

## Ester Vee And Her Grandson Mario Vee



This is me and my older grandson Mario Vee, Vallo's son, in the Kadriorg Park in Tallinn. This photo was taken in September 2005.

I have taught Estonian at courses, schools and kindergartens for over ten years. I also give private classes. I feel like working while I can. My work gives me a lot of moral support. Last summer I had an invitation for the meeting of veteran teachers with the President. Besides, it's always good to be able to earn some money. Karine will get her education, and my mother needs assistance. However, feeling that I'm needed is very important for me. My sons Mati and Tarmo live with me. They are single, and they are not easy-going whatsoever. My husband died a year ago [2005].

For 15 years Estonian has been independent. Now, when looking back, I can't say whether life has become better or worse than during the Soviet time. Many things have grown worse. In the past there were more children's programs: summer camps, free hobby and study groups in pioneer centers and sports centers. They still exist, but they've become rather costly. Few parents can afford to pay for their children's after-class activities. Also, there used to be state-provided apartments, free education and healthcare. There were no homeless or jobless people. This was good. What is good about now, is that we live in our own country, and people decide what they want it to be like. Hopefully, my granddaughter will live in an independent and wealthy Estonia.

My son Vallo was married. His wife died in a car accident, when their son Mario was two years old. Vallo hasn't remarried. Now Mario is 21. He is a student of the Tallinn Polytechnical University. He is very nice and decent. He has a fiancée.