

## Zinoviy Rukinglaz With His Wife Gitl Rukinglaz And Their Friends



I, Zinoviy Rukinglaz, (from the left) with my wife Gitl, from the right is my wife's niece and her husband. I don't remember their names. This photo was taken during a walk in a park in Kherson in the early 1970s.

In 1944 I went to work as an electrician at the shoe factory. Gitl had finished 5 forms in a Romanian school and 2 forms of a Soviet school. Uncle Ilia taught her accounting and in 1952 Gitl went to work at a storage facility. Her colleagues treated her well. My wife and I have lived a very good life loving each other. Gitl retired at the age of 55. I worked until 1990.

We couldn't afford much. We didn't travel on vacations. Actually, I spent my vacations trying to earn some additional money. We didn't have many friends and socialized mainly with my relatives and my wife's relatives. My wife and I tried to observe Jewish traditions, whenever possible. Of course, we had to go to work on Saturday, when there was a 6-day working week. We were generally not religious, but we celebrated Pesach, Chanukkah and Rosh Hashanah as a tribute to traditions and to the memory of our parents. We had festive meals and talked about the history and traditions of the holiday. We tried to teach our sons to respect Jewish traditions, and I can say, they grew up to be real Jews.

In 1988 the Jewish life progressed in our town and I began to take part in it. A Yiddish school was established. Professor Modiyevskiy and Professor Ruzberg taught it. There were about 30 Jewish activists and we wrote a request to the town executive committee for the return of the synagogue to Jews. We also arranged a meeting in front of the town administration. The synagogue was returned in 1988. It housed a mental clinic before. The Jews of Kherson collected money for its repair. I installed the whole electrical part. The synagogue opened in 1989. I attend the synagogue to pray and study in the yeshivah. I often ask myself why we didn't move to Israel, when we were young, but I can find no answer. I was probably too busy having two jobs and didn't have time to think of changing my life. I feel sorry about it now. I've always sympathized with Israel and their

struggle. I am very happy that at least my grandchildren will live in their Jewish country.