

Irena Wygodzka With Her Friend Mala Lobel In Gymnasium Uniform



This is a picture of me with my friend from school, Mala Lobel. I am on the right and Mala is on the left. This picture was taken in 1938, we are both wearing school uniforms.

I started attending gymnasium when I was 14 years old. It was a vocational gymnasium of the Polish Women's Association in Katowice. An all girls' school.

We learned sewing, corsetry. I didn't want to work in that profession, but my parents sent me there. Because I wasn't such a great student they sent me to a vocational school, so I'd learn a trade.

There was also a public girls' gymnasium in Katowice. But I wasn't a good student, so perhaps those general subjects would have been too difficult for me? I didn't like studying.

My friends from elementary school and from Akiba went to the gymnasium with me, for example Mala Lobel. There were some who attended the Hebrew Gymnasium in Bedzin.

It was called the Firstenberg Gymnasium. Classes were taught in Polish there. There was also a Jewish trade school in Bedzin.

My gymnasium was very decent: there were quite a few students, the building was very nice. It was in the Silesian Technical Research Plant, where there was a technical school for boys. We were in a separate part of that building.

There were practical classes and general subjects. We learned German and French. But the study of foreign languages was not very serious. I remember one professor - Mrs. Fik.

A great teacher of Polish. I think she must have been a communist. There were also Christian religion classes at the gymnasium. I left the classroom for religion classes. Jewish teachers didn't work there.