

Erika Shoval



On this photo the person in the middle is my daughter Erika Shoval [nee Grossmann]. Presumably this photo was taken in the High School of Arts in Kolozsvár, Erika attended that school.

Erika was born here, in Des on 10th March 1951. Erika's Jewish name is Cserna after my husband's mother. She was two and a half years old, when she was given an injection infected with tuberculosis, and she fell ill. She was very ill, her feet were swollen, they get swollen even today. Erika attended the high school of arts in Kolozsvár, she had the first place at the exam. The school was in the Budai Nagy Antil street. She finished it, then she entered the university, she studied fine arts there, in Kolozsvár. She learnt many things, not just drawing. She was writing poems, when she was in school she even participated at the Goga competition in Csucsá [Ciucea], where she was given the second prize. [Editor's note: The Romanian poet Octavian Goga lived in Csucsá, his house functions today as a Goga memorial house.] There wasn't a first prize, and she won the second prize. She wrote many poems, and she sent them to newspapers, to the Albatros, she sent her poems to many places, and she was given a lot of money [for publication].

First my daughter got married to a man from Bessarabia, in fact to a boy with Russian origins, he was a kerosene engineer [he worked in oil exploitation]. His name is Gigel Cernev. My daughter was a drawing teacher, she got to Moinesti, she was placed there, they met there. When he visited us and asked for my daughter's hand, I said: 'No! You can shoot me in the head if you want to, but I won't let my daughter marry you. She is unhealthy, not a rich girl, your family is rich, it won't be a good match for you. She has a Jewish suitor, she should marry that one.' And my daughter went back to Moinesti, well she was employed, and she kept the wedding one week after, without me. He was a good boy, he wasn't a bad boy, and it was a good family. He was the only child, and his parents were well off, his father was a physician, and his mother finished a university too.

They didn't want to stay in Moinesti, and my son-in-law got a job in Campina as an oil exploitation engineer, and Erika was employed in Ploiesti as a teacher. But somebody badmouthed my son-in-law - because that person needed that job - saying that his wife wanted to leave for Israel. Though Erika didn't want to. So they kicked him out from that employment in Campina. And so they

decided to leave for Israel indeed. Erika graduated in Kolozsvár, and in those days she had spent much time with the chief rabbi, Rosen, with the choir. And she spoke with Rosen, she related him what the situation was. He answered that they should go to Bucharest, and it would be arranged there. Indeed, she got her passport in a very short time.

She left for Israel with her husband in 1975 or in 1976, but he didn't like Israel, and he left for Australia. My daughter sued for the divorce, and divorced him. Then she met her present husband, Moni Shoval, this was a simple Jewish boy, he was born there in Israel, and it came out a very good marriage. In fact Shoval - that's what Erika told me - means Simon. I can't talk to him at all. Because he speaks Hebrew and English only. When my son-in-law comes here, he eats nothing in my house. He has some kosher canned food, but he has a weak stomach, he eats boiled meat. But he's very kosher, very religious. He has five siblings, Erika is on good terms with all of them. He's a nice tall man, thanks God they are fine. They lived in Ktarsa [Kfar Sava?], my daughter had two schools there, she was teaching in a very religious school, and she had a part-time job in a less religious school too. She was very contented. She is a drawing teacher, she also paints, and she teaches children at home. Recently they bought a house in Ghinot Shomron, because apartments were cheaper there, and my daughter wanted a house with garden by all means. Her husband works at the Schwartzkopff, he takes in the goods, and passes them on, he works on the computer. They have a daughter, Saphir, she's fourteen and a half years old [she was born in 1991]. She's tall, she's a very beautiful girl. And she's a very good student. She also writes poems, she published poems two times in newspapers. Erika was teaching her, she's still teaching her drawing. She wants to become a designer for telephones, things like that.