

Summary of Oral History: *Danielle Morris*

RG#: *RG-50.944.0189*

This Summary was written by a USHMM Volunteer 2022

Danielle Morris, born on April 26, 1937; parents from Grussenheim, a village near Colmar, France; family name Heimendinger; speaking of her father's and his brothers' business of wool fabrication for knitting in Alsace; recalling her brilliant father; returning to Alsace after the war; speaking of being Alsatian; her mother was Swiss, from Basel; speaking of her family; leaving Alsace in July, 1940 before the occupation; house was requisitioned; rationing; never revealing that you are Jewish; religious family; recalling the synagogue; speaking of "Pitchipoi"; leaving for Evian-Bains; speaking of a small synagogue in Evian founded by a Turkish family; speaking of being an only child; recalling the cold; using bicycles as transportation; not feeling anti-semitism in Evian; from an Alsatian Jewish heritage; clandestine radio; impossible to cross Lake Geneva in 1943; speaking of Saint-Gingolph and the 'Valley of the Dead'; speaking of the Rosenfeld family; speaking of the roundups in July 1942; speaking of relatives in Pau, and crossing the Pyrenees on foot; her father never considered leaving France; speaking of Pétain; recalling September, 1943 and feeling very afraid; speaking of hidden European Jews passing through Evian; arrests; recalling April 26, 1944 and trying to cross the border; being stopped by the Wehrmacht in Monniaz; being returned to Evian; recalling Henry Spira and Mr. Hertz; interrogations; her mother interned in Hotel Pax in Annemasse; speaking of the Hotel Terminus, across the street from the Hotel Pax; recalling Jean Deffaugt, mayor of Annemasse; being at a farm in Ton with her aunt and cousin, who was hidden by Dr. Skoubasse (sp) in Evian; her mother never speaking of her detention; no news of her father; recalling her mother being interned at Drancy until liberation in August; speaking of the horrible conditions in Drancy; her mother helping the younger children; recalling the atrocities; her father reunited with her grandmother in Basel; her father being interned in four camps in Switzerland, among them Girenbad; recalling speaking German or Alsatian; recalling being reunited with her mother; speaking of the trains to Auschwitz; her family restarting their business and reclaiming their stolen items from their apartment in Alsace; the family returning to their home in the Alsace region; speaking of her life after the war, and her studies in England; speaking of her writings in English; recalling again "Pitchipoi", the imaginary place where Jews were sent