

Remma Kogan



This is me, Remma Kogan. This photo was taken in Odessa in 1970.

In 1950 I married Yefim Kogan. We registered our marriage in a registry office.

On 25 July 1952 our son Alexandr was born. In the 1960s I worked as a district therapist in a polyclinic. Our chief doctor Dmitri Arkadievich Tsarkovski was a Jew - 90% of doctors were Jews. I was responsible for the provision of medical services to the district on Torgovaya Street near the Water Engineering College near the polyclinic. When I fell ill with myocarditis I stopped visiting patients on calls and worked as a therapist at reception. My husband worked in the house of officers. He trained the men's regional chess team of Odessa and the women's national chess team of Ukraine. He was an Honored Coach of the USSR [title of honor]. In December 1961 he received a comfortable two-bedroom apartment on the second floor of a 5-story house on the fifth station of the Bolshoi Fontan. This is where I live now. I remember this day very well since we couldn't imagine a happier day. When we moved into our new apartment we arranged a great housewarming party that lasted from 7 in the evening till 7 in the morning. We invited our friends and relatives. Our friends played the guitar and sang. In 1959 our son Alexandr went to school. He didn't face any anti-Semitism there, but he didn't identify himself as a Jew either. Alexandr studied well. He was a smart and bright boy and he played chess like his father. Alexandr was very attached to his father. He always had a good time with him: Yefim knew literature, art, music and history. Alexandr was fond of light music, he had a very good ear for music. He studied in a music school and often played the piano at home.

In the 1960s we lived an interesting life. We celebrated all Soviet holidays: 1 May, 7 November [October Revolution Day], New Year, Victory Day [9 May], birthdays of members of the family and relatives. We made arrangements for each celebration, making a list of guests and menus. My husband had Jewish and Russian friends: masters of sports, Honored Coaches of Ukraine. We went to theaters and concerts together. Yefim often brought records of classical operas and new books from his trips. When I met him at the railway station he had two bags when he got off a train: one with records and another one with books. We worked and Yefim also delivered lectures for which he was paid, so we were rather well off. We bought our first TV in the 1960s. My husband brought it from Moscow. We rented a dacha at the Bolshoi Fontan in the summer and spent time there with our parents. When my husband went on chess tournaments I usually took leave and joined him after the tournament was over. I visited Leningrad, Tbilisi and the Baltic Republics while traveling with him. I've seen a lot.