

Kurt Sadlik



This is me, Kurt Sadlik. This photo was taken in Uzhorod in 1970.

My wife and I had a good life. There were just the two of us in the whole world. We often spent vacations at the seashore. When I found my cousin we traveled to Slovakia every now and then. For residents of Subcarpathia traveling to Slovakia was easier than for the rest of the USSR.

Most of my friends in Uzhorod were Jews. It wasn't just a coincidence since I looked for Jews in every place I came to. However, Soviet citizens were reluctant to make new friends. It wasn't their fault, I understood that any person might happen to be a KGB informer and people tried to secure themselves. When I approached a man of Semitic appearance whether he was a Jew he rushed to reply 'no' and go away.

For me nationality was always important. I believed that I could have more trust in Jews and I thought that only with them I could feel at ease. Perhaps, this was something subconscious since Russians, Ukrainians and other nations living in the USSR were different to me while Jews were always Jews whether they were in the USSR or Slovakia.

When I lived in Uzhorod my neighbor became my friend. There was a synagogue in Uzhorod and my neighbor offered me to go to the synagogue together. I was happy to go with him. He introduced me to others at the synagogue.

They didn't like the name of Kurt and began to talk that I wasn't a Jew. I didn't look like a Jew. Then the senior man came. I talked to him in Yiddish. I said I could present an immediate proof that I was

a Jew. He allowed me to stay for a prayer.

I felt hurt: I didn't think they could treat a man who came to the synagogue in this crude manner. However, I understood that they were afraid of traitors and informers since life in this country taught everyone to be on guard.

My wife also asked me to stop going to the synagogue since the state persecuted religion and she was afraid that it might not be good for the children, either. I resumed going to synagogue after my wife died in 1993.