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## Schmitt, Kimberly Anne (FA 84)

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Manuscripts & Folklife Archives  
 Department of Library Special Collections  
 Western Kentucky University  
 Bowling Green, KY 42101-1092

*Descriptive Inventory*

**FA 84      SCHMITT, Kimberly Anne**

1 box. 11 folders. 25 items. 1988-1989. Originals and cassette tapes.

**COLLECTION NOTE**

Mania Ivanov/Ivanoff Ritter was born on 11 January 1922 in Wiesbaden, Germany. Though she never lived in Russia, Mania was proud of her Russian heritage with her grandmother's grandparents being Morozovs, a leading industrialist family in Russia. Her family fled Russia and the Bolsheviks, and her parents, Helen Liest and George Ivanov, went to Wiesbaden, Germany. Mania was the only one of their children to survive, and her parents eventually divorced. Her mother, grandmother and aunt moved to France to begin a business when she was young. Mania was sent to a boarding school at three years old and attended four different boarding schools in France by the time she reached the age of eighteen. She was then sent to a school in Carne to learn the Russian language and culture. She graduated from a school in Paris just as World War II commenced. Because she was born in Germany, Mania was considered a German and experienced discrimination from the French over the years. She had several jobs during the occupation and even helped her Polish boyfriend at the time to abet the Resistance by delivering messages, carrying the code book, and telling about arrests. Mania dealt with the black market, bribery, and other illegal activities while living in Paris. With the liberation of Paris in 1944, Mania began a job with the American Graves Registration Command where she met her future husband, John Arthur Ritter, in 1947. They married when she moved to America. She lived in Virginia, Oklahoma, Connecticut, Rhode Island, and Maine, and taught at the University of Maine. She moved to Bowling Green, Kentucky in 1966 with her family, and taught French and Russian at Western Kentucky University until 1989. Mania and John had a son, Christian James Ritter and a daughter, Kathryn Ritter-Smith; both were born in France. Mania was known for her annual Bastille Day party which she held for more than 40 years. The language professor passed away in Warwick, Rhode Island on 14 September 2017 after moving there in March.

John Ritter and Mania married on 16 February 1952 in Connecticut. He was born in Anna, Illinois, on 4 April 1920, and served in the Army for 25 years, after being drafted in 1941. He was a World War II veteran and worked with the United States Military Advisory Group, and as advisor to the French when they returned to Indochina at the end of World War II. He served tours in France on three occasions, Vietnam twice, and Cambodia. While in Kentucky, he worked as an advisor with four units of the National Guard. He retired as a financial assistant for the U.S. Department of Agriculture after fifteen years. John passed away on 31 March 2006 in Bowling Green, Kentucky.

Kimberly Anne Schmitt interviewed Mania and John Ritter several times as part of an independent study with Dr. William Lynwood Montell in 1988.

### ***SHELF LIST***

<b>BOX 1</b>	<b>Interviews with Mania Ritter and John Ritter</b>	<b>1988-1989</b>	<b>25 items</b>
Folder 1	Inventory		1 item
Folder 2	"A Life History of Mania Ritter" – Paper	1988-1989	2 items
Folder 3	Interview with Mania Ritter – Index, transcription and cassette tape	Feb. 18, 1988	3 items
Folder 4	Interview with Mania Ritter – Index, transcription and cassette tape	Feb. 18, 1988	3 items
Folder 5	Interview with Mania Ritter – Index, transcription and cassette tape	Mar. 4, 1988	3 items
Folder 6	Interview with Mania Ritter – Index, transcription and cassette tape	Mar. 4, 1988	3 items
Folder 7	Interview with Mania Ritter – Transcription and cassette tape	May 10, 1988	2 items
Folder 8	Interview with Mania Ritter – Transcription and cassette tape	May 10, 1988	2 items
Folder 9	Interview with John Ritter – Transcription and cassette tape	May 11, 1988	2 items
Folder 10	Interview with John Ritter – Transcription and cassette tape	May 11, 1988	2 items
Folder 11	Interview with Mania Ritter – Transcription and cassette tape	May 13, 1988	2 items

**BIBLIOGRAPHIC RECORD**

FA SCHMITT, Kimberly Anne 1988-1989  
84

Project titled "A Life History of Mania Ritter" which includes interviews conducted by Schmitt with John and Mania Ritter. Mania Ritter discusses her Russian heritage, her experiences in French boarding schools and her life in France during World War II. Includes indexes, interviews on cassette tapes, transcriptions, as well as a paper describing a portion of the interviews. The interviews have been digitized and are in the WKU Sound Archives. The transcripts are also located in TopSCHOLAR.

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**SUBJECT ANALYTICS**

Boarding schools – France, 1920s-1930s	F3-5
Ritter, John Arthur, 1920-2006 (Informant)	F9-10
Ritter, John Arthur, 1920-2006 – Relating to	F5,7-8,11
Ritter, Mania (Ivanov), 1922-2017 (Informant)	F3-8,11
Ritter, Mania (Ivanov), 1922-2017 – Relating to	F9-10
Russia – Revolutionary period, 1917-1921	F3
Schmitt, Kimberly Anne (Interviewer)	
World War II, 1939-1945 – France – Civilian affairs	F5-7
World War II, 1939-1945 – France – Espionage	F6-7
World War II, 1939-1945 – France – German occupation	F5-7

**SEE CARDS**

German occupation of France, 1940-1945

See:

World War II, 1939-1945 – France – German occupation

Smith/Jeffrey 11/28/2001