

Sarrah Muller With Her Family



My family, my daughters, sons-in-law and grandchildren photographed before Alla and her family's departure to Israel in 1990 in a photo studio in Kiev. Sitting from left to right in the upper row: my daughter Inna Lesovaya, I, my daughter Alla Gotlib and her son Vladimir Gotlib. Standing from left to right: my grandson Inna's son Maxim Lesovoy, Inna's husband Arnold Lesovoy, my daughter Alla's husband Victor Gotlib with their son Yuriy.

Our family lived a happy life, full of love and understanding. We spent a lot of time together, went out of town, and liked spending our vacations at the seashore whenever we could afford it. My husband and I read a lot, loved theater and attended all premier performances. We spent a lot of time with our daughters teaching them to like good literature, theater, listen to music, talked a lot in the evenings to raise harmonious and spiritual people of them. My husband died in 1983.

We raised wonderful daughters. Inna, the older one, showed talents since childhood. She played the piano beautifully, drew and wrote poems. Inna studied very well, but when she was in the second form, she fell ill with poliomyelitis. She spent a lot of time in hospital and in a recreation center. A few years afterward Inna walked on crutches, but when she walked without them, the doctors were struck by her strong will and spirit. When my daughter fell ill, I had to quit work to take care of her. I took work home, and the whole family helped me to knit bags that I took to the shop and they paid very little for this work. Inna attended an art studio and submitted her documents to the Art College and failed, naturally. It was next to impossible for a Jewish girl to enter this kind of a higher educational institution in Kiev. After her second effort that failed Inna's friends advised her to send her works to Moscow Polygraphist College. She did and soon she entered the Faculty of Book Design. She studied by correspondence, and I always accompanied her to Moscow, when she went to take her exams. Inna finished the college very successfully. At that time she already had an interesting job. She made dolls since childhood and this became her profession. She made sketches and sample dolls for several toy factories. Inna received a decent reward for her work. She also drew pictures just for herself. In recent years Inna's talent in literature has shown up. She had a few books published and her works published in magazines in Kiev, Israel and USA. Regretfully, my daughter has suffered from poor sight lately, but she

continues her work. Inna married Arnold Lesovoy, a Jewish guy, in 1974. He was born in Chernovtsy in 1946. Arnold is a brilliant mathematician. They've had a happy life together for many years. In 1976 Inna's son Maxim was born. Maxim got fond of Judaism after he went to a Jewish camp in his teens. This became the essence of his life. Maxim is a religious Orthodox Jew, one of the leaders of the religious community in Kiev. His Jewish name given to him at the brit milah ritual conducted in his adulthood is Moshe Elizeer. Maxim is married and has a daughter. His family follow kashrut strictly, celebrates Sabbath and observes all Jewish religious traditions. I live with my daughter and son-in-law. We celebrate all Jewish holidays and try to observe Sabbath. In 1999 my grandson insisted that Inna and Arnold stood under the chuppah at the Brodskiy synagogue on their 'silver wedding'. This was very moving and ceremonious.

My second daughter Alla dedicated herself to music. She failed to enter the Conservatory in Kiev and went to Gorkiy where there are no prejudiced attitudes to Jews. She finished the conservatory there and became a pianist. Alla married a Jewish guy. Her husband Victor Gotlib, born in 1948, became a scientist in mathematic and chemistry. She was thinking of returning to Kiev for many years, but when Chernobyl occurred we convinced her that they should stay away from here. Alla has two sons: Yuriy, born in 1979, and Vladimir, born in 1986. In the early 1990s they moved to Israel where they live in Ashdod. Alla's sons had a circumcision ritual in Israel. Now their names are Uri (Yuriy) and Zeev (Vladimir).

My daughter and I have not become religious. We do not observe traditions or celebrate holidays, but I order a memorial prayer for my dear ones at the synagogue every year on Yom Kippur. I took this vow back in 1944, when I got to know that my family perished. I also pray for my daughters and grandchildren wishing them happiness. I think that I've lived a happy life despite all the suffering that I had to live through. I loved and was loved.