

Basia Gutnik's Mother Hana, Her Sister Luba And Brother Matvey



My mother Hana, her sister Luba and brother Matvey. This photo was taken in Kiev in 1910. My grandmother had three children: my mother, Luba and Matvey. Matvey was born in 1908. He was very handsome. He finished grammar school and then received further education at the Kiev Polytechnic Institute. It was difficult to gain admission into this Institute in the 1920s. Only the children of workers and peasants could be admitted. My grandfather was a clerk. The husband of my grandfather's sister was a veteran of the Great October Socialist Revolution. He and some Party official helped my grandfather to obtain a certificate stating that he had participated in the October

Revolution. With this certificate, Matvey was able to study at the Institute, and he graduated from it very successfully. He got a job assignment as a shift engineer at the KPP and married a very nice woman named Anian. They led an ordinary life, went to the cinema and to the theater, and celebrated the Soviet holidays. When the Great Patriotic War began in 1941 and the Germans were approaching Kiev, Matvey evacuated his family, his sister, her baby and his mother. He remained in Kiev to blast boilers at the KPP. They completed their task and were heading in the direction of the front when they bumped into German military. The Germans let the other workers go, but shot Matvey because he was a Jew. My mother, Hana Tabachnik, was born in Rakitnoye in 1904. At the age of five she attended the grammar school in Kiev, but didn't understand a word of Russian. There were only Russian grammar schools in Tsarist Russia, but her family only spoke Yiddish. She had a music teacher who came to her home to teach her. Besides the music teacher, an Italian teacher also came to give her lessons in how to use her voice - she could sing well, but was too shy to sing in public. Aunt Luba was born in 1907. She studied at grammar school and then at the Ukrainian secondary school. She couldn't enjoy her youth because of the civil war and the devastation which followed (1917 - 1921). After finishing school she entered Kiev's Pharmaceuticals Institute and then worked at the pharmaceuticals factory. She married a Russian in 1933. Her husband's name was Alexandr Morozov. He was a very decent man. He came from the Crimea and was educated at the Kiev Construction Institute.