Frieda Shteinene



This is I during my vacation in Palanga, 1959.

In 1952 I successfully finished school and entered the philological department of Vilnius university. I graduated from the university in 1956. I got a mandatory job assignment in town nearby Kaunas. I changed it for a backwater village not far from home to be closer to my parents. I taught at junior classes there. I lived in a rustic house without electricity and any conveniences, but I could go home every week. Despite father being a communist, they tried observing Jewish traditions mostly likely to pay a tribute to grandmother Chaya. Of course, it was impossible to observe Sabbath at that time as Saturday was a working day, but big holidays like Rosh Hashanah and Pesach were marked at home. We always had matzah, even if we did not know where to buy it, we always made it ourselves. We had hamantahsen on Purim, and fasted on Yom Kippur. I was pleased to come home once a week and feel the spirit of Jewish home, known to me since childhood. I lived among Lithuanians in a village. Students loved me and their parents treated me dearly and tried to help me. I still keep in touch with my first students. They still call me minder.

Having worked for two years under assignment, I came back in Zagare, where I started teaching Russian. I did it for several years. Father often told me that he saw my former classmate at work and found him very pleasant. Once he invited him for a holiday.. it was Boris Steinas, a guy from our prewar class. I did not pay attention to him at school as he was lean and tall, with protruding Adam's apple. He behaved improperly and cut classes. I did not like guys like that. Now I saw a good-looking, confident young man. We had lunch and then we started looking at school pictures. In couple of days Boris came to us once again. We had similar fates, families, we enjoyed spending time together and then we fell in love with each other. On 31 December 1959 Boris and I registered

our marriage. We had wedding rings. Mother made a fashionable navy blue dress. We had a festive dinner at home, attended by our relatives throughout Lithuania.

After wedding I went to Boris in Siauliai. At first we lived in a small two-room apartment, in couple of years we moved to a new apartment from the Consumer Council, which was built by Boris's office, when he was in charge or Siauliai branch. Then we got a four-room apartment. I worked at school as a Russian language and literature teacher. I was always respected by my colleagues and students.
Boris and I had a very good living. we had polar characters "ice and fire", but our principles were alike. In businesslike issues husband was the leader, in other day-to-day things I was the head. In 1960 our daughter Rita was born and in 1963 - Lana.

Mother helped me raise my daughters. We had a good living. Husband made pretty good money and I also had an income. Every years daughters went to pioneer camps in Palanga, we went to sanatoriums using trade union vouchers. We also did not forget about cultural life. We read all novelties, went to the theaters, cinemas. later husband was given a garden. Then he bought a car and we started traveling all over Lithuania. We also went to Russia.