

## Anna Eva And Andras Gaspar At A Picnic With Friends



This is a picture of us out on a picnic in Marosvasarhely, on the banks of the Maros; it was summer. This Skoda was our first car. The second one was a Dacia, we won it, but then we gave it to our kids. The Volkswagen beetle was our friend's. In this picture Andris, my grandson is in my lap, who is now 29, so the picture was taken around 28 years ago.

All four of us are Jews. I'm the one sitting with the child in my lap. My husband Andras Gaspar, Andris, is the first one, he is lying down on the blanket. She is Kati Velcer [the lady sitting second from left, with the headband]; she was my classmate until fourth grade of middle school. She is Jewish, and she is living in Germany together with her husband, Feri Velcer, who was the executive manager of Prodcomplex. Kati is around 90. Veronika, who graduated the music academy in Kolozsvar, went on tour with the band to Germany and she remained there. Kati's son, Peter Velcer, went on a trip and also remained there. Feri, his father, had some problems with the police and the Securitate. He was a passionate hunter and had a permit for hunting gun, but it was revoked. This was only one of the slaps in the face he got. Veronika married a German man, while Peter a German woman. They are assimilated. No two months pass by without calling me. Klari, who is lying down on the blanket is Veronika's lady-friend, who was viola player in the symphonic orchestra of Marosvasarhely. Her husband is next to her.

Andris wanted to emigrate to Israel, right after we got married, but I didn't really liked Israel. Many of his friends are there, and he was there. I often reprove myself for it, because I was the one who said I don't have the strength to move to a new country, because it is possible that it would have been better for my child. But I knew I could never learn that language. I have a very bad sense of language. And that one is one of those dead languages. I liked living here, and I was hoping my mother would come home. Then I hoped my brother would come home. But I got no sign from him.

I didn't know where they were, or if they were alive, I knew nothing about my cousins, but one day Andris, while we were still living in Vilcea, came home and told me he has such good news I would

be happier than to see him. 'What happened?' He looked around and found out that Leitner, my cousins' uncle was still living in Bucharest. He went to him and asked him whether he knew anything about my two cousins, the daughters of my uncle in Tasnad. 'Of course I do! One of them lives in England, the other one in America.' And he gave him their addresses. I was so happy I started crying. As I found out later, they worked in a factory [during the Holocaust]. Those who worked in factories had a much better situation. They had a roof over their head, and weren't cold. And they weren't starving as much as the others. After they got liberated, a Swedish company from Sweden took them under their protection and took them to Sweden. They told them 'You can stay there as long as you live.' But how did Agi get acquainted with her English and Evi with her American husband...? Probably in Sweden, but I never found that out.

We arranged with my husband's cousin, Gyuri Herschdorfer, to go to Germany still under the Ceausescu regime. This was in the early 1980s. And what a fuss they made until they let us go! We only managed to get the documents following much fuss. We had to produce the invitation and some documents stating they would provide for us, and that we would return; we needed lots and lots of documents. Andris arranged everything. But he always came back displeased. I remember a militia came to us, Andris started crying in the little room, he was still small, around one and a half years old, and he asked us why we wanted to go to Germany? 'Do you want to dicker?' I told him by no means, I just wanted to meet with my relatives. 'Or your husband has some ideas, he looks for a job?' Under no circumstances, I can guarantee you we'll come back. Well, you can never know. He behaved very badly with me. Then there was another one who came, but this one was more civilized, he only asked me to be careful what we said, because people were talking. The documents have reached the Ministry, and in the end we got the documents. Otherwise I don't think they would let us go. I don't believe they would. Our relatives from Germany sent us money for train tickets for going to Bucharest, and from there we went by plane to Frankfurt. Gyuri was living there, who, I hope, is still alive there in Germany.