

Mina Smolianskaya's Family



We had this picture taken prior to my son's, Victor's departure to Tomsk where he was going to enter an Institute. Victor studied in Tomsk. This photo was taken in Chernovtsy, in 1963. Victor is standing on the left. My husband and I liked guests and parties. We celebrated Jewish and Soviet holidays. We took advantage of every opportunity to have guests and party. We had fun singing and dancing when getting together with friends. I didn't take any part in public activities after I got married and didn't take any effort to restore my membership in the party. I didn't obtain my party membership identity card and was not registered as a communist. So there was no registration information about me in Chernovtsy. I took no interest in politics, either. I was a married woman and had other things to care about.

Our sons were doing well at school. In 1963 Victor finished a Russian secondary school. It was difficult for a Jew to enter a higher educational institution. All our friends' children were leaving for other towns. Victor went to Tomsk in Russia and entered the faculty of Physics and Mathematic at the University. Upon graduation he returned to Chernovtsy and became a teacher of mathematics at school. Victor married a colleague of his. His wife Ludmila, nee Gotman, is a Jew. Victor has two children. His older son Jacob was born in 1972 and his daughter Yana was born in 1976. They both went to Study in Israel under the student exchange program "Sokhnut". They stayed in Israel after school. Yana visited Chernovtsy in 1997 for a month. She married a Jewish man and they left for Israel together. My son Victor got in a car accident in 1983. The doctors said that he had a concussion and sent him home to complete treatment. In two days' time he fainted and was taken to hospital. He died there during a surgery. We buried Victor at the cemetery in Chernovtsy.

After finishing school Efim got fond of orienteering. He was very successful and was a permanent member of the sport team of the USSR. Efim married a Russian woman. My husband and I and her parents were against their marriage. Her father threatened to kill my son with an ax and said that they didn't want a Jew in their family. Well, the young people didn't listen to what they were told. They got married. Her father didn't come to their wedding. Only her mother came. They lived in their own apartment. I heard the word "zhydovka" for the first time after the war. It was said by my daughter-in-law, we had had an argument with her - I don't remember for what reason. I do not try to say that there was no anti-Semitism. I guess, it always existed, but almost all of my colleagues were Jews and so were my neighbors. Not all Russian people are bad, but many of them hate Jews.

My older daughter-in-law told me that Efim's wife loves him and tolerates his relatives, but she hates other Jews. Efim entered the Institute of Physical Culture in Lvov after he turned 40 to get a diploma of higher education. He graduated from the Institute and became an international referee. He often goes on tours to the US and Israel. He has two children.