

## Sarah Rutkauskene With Her Grandchildren Asta, And Andrus



This is I with my grandchildren in our yard. To the right from me is my granddaughter Asta, to the left is grandson Andrus (Romualdas's son) in his father's militia cap. The picture was made in Kaunas in 1984.

I had always been a housewife. I raised the children. I always had a baby-sitter and housekeeper, whom I supervised. We liked to mark holidays at home- our and children's birthdays, memorable dates. We marked no religious holidays neither Jewish nor Lithuanian. I did not like marking soviet holidays. There was no use in that as we always were invited somewhere. We often marked them in the town theatre or at some companies. Benis got the invitations an I accompanied him.

My husband died in 1986. I remained by myself in a way as after husband's death I did not have friends any more. I communicated with husband's friends only. I am not needy. I get a large pension 905 lita for my husband [editor's note: about 350 dollars]. I felt myself alone morally and I came back to my roots as if I got the call from childhood, I started going to the synagogue, mark Jewish holydays, pray. It was so easy and natural to dip into the world of values which have been dear since childhood. There is a Jewish community in Kaunas. It was open in early 1990s. I am an active member of it and I get some help from them. 1990s I regularly went to the synagogue. The last time I was there was on Pesach four years ago. My daughter Lina also goes there, she orders prayers for our kin, buys matzah on Pesach. My children come to me on holidays, paying the tribute to my Jewish roots. I am about to start praying daily like I was taught by my father. I even recalled Hebrew. Probably I had never forgotten about my roots as this is the best knowledge in my time. I read the Bible every day and recollect my childhood, our town, my parent and the Jewish world, I grew up . Today I turned 89. My children, grandchildren and great grandchildren have been visiting me since early morning. They love me, and it makes me happy.

My children took father's nationality. First of all it was common, second of all they identify themselves as true Lithuanians. They know that their mother is a Jew, respect my past and commemorate the perished. But they are pure Lithuanian in their conscience. They went to good schools, did well. When Lina finished school, she entered Kaunas university , the history and literature department. He was fond of art and quitted her studies at her last year as she did not want to be a teacher. So, she has not got a diploma. In late 1960s Lina married the student of Medical Department. He was a Lithuanian. His name was Pupuskenyane. Their private life was not OK. Shortly after their daughter Asta was born in 1968 they got divorced. Asta finished food college, then institute. She is married. She has a wonderful husband and two daughters - Astesa and Stesya. Lina is retired. She is fond of art. She is painting landscapes. Lina is living with me. I moved to her after her husband died. Romualdas family took our big apartment.