

Semyon Tilipman And His School Ates



This is me Semyon Tilipman (the first from right in 4th row) at the photograph of graduates of the Faculty of Wire Communication of Odessa Electric Engineering Communications College. This photo was taken in Odessa in 1939. The second from right in the 1st row is my friend Akiva Averbuch, the first from left in 6th row is my friend Zhora Schwartz, the first from left in 6th row is Fyodor Tomchakovski. I left home in Minsk on the first day of the Great Patriotic War on 22 June 1941 with this photo in my pocket and kept it with me through the whole period of the war.

There was a group of five friends in College: Akiva Averbuch, Yuzef Chizhyk, Zhora Shchwartz, Fyodor Tomchakovski and myself. Akiva and Yuzef were Jews, Zhora was German and Tomchakovski was Polish. Chizhyk left the college after his first year of studies and the rest of us finished it. Tomchakovski lived in his own house in Slobodka [neighborhood on the outskirts of Odessa]. We got together there to prepare for our exams. We went to the seashore in Lanjeron, Otrada, Arkadia [town beaches in Odessa]. In summer 1939 I finished my College with honors and we moved to Smolensk where I got a mandatory job assignment. My wife Tatiana could continue her studies in the Medical College in Smolensk. I became a civil communications engineer in communication department of Byelorussian military regiment.

In 1964, 25 years after we graduated, I organized a reunification of graduates of our college. Our graduates were working all over the Soviet Union. Many of them, including my old friends, came to this meeting. Akiva Averbuch came from Kherson, Zhora Schwartz came from Kazan. He came with another graduate of our college Kaminski. We met him at the airport and drove the car around Odessa. Kaminski was very happy to see us and talked to us fondly about Kazan, how much he liked it and how wonderful the town was, when all of a sudden he said when we were driving along Pushkinskaya Street 'Pull over, I shall kiss the stones of the pavement!' Odessites shall always be like this: they know no better town than Odessa. Zhora Schwartz visited us about five years ago, in 1998. He is in good shape: we went to the seashore with him. I often met with Akiva Averbuch - he lived in Kherson. He suffered from hypertension and when he visited us Tatiana checked his blood pressure before offering him a strong drink. Akiva died in Kherson in the late 1990s. I was away and didn't go to his funeral. Yuzef Chizhyk and his wife went to the funeral. Yuzef Chizhyk died in

1996. One of his sons lives in Berlin, Germany. Fydor Tomchakovski still lives in Slobodka. My wife and I always go to see him when going to the Jewish cemetery to the graves of our dear ones.