

Grigoriy Sirotta And His Family



This is a picture of my family: My daughter Tatiana, my son Misha, my wife Sonia and I. This photo was taken on Sakhalin island at my daughter's birthday party in 1955. My daughter Tatiana was born in Lipetsk in 1947 and my son, Misha, named after my older brother, followed in 1948. I served as a professional soldier in Sakhalin, in the Far North, from 1949-1957. It was a hard and hungry time, but we were happy. We were young and far away from the commandment and enjoyed it. We lived in a huge barrack, in one of 30 rooms on the ground floor, with one common toilet. There were people of all nationalities. There were Georgians, Latvians and Ukrainians. There were two or three Jewish families, but nobody paid any attention to nationality. We shared everything we had. We had meals together, helped each other, celebrated holidays together, sang songs, went to the cinema and dancing. Of course, there was nothing Jewish left in me, we were all Soviet people. In 1958 I was transferred to Lvov in Western Ukraine. We went there, and I received a small apartment. I got to like this town. However, this was a place with anti-Semitic and anti-Russian demonstrations. Nonetheless we made friends with people of different nationalities; all honest and nice people. My children grew up in this town. My son became a geologist, and my daughter a teacher. My children didn't care about my Jewish nationality. They know that their father is a Jew, but it doesn't matter to them. They don't judge people by their nationality and don't identify themselves as Jews. They have children. My daughter moved to Yalta in 1983. So, my grandson, Sasha, born in 1970, lives there. He is a construction engineer. I retired in 1960. I worked as a drawer at a design institute called Ukgiproavia Project for about ten years. We developed new designs for aircrafts. My wife worked as a typist in various institutions. Our pension is too small. My wife and I are both very ill, and we stay at home most of the time. Our son's daughter, Katia, often visits us. She was born in 1987. She listens to my stories and is always very interested. Perhaps, she will continue the Jewish line of our family. We went to a Jewish organization recently to ask them about the possibility for her to go to Israel, at least as a tourist. Perhaps, she would like to study there and perhaps stay to live there. I hope she will take her chances. I'm too old to go, I can hardly walk as far as the market, but maybe my grandchildren will be lucky enough to see this beautiful country. We have discussions about the political situation in Israel. We are very interested in everything that happens in this country.