

## Zoya Shapochnik And Her Classmates



These are 4th grade students of the secondary school in Chirchiq in 1943. This is me the 2nd to the right in the middle row. To the left is my friend Inga Golunova.

During our wartime wanderings, my mother and I reunited with my father in Chirchiq. We reached Chirchiq and gingerly stepped on the suspension bridge trying to cross the rapid mountain river. A military guy helped with our things. We reached the hostel, where my father was living. It's difficult to put in words what we felt when we saw my father. Even now my heart is thumping when I go back to that moment. We embraced each other, crying and laughing at the same time. We spent the first night in the room of the hostel for men. There were six more men apart from my father. Then my father found a tent where we settled. There was an aryk [artificial irrigation channel] close by. We drank water from it and bathed there. We didn't stay there for long, we moved to barracks. My mother found a job at a fertilizing factory and soon she was given a room in a warm barrack. Our life was getting better.

Here in Chirchiq I went to school, where I studied for two years. in the third and fourth grades, and became a pioneer. I did well at school. I was equally good at liberal arts and sciences. I took part in extra curriculum activities, recited verses on festive events. I had a friend, Inga Golunova. Both of us took an oath that we would never part. We corresponded with each other. Inga graduated from Moscow State University, the history department and got a mandatory job assignment in Pensa. She worked in a history museum. In 1962 we stopped keeping in touch. I don't know what happened to her.