

## In Edirne City Club



We were newly married. It could have been Purim, it was a holiday celebration. I think I was on the board of directors of the club that year. The Jews, we would congregate together. There is one synagogue in Edirne that is now demolished. In the old times, there was one synagogue in each neighborhood. They were about 40-50. For example ladies had a separate synagogue. This was like a one-room prayerhouse. They would gather and do their prayers. They had a rabbi, a gardener. There were synagogues according to professions. There even was a city club. It had no name, I even was on the board of directors. All social activities took place there. I worked on the board of that city club too. I am not a founder. This club was for Jews. There would be balls, garden parties once a month. For example, we would gather there after lunch, it had a large library, whoever wanted read, or played cardgames. From time to time, musical meetings took place. In my childhood, I think close to 15,000 Jews lived in Edirne. The Sabbath days had a special place. That day, after leaving the synagogue, we would go strolling to parks, to river banks. Saturdays was a different event for us. Everyone dressed well. There was a park called Bulbul Parki(Nightingale Park), ladies, gentlemen, when they left the synagogue they would eat their dezayuno(breakfast) boreks) there. On Saturdays, this event was known among the Turks too. There was a beautiful unity. There was a lot of unity and accord in Edirne. My father was a very strict man, but he paid a lot of attention to solidarity among Jews. We were all like a family. Whenever someone had a problem, or someone had a happy occasion, we would run there. That is to say we shared everything. We lived through the good days and bad, the sweet and the beautiful together.