

Dr. Asher Ehrenfeld Rabbi In Dej



This picture was taken in the office of the Jewish community of Des in 2004, at the 60th commemoration of the deportation. It was attended by the then Chief Rabbi Dr. Asher Ehrenfeld. [Editor's note: the rabbi is originally from Nagyvarad, he replaced Chief Rabbi Moses Rosen for a year in 1992, then substituted his brother Abraham Ehrenfeld for few months in 2004 as the official rabbi of the Association of the Romanian Jewish Communities.] He is the one with a hat who sits at the table. The current Chief Rabbi is his brother, another Ehrenfeld, they are originally from Nagyvarad. [Editor's note: The only employed and official rabbi of the Association of the Romanian Jewish Communities is Abraham Ehrenfeld, Asher Ehrenfeld's younger brother. But his position is not Chief Rabbi, because after Moses Rosen's death there were no more national chief rabbi.] The one sitting on the sofa is a delegate of the Association, a chazzan.

I kept the Jewish religion even after my marriage. I didn't go every day to the synagogue, but I observed each holiday and attended the ceremonies, commemorations or any holiday: New Year's Day, Yom Kippur, Pesach, Shavuot, and I was present at the Yiskor services, every time. We didn't light candles for Sabbath. There's an interesting thing that I found out just now, when I grew old. The candles on Friday evening were lit by the women, not the men. And I was scared in Israel when the partner of my daughter didn't light the candle, but he showed his gratitude for the challah every Friday evening, and poured wine into a goblet, and said a prayer for that. After that everyone tasted the wine. In a word I'd like to say that only women light candles, and not the men. My mother lit candles. After she died, nobody lit candles in our house.

The rabbi from Temesvar always used to come to Des for Chanukkah, and after he died, they sent a chazzan from Bucharest. On a scheduled day, we gather in the synagogue, in the small office. They light candles, one for each day of the holiday that has passed. Because we had to light candles for eight days, one on the first day, two on the second, three on the third and eight on the eighth. We celebrate the other holidays only in close companionship. We go to the lobby of the synagogue, not in the main room, and everyone prays as they can.