. I said – she said, you know, come to think of it, his – his name had something to do with a flower. And she mentions a couple flowers, and she said, no i – I'm just not – I can't recall. And I said, could it have anything to do with a rose? She says, that's it, it's **Rosenstamm**, and his name was **Fred**.

Q: Oh my goodness.

A: It's my uncle.

Q: Oh my goodness.

A: So **P.S.**, in instant, we were – we were like instant, and she couldn't believe it.

She put her arms around me, and well, we couldn't believe it. To say the least, sh –

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

after she graduated, she had – do you want to hear her story?

Q: Yes, yes, I do, I do.

A: She had – she came from a very Orthodox Dutch Jewish family. She had never been allowed on a date, she had never been away from home, and she told her mother she heard about skiing in – in **Switzerland**, she is going to go skiing. And her mother said –

Q: No.

A: – you cannot do that. Well, she and a couple of friends decided they went anyway. And her second day on – on the slo – on the –

Q: Slopes.

A: – mountain, she falls down, and she can't get up off – get back on her skis. And a gentleman comes over to her and helps her, and invites her for a cup of chocolate. And it turns out that after two years of corresponding – he was not Jewish, he was a young – oh, I want to say this correctly – can't think of the word. Something to do with plants, and –

Q: Horticulturist, or –

A: Something like that. Anyway –

Q: Okay.

A: – he – he –

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

Q: Botanist?

A: – had – she ha – that’s it. And – maybe, I don’t re-recall **[indecipherable]** – an engineer in a certain field, to do with – he had just been invited to go to **Israel**. He was Swiss, and he was given an internship at the Hebrew University, and they correspond. Now, he’s not Jewish, and after two years, they decide to get married, and her parents say, out of the question, but she said, I’m in love with him, and she goes to **Israel**. She becomes a nurse at the **Hadassah** Hospital, in its infancy. Rose to be the **CEO** of the **Hadassah** Hospital. And he was an engineer, who became a professor, who created the tomatoes that are grown under water.

Q: Oh my goodness.

A: That’s his invention. So we became friends on that first trip, and we had a wonderful time.

Q: In 1982?

A: 1982.

Q: So that’s f – over four decades after you meet her. But you don’t know it, at that time.

A: No, I – I did not know. And we – we corresponded all those years.

Q: But isn’t it interesting then, your own story brings you to the train station, and years later, you learn the story o-of how some – how those young people who were

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

there, who brought you the sandwiches and the chocolate, who they were, and how – you know, what brought them to the station.

A: Exactly.

Q: Okay. So what happened after that?

A: And she was wonderful. I saw her again on a following trip to **Israel**, and then I lost track, and we were there two years ago, three years ago, and we were at **Hadassah** Hospital. Of course, I asked for her. She had passed away the year before, but I never knew.

Q: Oh. Tell me about –

A: So that was kind of an interesting inter –

Q: Yes, it is. Do you remember her name, so that we'd have her name.

A: No, but I could look it up.

Q: We'll do that later.

A: I do not know her name.

Q: Okay. So tell me, what happened after you had the chocolate, the hot chocolate.

A: So we had the chocolate, and we got to **Amsterdam**, and we were put on a bus, and we are going to a – a home. And here was this, I would say like extremely large country home.

Q: Okay.

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

A: Not fancy. They had taken the second floor and made – what do you call it, with lots of beds –

Q: Bunkbeds? A dormitory?

A: A dormitory. They had like six dormitories on the second floor, half for girls and half for boys.

Q: Do you know the town where you were?

A: Oh, sure.

Q: What was it called?

A: **Bergen**(ph) **underzee**(ph).

Q: **Bershen**(ph) **underzee**(ph), okay. Was this far from **Amsterdam**?

A: Yeah, about hour and a half, two hours.

Q: I wonder if it's the same place where we talked to somebody the other day, who – well, we talked with somebody who was –

A: There are several, and this Dr. **Keesing** has documented where I was.

Q: Okay.

A: So we remained there, we were treated beautifully. We had school every day. We were up at 6:30 in the morning, and we had to walk a mile on the sea, in the cold winter, we froze to death. But then you had your hot chocolate, yeah, hot chocolate, whatever. And –

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

Q: Who – who supported – who was funding this? Under which agency –

A: My parents had paid for three years of –

Q: I see.

A: So, it was – we –

Q: So they had funded your – your ability to be there, but under whose umbrella was this being organized?

A: I give this Jewish organization.

Q: Got it, okay.

A: That's all documented.

Q: Okay, okay.

A: So –

Q: Now, do you remember how long you stayed at this place?

A: Yes, I was there from – until September, when my parents visa number finally came up, and they came to **Holland** in August, and rented a little apartment, cause she had her cousin there, so that was all facilitated. And I was allowed to go and live with them.

Q: Okay.

A: But my sister, who was 14, had just had a birthday, was not allowed to leave the camp –

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

Q: Okay.

A: – because she could have gone to work in **Holland**. So, they did not allow anyone over 13 to be out of –

Q: The camp. To keep them in school.

A: Mm-hm.

Q: Okay. So you were there how many months, would you say?

A: So, I was there like seven month, eight months. Had a perfectly wonderful time.

Q: Can you describe – like, you’ve described your home in –

A: It was just like being in boarding school.

Q: Okay.

A: We had our regular routine, we had our lessons. We got up early in the mor – the worst part about was the first night there. First of all, I had never – I – we walked into this dormitory of 12 iron beds, rusted terrible, with a thin mattress, and one little blanket. Out of the home I came, I had no idea what this was all about.

Q: Yeah.

A: And a – in my usual fashion, I started to cry, and I didn’t want to go to bed. But I had no choice, I went to bed with my doll, and continued to cry. And for every three dormitories, there was a lady sitting outside, watching us. Cause we’re all overcome with this total strange atmosphere. Besides which, there was no hot water. We had

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

to wash with cold water. Who ever heard of that in the middle of winter? So, I proceeded to continue to cry, and she came to my bed, and she said, you're going to have to take your blanket, you're going to have to come and sit with me outside, cause you can't disturb the other people. So that was my first night in **Holland**. And after a couple of nights of doing this, I got nowhere, as nobody else did either. And you – you just accustomed.

Q: The building itself, what did it look like? Do you remember? The building itself.

A: The building its – I was trying to tell you, I – I think I have a picture of it. It just was a huge, huge home, and they had taken all the rooms out, and made one living room area. I mean, there are lots of kids there, about 80 or nine –

Q: Do you know about how many?

A: Yeah, I have a picture of it.

Q: Oh, I think you showed me that before.

A: Yes.

Q: Yes, okay.

A: But we were in groups, so we ate at different times, and we ate at a long table of maybe 24, and very nicely done, like camp. But everybody had a napkin, and their napkin ring paper, with their name on it.

Q: Very proper.

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

A: And – I do. And the food was, I'm sure was edible, but I had never – I had been a very fussy eater. I ate nothing, until they forced me to. And then I got a letter in **Holland**, obviously, that – I never drank milk in my life, cause I was allergic to it. I didn't know I was allergic to cheese, I loved it. So I would get these, whatever –

Q: Rashes.

A: – the dark rashes and things, until they got a note from my mother, at the time, that I should not have milk or cheese. Well, that left very little to eat. So, you eat potatoes and vegetable, whatever else.

Q: Yeah. Now, did you get letters then, from your parents, while you were there?

A: Yes, we did. Usually to the cousins, and then the cousins would forward it.

Q: Okay.

A: But not on a regular basis, because it was already being censored, or whatever, so –

Q: So you were out now, you're in this – you're in this sort of camp area, in a dormitory, going to school, getting adjusted, having a new routine. Your parents are left behind, and you don't really know all that's going on with them.

A: No, I do not.

Q: Did they tell you later? Can you tell us –

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

A: They were struggling. They were not in the apartment, they were in a rented apartment.

Q: And they rented the apartment because?

A: I don't know, because I guess they didn't want to live there any more, they were afraid.

Q: Had it been looted at any time?

A: Oh yes, several times, destroyed.

Q: The apartment as well?

A: No.

Q: No.

A: No.

Q: But the store had been looted –

A: My mother, in her inevitable way, in 1938 – '38? Yes, beginning of '38, decided to take our furniture, and put it in – they called it a lift, but here you call it in a – you know, those great big –

Q: A storage facility?

A: – containers.

Q: Containers, okay.

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

A: So, she had taken our furniture, put it in this giant container, and shipped it to **Los Angeles**, that's where we were headed for. So –

Q: Okay.

A: – that's – I think that's why they moved out of the apartment

Q: Okay. So they were able to get the furniture out of the country?

A: Absolutely.

Q: Some people could, others could not.

A: I know.

Q: You know. Do you know – were they able to take – get any other of their assets out?

A: Zero. However, my father was – had English lessons in '37, from an Englishman who had quite a scheme going. He had multiple people that he'd taught, and he also advised them that he could take major belongings, silver, or money, or whatever. And as everybody else trusted him, so did my dad, and never saw any of it, not a penny's worth. Never.

Q: So it was a scam to take advantage of the situation.

A: Oh, that was – from later on I've heard he wasn't the only one. I mean, it was being done everywhere.

Q: So, when they left **Germany** –

A: They had zero. They could take out, I don't know, a hundred marks.

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

Q: Whatever limit was, the official limit was.

A: Oh, absolutely, and nothing else.

Q: So, they end up in the **Netherlands** penniless, basically.

A: I – I – they had – because of the cousins, they had brought money into **Holland**.

However, that's another strange happening. When this cousin used to come back and forth, he suggested to my folks, that he'd take certain assets back. They had a lovely home, they were young. They had two young children, and they had a home in **Amstelveen**, it was a very upscale suburb. And he buried whatever my parents gave him, in his backyard. And he had a – a map made of the actual spot of where this was hidden. However, during the German occupation of **Amsterdam**, his home was designated as a – what do they call that? Oh, where soldiers go if they're hurt.

Q: Oh, sort of like a –

A: Not a rest home, but a –

Q: Almost a field hospital, nursing home –

A: No, it was a recreation facilities, whatever.

Q: So at any rate, he was no lo – there was no way of accessing.

A: So, after the war, the – the people who owned the home were fleeing themselves.

Their children went to **England**, and one stayed in **Holland**, and was killed the last day of the war.

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

Q: Oh dear.

A: So, they had their own problems. But after the – after the war, when they went back to that home, they could either reclaim their home, or find any other home, they went to another home. Nothing that was ever hidden, was ever found. Zero.

Q: So your parents had a lot of bad luck in this way.

A: They never thought about – yes, they felt it was bad luck, cause financially when came to the **United States**, each person was allowed five dollars. That's all we had.

Q: So tell me about that. You left the school, your parents were in – remind me again, where were they staying? In **Amstelveen**, or –

A: In amst – no, they – I have their address, too.

Q: But was it –

A: In **Amsterdam**, in a –

Q: In **Amsterdam**.

A: – in a furnished, one room apartment.

Q: Okay. And you hadn't seen them then, for how many months?

A: Eight, nine months.

Q: Okay.

A: September. Eight months.

Q: Okay. And what happened after that?

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

A: Well, I think I went to school in **Holland**. I'm not sure about it. I think I did go to school for – cause I was already speaking the language, I must have gone to school. But then, two months later, in December – was September, October, November, this – the second of – no, in November we left, and we went to the **United States**. And my sister was allowed out two weeks before we left, and I have all that documented.

Q: So, when you get to meet your parents, it's actually right at the beginning of World War II, because September first, **Germany** invades **Poland**.

A: That's correct.

Q: And soon after, they also march into netherl –

A: While we were on – on the ship, on sea –

Q: Okay.

A: – **Holland** was negotiating. They did not go into war until January. So, we were already good. Things were very bad in **Holland** at the time we were onboard ship.

Q: Okay. So it was by the skin of your teeth, basically, that you got out.

A: By the skin of our – last boat to leave **Holland**.

Q: What was it –

A: The **S.S. Rotterdam**.

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

Q: The **S.S. Rotterdam**. Now, before we started this interview, off camera, it was mentioned to me that I should ask you about a 13 year old boy.

A: It is at – this is at the propitious moment.

Q: Oh really? Okay, so tell me about this.

A: The day we left out of **Rotterdam**, we were just outside of the boat area, guess we were having lunch. And all of a sudden, my little friend, **Danny Appel(ph)**, 13 years old, and I was 11, comes with one rose to bid me goodbye. How he knew I was going, I have no idea. I have his picture, I'll show it to you. So –

Q: Who is **Danny Appel(ph)**? Tell me.

A: **Danny Appel(ph)** was a little boy that I met in – in the group we were in, in **Holland**.

Q: Okay.

A: He had also been on a children transport.

Q: Okay.

A: But he was very short for his age, and I was very petite, so we were the two little kids, always. And he came to **Rotterdam** to wish me farewell, and he gave me a little photo, and with a little note in the back saying, for – remember me, your friend, **Danny**.

Q: Okay.

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

A: So that happened the last day of my – prior to getting onboard ship. Now, about five years ago, or four years ago, this doctor, Dr. **Keesing** gets my name through an organization here that's – the **Kindertransport** has an organization. I went to one or two meetings, and find out about Dr. **Keesing**.

Q: Okay, so we're going – at this point I'm going to interject and say that, we're talking about – now jumping ahead to about 2010, and Dr. **Keesing** is – tell us who she is, and –

A: Okay. And this is all pertaining to **Danny Appel**(ph).

Q: Got it.

A: Dr. **Keesing** is a professor at a university in **Holland**, who is –

Q: Today.

A: Today. Who is documenting the 2000, quote, illegal children that came into **Holland**.

Q: Okay.

A: And I – through this organization, I heard her name, I emailed her, and she emailed me back, all of which I have documented, wanting to know where I was, what happened to me. And she writes me this – all of this information of the documents of my entry, the documents of my exit of **Holland**. She had already documented me, she knew all about me. But she's trying to figure out how this all

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

happened. So, on our second or third email, I said, with all the work you're doing, I have been thinking about a young man by the name of **Danny Appel(ph)**, and I had no response. I can't figure it out, because previously she emailed me back right away. One evening I am by myself, right here, and the phone rings. And a gentleman is on the other line, and he said he'd like to speak to me, and was I in **Holland**, blah, blah, blah. And I'm sure that this is a hoax. So I said, I'm terribly sorry, but I don't know who you are, and I'm going to hang up the phone. And he said, no, no, no, no, no, he said, I forgot to mention Dr. **Keesing** gave me your number. Well, with that I knew whoever this person was. It turned out to be **Danny Appel(ph)** –

Q: Wow.

A: – who is no longer **Danny Appel(ph)**. He was – he remained in **Holland** at the beginning of the war, but when he was – the entrance into **Holland**, his German passport, he was **Rudolf Appel(ph)**, that was his name. He changed it to **Daniel**, **Danny** for short. That's what he was known by. So when I'm asking for **Danny**, he is no longer **Danny**, he jar – he joined the French underground –

Q: Oh my goodness.

A: – and survived in **France**, under **Danny**. He – he finally gets a visa to come to the **United States**, and his passport is **Rudolf**, so he has to change his passport back

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

to **Rudolf**. And I said to him, I have your picture, and he said, I can't believe it. So I went, enlarged the picture, send it to him. And my children said, Mom – this was in February, so my children said, get on a plane and go to **New York**. I said no, it's wintertime, I'm not doing that. So that summer, I did just that.

Q: Did you?

A: And we reunited after 70-some odd years.

Q: Oh my goodness.

A: So –

Q: I mean, the – the – the circles, as they're coming full circle, you know?

A: Right. And it turns out that he survived the war, and so did his mom, whom he did not know was alive, and he lives in **New York**. He married a na – a lady by the name of **Suzy**(ph).

Q: Oh.

A: And he has two daughters, and he was alive and well. However, we have been calling each other to say hello. I called him for the holidays. I called him three times, and left a message, and I have not heard. So I make the assumption that **[indecipherable]** something's not right there.

Q: Well, what a – what a gift, you know, so many decades later, to find the boy who gave you the rose, right before you leave.

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

A: And he is very involved with Dr. **Keesing**, because all his gentlemen, all his boy friends who survived, he was able to give Dr. **Keesing** the information where they are, what happened to them.

Q: Wow, wow.

A: So he's been involved.

Q: So let's go on the **Rotterdam**, as you're crossing the ocean. Do you have memories of that crossing?

A: Absolutely, it was lovely.

Q: Yeah?

A: It was lovely except for one unfortunate situation. A lady passed away on board ship. And my mother, being Orthodox, offered her services, and volunteered to take care of the deceased, which is a Jewish custom. And my sister and I, who never had heard of this, didn't know anything about it, we, both of us refused to have anything to do with my mother, because she'd been with –

Q: A dead person.

A: So until we understood –

Q: What that involved.

A: – what a privilege, what she had done, which we had no idea.

Q: Yeah. And was the lady buried at sea?

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

A: Yes. But here my mom, I mean, it's Modern **Millie**. How she had all these – it was incredible.

Q: Did you know where you were going? You know, when you – when you –

A: Oh yes.

Q: Okay.

A: Yes, definitely. We landed in **New York**, we were met by a distant cousin, young, young guy, who had been sent to **New York** by **Zeiss** camera company as an intern from **Germany**, and never went back. He's in his like, middle 20s. And he came to the ship to greet us, to tell us that unfortunately, we could no longer go to **L.A.** All our things went to **L.A.**, and some clothes went to **L.A.**, and we were not prepared for winter, except what we had on our bags. But the gentleman who has sponsored us, who was a Chicagoan, had a brother in **L.A.** Apparently he didn't want us in **Chicago**, so he suggested the climate would be better, whatever reason. However, unfortunately, the brother had a massive heart attack the week that we arrived, and could no longer –

Q: Help.

A: – help us. So we went from **New York** by **Greyhound** bus on 20 dollars that we had, and for two days of – of the trip, we each shared a half a sandwich, every place we went. A half a cheese sandwich. But we got to **Chicago**.

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

Q: And then what happened in **Chicago**?

A: In **Chicago** we were met by a first cousin of my mother's, whom she hardly knew, who had been here four months, and with his wife. He got us a hotel room, one room for the four of us. And – not in downtown **Chicago**, in a very nice South Side of **Chicago**, where most of the German people gravitated to.

Q: What was a – what's it called, that section?

A: That –

Q: It was just called South Side?

A: No, it – it was – **Hyde Park** was the nice section.

Q: Right.

A: This was on the lower side of **Hyde Park**. But nice.

Q: Okay.

A: It – it was a divided section.

Q: Okay.

A: On one side there were mansions, and on the other side was [indecipherable]

Q: Okay.

A: So we – we were there, and I started school a week later. And I had a wonderful experience. I couldn't speak a word of English.

Q: I was going to ask you, yeah.

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

A: And I was put into kindergarten.

Q: Oh my.

A: And then I went to first grade, and then I went to second grade, and finally I ended up in third grade.

Q: At the end of – during one school year?

A: Oh yeah, during a few months.

Q: Yeah.

A: And you know, you pick up the language very simple. And one day, in December [indecipherable] or maybe – maybe it was January, I don't know, it was very cold, wintery December, and I wore the same thing all the time to school, cause I had – all my clothes were – we didn't buy clothes in – you bought clothes, but we had our clothes made. And so I had a little suit on, and a little sweater that I wore every day, and a raincoat over it. And big boots, we all wore boots, which were not in fashion here, at the time. And it was a very, very cold, snowy day, and a limousine drove up to the school, that – school was – some of the more comfortable people were there, you know, ordinary, middle class. And a limo moved – pulled up in front of school, and a few of the kids we – and a little kid who was in my class, I don't even know his name, and he s – he said come on, come, come on. And his mother was in the limo. And as I approached the limo, she spoke German to me,

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

and she said, you're the new kid, hey come have lunch with us. And she was a lovely woman.

Q: Oh my –

A: Magnificent home. And she had us for lunch, and then drove us back. And she said, why did you come in the limo? And I said, we had a chauffeur at home. There wasn't anything special. As long as you were sitting there, I figured why not? What do I got to lose? I mean, all the other kids were going. Turns out this lady had three sons, she never had a daughter. So, few days thereafter, she picks up the telephone, and – we didn't even have a telephone, about a year later, she picks up the phone, and she calls my mother and she said, I am so crazy about your little girl. Could I adopt her?

Q: Oh my goodness.

A: And my – my mother said, are you crazy? However, this lady was someone I kept in touch with. We used to sit next to each other at the opera. I really kept in touch with her for a long time.

Q: What a lovely story. Now, you went to public school in **Chicago**?

A: Absolutely.

Q: Was that a strange adjustment, or not so much?

A: You're in a strange country. First of all, you have to learn the language.

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

Q: Okay. Were there other refugee kids in that school, or were you really the only one?

A: Not that I know of. In high school there were.

Q: Okay.

A: In high school there were several others, but not in that school, that I know.

Q: Did your stuff ever arrive from **Los Angeles**?

A: No.

Q: You never got it.

A: Never got there.

Q: The container –

A: Stayed in **Chicago**.

Q: You stayed in **Chicago**, but the container, items, never got –

A: Oh yes, they were there, and it took like oh, three years. And my mother said to my dad, I must have that container. Why do you need it? We can do without whatever. You know, we were in furnished apartments.

Q: Right.

A: And my mother said, all my photos all are there, and no matter what, we're going to get the container **[inaudible]**

Q: And it happened, eventually it happened.

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

A: Again my mother.

Q: Yes, yes.

A: My dad thought it was crazy, but –

Q: What – how did your parents then start establishing themselves? What happened?

A: Oh, terrible.

Q: What happened?

A: The gentleman who sponsored us was – had a company that was a major American company, **American Transportation Corporation**.

Q: Okay.

A: They made railroad cars. And he invited us to meet him. This was a third cousin, or second – I have his birth certificate, too, because my mother needed all this to verify –

Q: Right.

A: – that he was –

Q: A relative.

A: – a relative. He invited us to come downtown **Chicago**. We lived on the South Side, 47 blocks from downtown. December 10th, we walked from 47th Street to downtown, through an area that was –

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

Q: Rough.

A: – not for us to walk through, but we didn't know, how did we know? And we got to the office. He not only had his office there, he owned the entire building. Major. Major, major building, 15 floors, a big building in **Chicago**, on **LaSalle** Street. And we came, and he didn't offer my mother a seat in his office. And my father was so infuriated that no – my mother kept saying, he saved our lives, it's nothing, don't worry about it. Well, he didn't offer my dad a job. Here he is, the whole thing, the whole building was not all his, but he had like 10 floors. Give him a job as a sweeper or something. So – but he said that, in his factory outside of **Chicago**, like an hour and a half, they could use somebody. So that's where my dad started, and he was there for about four months, and he said, I can't do this, it's not for me.

Q: And so he had to find work on his own.

A: So he – he decided to find whatever job he could. And his first job in **Chicago** was as a dishwasher in a restaurant. And it was his first paycheck – this will show you my father was – the lady who hired him, he – he went and bought her six roses with his first paycheck, to thank her for finding a job.

Q: That is class.

A: That's my father.

Q: That is [indecipherable]

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

A: We had no money [indecipherable].

Q: Yes.

A: So, it all started.

Q: And how did life develop then, from there?

A: It just developed, and they went into another business, became representatives of ladies' fashion. But then he needed a car, you know, it – it took time.

Q: So did he –

A: The progression was slow.

Q: It's ironic, but you ended up in a city that had a lot of slaughterhouses.

A: Yeah.

Q: And was that ever a thought, or a possibility, that he'd use the expertise that he had?

A: Oh, he was dying to get into the air conditioning field, that was really what he knew.

Q: Yeah.

A: But –

Q: No possibilities.

A: No, unfortunate.

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

Q: And yourself, you finished high school in **Chicago**. And what – how did your life go? Did you go to college?

A: Beautiful.

Q: Yeah?

A: I was very busy.

Q: Okay.

A: I started working when I was 14, in one of the finest dress shops in **Chicago**.

Very unusual shop, owned by Germans. Learned everything I knew through difficult times, for 25 cents an hour.

Q: Oh my goodness.

A: But that's okay, I was 14. I had to wear a black dress and white collar and white cuffs, was our uniform to work in the store. And –

Q: What was the name of the store?

A: **Feigenheimer**(ph).

Q: **Feigenheimer**(ph).

A: He was – he had one of the finest shops in **Berlin**, he was known there. He only did copies of **Paris** fashion. He would go to **Paris** every three months, copy this.

Q: And come back.

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

A: So I learned a lot. Terrible man. Terrible. But he had a lovely daughter, who didn't want any part of the store. She was Americanized already, and she did not want – the store was by appointment only.

Q: Oh, it was that kind of store?

A: Oh yes.

Q: [indecipherable]

A: And you were served lunch if you were there, or tea, and whatever. So –

Q: And when you were 14, war was still going on in **Europe**. That was in the f – early 40s. And –

A: War was just over.

Q: Oh, it was just over?

A: Yeah.

Q: Yeah?

A: No, no, the war was still going on.

Q: Were you hearing anything of what was going on in **Europe**? Did you know of what had happened to relatives, had you any news, or anything like that?

A: No, there was no news, other than what everyone was subject to on – no.

Q: When did – when did you find out about what the fate was of people who didn't make it out?

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

A: Much later, when the news finally broke. You – you had no way of communicating with.

Q: And no news reports, in other words.

A: Oh yes, there were, sure. But at the time when they liberated **Auschwitz** and all that, that's when we first started hearing about it.

Q: Through the U.S. news reports?

A: And my husband was in **Europe** at the time, cause he wasn't my husband yet. But he was in **France** during the war. And my pediatrician was there when they liberated **Auschwitz**. So there – finally, but this is years later.

Q: Was your husband also from **Europe**?

A: Yes, he was. He was born – born in **Poland**.

Q: Okay. And he had come to the **United States**, and – and –

A: Yes, with hi – with his mother. His father had come prior to that.

Q: Okay. He joined the U.S. military?

A: Did?

Q: He joined the U.S. military, and was –

A: Oh, absolutely.

Q: Okay.

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

A: He was an attorney, went to **Washington**, wanted to work for the government.

As a Jew, could not work for the government, so he enlisted in the army, became a captain. Spoke French fluently. Went to **Paris** as a – went – not **Paris**, went to **France** as an interpreter for the **Wiedergutmachung**.

Q: Oh, it's restoration

A: Restoration, yes.

Q: Okay.

A: That was his field.

Q: So, let's go back. You said your – your nanny had kept all of the documents about your parents' business.

A: No, she did – she documented, she didn't have documents.

Q: She documented –

A: She documented the kind of family we were, that she –

Q: When we talk about **Wiedergut-gutmachung**, which is restoring – righting a wrong, basically, that's what it's – it means, did that ever happen in your parents' case, as far as the business? Did they ever get any compensation for it?

A: That's – the following happened. My mother suggested to my dad, that like many, many of their acquaintances, went to **Germany** immediately, got lots of reparation, or considerations, let's put it that way.

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

Q: Okay.

A: My father said, I will never step foot in that country again. They didn't do right by me, and they can keep their reparation. However, when he realized what he had missed, because his friends were all being well taken care of, he decided to get in contact with the attorney who had handled the business deal, who was alive and well. I have all o – I have a ledger this big of every correspondence that went on, for three years – or two years, I'm not sure. I have it all. I just went through it the other day, it's amazing.

Q: And so what was the end result?

A: So the attorney kept suggesting my father come, that without his acknowledging all this. And finally, about, I would say, nine months before the end of the period where you could claim, my father decided to go to **Germany**. And by the time all the papers were claimed, he could – he nee – the date had expired – th – the time for that particular law – there were different laws of personal – regarding business. And the German who bought, fought the case. He fought the case. And so my father never got anything pertaining to business. However, they did get reparation. Not as much as anybody else did. And I have stuff showing what they got. I think they – I – I don't know, I'd have to look it up, I think they got something like 500 dollars a month, or 300 dollars a month. Maybe was three. I could look that up, I don't know.

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

Q: But they never got –

A: But very minimal, because he hadn't followed up in the beginning.

Q: Okay, he wouldn't have come across all of these obstacles.

A: Under duress, he was not going to do that. So they did, for the rest of their life, did get reparations, yes. Minor.

Q: But not –

A: They never got a major sum, with – many people did, and then their monthly.

Q: So they never got compensated for their business?

A: Not a penny. I don't know why this other man got involved, but –

Q: The other man being the one who was fighting it? Or the –

A: Yes.

Q: Yes.

A: Yes.

Q: Yes. Well, maybe he wanted to keep the business. He probably just didn't –

A: I – I – I don't know what he said. He only bought it at this special price for whatever, but that wasn't the fact.

Q: Okay. When did you first go back to **Germany**?

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

A: In 1955. But they – I – I didn't go to **Germany**, no. When did I first go back to **Germany**? Interestingly enough, I went with my rabbi, who talked me into going. He said, I'll take care of you, don't worry. And that must have been in the 90s.

Q: So, decades later.

A: Yeah.

Q: Fifty years later, actually.

A: Yeah.

Q: So in some ways, you are the same –

A: Yeah, I think must have been either 80 – '89 or '90. I can look that up, too.

Q: Yeah. So y-you know, that means it's half a century after you leave. So you also had a point of you, like your dad was, I don't want to go.

A: Absolutely. There was no reason why I should go, and I really didn't want to go.

Q: And when you did, that first time with your rabbi, did it change anything?

A: It was an interesting trip, because I was the interpreter of a lot of unpleasantness that I overheard, because he was wearing a yarmulke all the time. And people would make –

Q: Comments.

A: – very unfavorable remarks. Not all the time, but if we were sitting in – in a restaurant, there were people discussing unfavorable things.

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

Q: In the 90s?

A: Oh, ab – in German, and I – I – I’m listening to what they’re saying.

Q: Did you go to **Cologne**?

A: No, not the first time. No, I went to **Cologne** as a guest, that was first time.

Q: The first time you went to **Cologne** was as the guest?

A: Yes.

Q: And that would have been recent, fairly recently.

A: Right, yes.

Q: And that was in 2005, or six, or something like that? Eight, nine years ago?

A: No. I have it all here, I looked it up in – in a minute. When did I go, let’s see.

Eight years ago would have been – I think it was about eight years ago. So, ’15 –

Q: So that’s 2007.

A: Yeah.

Q: Yeah, 2007 is the first time you’re back in **Cologne**.

A: Right. With my children.

Q: With your children. And what kind of experience was that?

A: It was just lovely. I was treated most cordially. The mayor’s secretary, who had been with him for – she had been in that position over 25 years, through different mayors. She was a love, and we just hit it off. And we still correspond.

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

Q: So, what kind of a program had they set up for you?

A: We were not the only people. They had 30 – I think we were 28 people, from all over the world, who – one of whom was born in **Cologne**.

Q: Okay.

A: There were people from **Israel**, people from **England**, people from **Australia**.
It's lovely.

Q: And was it a formal program?

A: We had a total program for seven days, very strenuous. Every day we had an unusual experience, including – and this lady was interesting – a woman who is now the head of – oh my goodness, I – I don't know all these terms. She is in charge of all the documents in the **Rhine** area, of anything that happened to the Jewish population.

Q: I see.

A: And she works in an office that had been the head of the police were – the basement was a jail, and she took me aside, and she said, I don't want you to go down there. So –

Q: Do you think it's where your father was held?

A: Yes. I don't know. No, that I don't know. But she was the one – they have a library of everything that happened from 1932 on, and she gave me the picture, she

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

gave me my parents' engagement announcement in the newspaper, and she gave me my grandfather's – I have it there – opening of the store.

Q: Oh my goodness.

A: So it – she took me into her library. It was unbelievable. You know how the Germans keep the ledgers.

Q: Yes, yes.

A: She wi – she had done all the work before I came, because she had everybody's name , who were all from **Germany**, but she didn't **[break]**

Q: Okay, so she brought you in, and she showed you items that were – pertained to your family.

A: I mean ha – I would have never known this. She had investigated the name, and she said yes, they were originally a **[break]**

Q: Okay, so we were talking about –

A: Lady I was referring to, is quite ro – respected in her field. She has written a book about the Jews in **Cologne**, and I own the book. She gave it to me.

Q: Oh my.

A: And she knows – she is – I – I – she's so unusual, she's a very quiet and laid back intellectual, with knowledge that – I always look at her and I said, how – where do you store all this? She's amazing. So when I took my grandchildren, they

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

were fascinated with this woman. They couldn't get enough of her. We invited her for dinner, and she said, no, I can't do that, but I'll have coffee with you. And we had coffee one afternoon. She just – th-ther was so much personal things that she told the children about. And they're all now, really interested. I mean, I don't know whe-whether it'll continue, but they have a wonderful background with whatever this woman created, this wonderful –

Q: Did it – did it –

A: She is still –

Q: – change your – no, did it change your feeling about **Germany**?

A: Yes and no. I must say yes, because the people I met were cordial, lovely, young. I spoke at two different schools. They were interested. However, way down deep, I had this feeling – one little child in one of the schools said, oh my grandpa told me something about the terrible Jews. This – this little kid in school that I was addressing. So, you know, my feeling were, my peers – I'm not sure. But I – honestly, I just recently read an article, I think last week or so, last 10 days, that the Germans are saying they've had enough about they had to be educated on the Holocaust. They no longer want this to be part of the school curriculum. I don't know whether that's a fact.

Q: Okay.

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

A: But –

Q: It sounds like very much a mixed bag, a mixed bag of reactions and impressions and feelings about wis – would that be accurate?

A: Well, I don't think I met the average person. So, I would not be able to qualify that.

Q: Okay.

A: Because the type of people I met had all been involved with people like myself. They were educated. And I don't think that's – that's the case. However, I did have another interesting experience I'd like to share with you, in **Israel**.

Q: Sure, please.

A: I was on a trip to **Israel**, not with **George**, on another trip to **Israel**, and I went to the Holocaust museum, of course.

Q: **Yad Vashem**.

A: Right. And by myself, I went into the gift shop. And I'm walking through the gift shop, and I see four women, young, in their early 20s, and they're speaking in German. So, I'm fascinated. I was – went over, introduced myself in German, and I said, forgive me, but I'm curious. What are you doing in **Israel**? And this one lady turned to me and she said, I know so little about the Holocaust. She said, I'm doing my master's in education, and we all came here to be educated. She looked at me

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

and she said, and what are you doing in **Israel**. And I – of course, I answered her, and she said, you lived through **Hitler's** time? I mean, she was like – she couldn't believe it. She said, I – when were you born? She started – it was some engagement that I had with them. It was very interesting. Had I not approached them –

Q: You wouldn't have – you wouldn't have had it, you wouldn't have known.

A: No, and here there are educated people coming to **Israel** to study, learn. So, one never knows.

Q: I wanted to, on this question, still talking about post-war, and ha – your – your feeling, and your relation to **Germany**, we jumped ahead to more recent times, but the first time you saw your nanny, after the war. Tell me about that. Tell me how you got to see her again.

A: It was glorious. It was –

Q: All right, what were the circumstances?

A: Well, we had her come, as our guest, to the hotel we were staying at.

Q: And where was this? What ca –

A: In **Amsterdam**.

Q: Uh-huh, so you were in **Amsterdam**.

A: And we just talked til all hours of the night, and we recalled so many wonderful happenings that we had shared throughout the years. And she had corresponded

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

after the war with my mother, all the time. But you know, I had young kids, I wasn't interested, or – I think I sent Christmas cards or something, but nothing on a very personal basis. So, it was a glorious two days. My poor husband was, I'm sure, bored to tears, cause we spoke German all the time. And it was –

Q: How did –

A: – beyond my expectation.

Q: Did she fill you in on what her life had been like, from the time you said goodbye to her?

A: I think she did, but I don't recall very much. She had an injury during – I think during the war she fell, if I remember correctly. And she had – she worked in some kind of office position, but she couldn't walk very well. So I don't think her life was too wonderful.

Q: We're coming to the end of the interview. Can – is there anything else you would like to share with us, that you'd want other people to know about, about your experience? And this can be either episodes, or some of the thoughts that have gone through your mind, that you've wondered about. Some of the ways you've interpreted what you went through, what you saw, and so on?

A: Well, I have always – the – my – my temple has asked me to speak several times. And I – I have always feel that perhaps I was too young to realize what was

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

really going on. I didn't have the burden of all the hardship. I was – I was well taken care of until **Kristallnacht**. And I felt my childhood was absolutely glorious, lovely. I mean, I had as lovely a childhood as I wanted my children to have. But we – we definitely had values in our family. We had religion in our family. And I have felt very grateful that – we talk about it a lot, especially when the holidays come about. Because most of my friends are not so inclined. And I love to go to services, I enjoy it, I – something very personal that I get out of it. And I think my – my children are involved, but not to the extent that I am. They are – I always feel they do things cause they know it means a lot to me. They do go to services, but not on a regular basis, you know. But that's fine. They have their value system, I have mine. So I have been – I have always said, I'm so grateful that I had the kind of parents I had, cause I was given values that have served me well, and I – you learn very early on in life, I was very independent, and I'm very particular about friends I choose. And I – I've always been. I mean, I didn't have a lot of girlfriends, but if I had one – this lady just that called, we're friends 55 years.

Q: Wow.

A: And I have another one in **Chicago**, it's 56 years. So it's – I think I have been so grateful. I've had a lovely life. I – I believe that every person, up to an extent, I realize that, but we have the ability to create a la – a lifestyle, no matter what milieu

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

we're in. But the style we create is something that I think I really inherited from my mom.

Q: What a great tribute to her.

A: And I learned a great deal from both of them.

Q: Yeah. Well, **Susi**, thank you very much. Thank you for sharing your story, thank you for painting such wonderful pictures with your descriptions of the various parts, the various episodes, the impressions that you had. I – I'm very grateful, and this has enriched our knowledge of this huge, huge, monumental event, that still why – reverberates today. And with that, I'd like to say, this concludes the **United States Holocaust Memorial Museum** interview, with Mrs. **Susi Frank Annes**, on October 4th, 2015, in **Palm Beach, Florida**. Thank you.

A: My pleasure, it's been a lovely experience.

Q: Thank you. [break]

Q: Okay, so **Susi**, tell me, what is this that we see here?

A: It's an **eisschränke**.

Q: Okay, but the whole – the whole item, it says **J. Rosenstamm, Köln-Schlachthof**.

A: **Schlachthof**.

Q: So, is this an advertisement of some kind?

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

A: It is.

Q: And what is –

A: This was an ad in the newspaper. This is an advertisement that they have refrigerated cabinets, for the use of butcher – butcher stores.

Q: And this would have been one of the items, one of the products –

A: Yes.

Q: – that your mother's business – your mother and father's business had.

A: Okay, but this was 1927.

Q: So that would have been before they took it over.

A: Correct.

Q: The most important part is that we get all of the top. Okay, so **Susi**, and what is this about? What is this?

A: This is my maternal grandfather, who started this business of butcher supply needs.

Q: Okay. And – and he's the one –

A: In **Cologne**. And this is where the business was when I was born, **Liebigstrasse 167**.

Q: Got it. And, thank you. Okay **Susi**, what's this?

A: This is my passport, or my **pass**.

Interview with Susi Frank Annes
October 4, 2015

Q: You mean, to leave **Germany**?

A: To leave **Germany**.

Q: I see. And it does have – it does have all of the –

A: Now, this – this says **Rotterdam**, August 1939, but we didn't leave 1939. But apparently, this was a new passport that I had to do in **Holland**.

Q: Okay.

A: You

Q: You le – I think you left in November '39.

A: Correct.

Q: Okay. Thank you.

A: And this is the – this is the document telling my parents where to take their children who are going on the **Kindertransport**, on the fourth of January, 1939.

Okay, this is a document that tells my parents – it's – it's – it's to my mother, that the children who are going on this children transport, where to drop them off at the main train station, and the time. And be sure that they have a special number on the – on the suitcase. And we – they also need their birth certificates, and what's that called – inoculation in a separate envelope. Be sure they have the inoculation and the birth certificate, in a special envelope.

Conclusion of Interview