Ironically, the government deemed her too young to be sent overseas, and she spent her first four years in Washington D.C. Finally, at the age of 25, Nancy got her chance and was posted to Seoul, Korea.

She remembers a city in disrepair. She shared a room in a compound built by the Japanese before W.W. II and ate in the army mess. After two years she was assigned to the Reconnaissance Branch of the Defense Intelligence Agency back in Washington, where she was privy to many secrets about America’s satellite imagery capability during the Cuban Missile Crisis. That position required her to travel to Vietnam before the war. In contrast to Seoul, Nancy recollects Saigon as a beautiful, cosmopolitan city.

In 1965, she was transferred to Damascus, Syria, which eventually became her favorite destination. Working in the ambassador’s office, Nancy helped a Chinese national defect and dodged attractive Russian spies who tried to compromise the Western girls. Throughout the ’60s her duties led her to Taipei, Taiwan, Morocco, and Nigeria.

Even though her work kept her far from her family in Arkansas, her parents were always very supportive of her career. “I was brought up to believe I could do anything I wanted to, if I believed I could do it,” Nancy said.

Back in Washington, she joined the Office of Protocol under Secretary of State Dean Rusk. Nancy stepped in to salvage preparations for an important meeting, earning herself a commendation from the Secretary and an invitation to join his advance team to prepare Foreign Service posts for a secretarial visit. Some of these trips included Helsinki, Paris, London and Kathmandu.

In the ’70s and ’80s, she went back to Damascus, then to London, Manila, Africa, Hong Kong, China, Nepal and Afghanistan. Highlights included watching sea turtle eggs hatching on the beach in Accra, Ghana, and riding an elephant in Jaipur.

Nancy found herself in Bogota, Columbia in 1984 at the height of the anti-narcotic program. She spent the remaining years of her career in Costa Rica and El Salvador, eventually retiring from Foreign Service in 1987 at the age of 51. She returned to Little Rock and began a completely new career in the medical field. Nancy took care of both her parents in their later years and was active in her Episcopalian Church parish.

Nancy moved to Independence Hill Retirement Community a year ago to be close to her niece, Tam. She has decorated her apartment with artifacts from her travels. Her eyesight is declining, and Nancy appreciates the security of living in Independence Hill, where she can walk for exercise in the corridors and enjoy chef-prepared meals. She shares her home with her beloved non-standard munchkin cat, Bella, who was her last Christmas present from her mother.