

Ida Limonova With Her Older Son Yuri Shafir



My older son Yuri Shafir and I. The photo was taken in Kiev on 8th March in 1949. [8th March is Women's Day, widely celebrated in the Soviet Union.] In May 1936 my son, Yuri Shafir, was born. I hired a babysitter and continued to work [as an editor work for the children's newspapers, *Na zminu*]. Yuri lost his father in 1942 at the age of 6. I returned to Kiev [from evacuation] in spring 1944. At the beginning of 1945 I received a room (20 square meters) in this same building and my father, mother and Yuri could come from Chkalov to Kiev. Everyone celebrated Victory Day on 9th May 1945. I did, too, grieving for my husband, though. We were happy to have my father with us. I had worked with the *Perets* magazine for a year when I got a job offer from the children's magazine *Barvinok*. Actually, I was supposed to establish this magazine. I had recently become a party member, was very enthusiastic about building a new life and overwhelmed with patriotic feelings. I worked with the *Barvinok* magazine for 27 years. During the time in evacuation my father told Yuri a lot about Jewish holidays and made him a Chanukkah dreidel on Chanukkah. He also made him a rattle [for Purim]. My son was the one who had these toys, and other children borrowed them from him to play. My father taught Yuri to do many things: fix household appliances, do some carpeting and metalwork. My son became a very handy and hard-working man. . Yuri went to school. He studied very well. He finished school with a gold medal in 1953. It was also taken into consideration that his father had perished at the front. He was admitted to the Polytechnic Institute. Yuri married his fellow student, a pretty blonde girl called Julia, in 1957. She came from Melitopol. She had a Jewish mother and a Ukrainian father. They had a wedding in autumn, and in spring they graduated from the Institute and got a job at the Zaporozhye transformer plant. In 1957 my father died, 11 years later my mother passed away. Yuri worked at this plant for 44 years. He designed transformers that were in demand at foreign markets, but he didn't go abroad to advertise his products. He wasn't allowed to because of his nationality. I felt so unhappy about this. Yuri always identified himself as a Jew and has always been interested in Jewish culture and history.