

Kurt Sadlik With His Classmates



This is a photo of pupils of the cheder where I studied. I, Kurt Sadlik, am the 9th from the left in the 4th row. This photo was taken in Liptovski Mikulas in 1940.

The 7th from the left in the 4th row is Doctor Kirtz' son. The doctor was one of the best doctors in our town. The 8th from the right is my friend Oscar Driabsa. To my right is Leon Asol, a son of the owner of a big distillery, a very rich man. The man in the 2nd row wearing a black suit is the director of our school, Wais. On his right in a gray suit is a teacher called Wais. I don't know whether they were relatives or just had the same name.

There are junior pupils sitting in the lower row. Some of them have payes. They were children of orthodox Jews. There are ink dots on some children's faces. They were put there by Oscar Debsa. He gave me this photo when I found him during my visit to Czechoslovakia in 1991. He put the dots on those who survived World War II. There were only few. Regretfully, I couldn't find any of them. There wasn't a dot on my face either. They were sure that I perished in a Gulag camp.

At the age of six I went to a Jewish school in a beautiful two-storied building in the neighboring street. There was a synagogue near the school. We attended this synagogue. Our school was called cheder, but besides religion we studied general subjects: mathematics, Slovakian and German languages, history and geography. Boys and girls went to this school. It was a school for boys and girls.

We also studied Jewish religion and traditions. A rabbi taught us to read and write in Hebrew and Yiddish and translate from Hebrew to Yiddish. We learned prayers by heart and later read them when we learned to read in Hebrew. The rabbi read articles from the Torah and we discussed them.

I studied well. My favorite subjects were history, geography and Hebrew. I didn't like mathematics. I just hated it. Before Purim we prepared Purimspiel performances. We performed in the school concert hall at Purim. Our spectators were our families. We also gave concerts at Chanukkah.

There were no sport clubs at school. There used to be a football club, but for some reason it was closed. I was a sociable boy and got along well with other children at school. I had four close friends. Of course, my school friends were Jews. Later, when I grew older, I had Christian friends.

In the 1970s I traveled to Czechoslovakia. I went to where my school was. It was still there; only it had become a vocational school. When I came to Liptovsky Mikulas in 2000 the school was not there any longer.