

Mair Benvinisti



This is a photo of my father Mair Benvinisti on the terrace of our apartment in Hipodruma quarter, Sofia, in 1965. My father studied at the Jewish school until the 4th grade. The most interesting thing is that he could remember in strict order the names of all his 32 classmates. He used to recite them at all family gatherings, and that always amused and impressed us very much. Both my parents were literate. My father's favourite book was about Vassil Levski. . My father worked as a shoemaker when we lived in Plovdiv and also when we moved to Sofia. In the 1930s he hid people who were illegal and wanted by the police for their extreme pro-communist convictions. Such people used to take refuge in the Soviet Union at the time and came back after 9th September

1944. Many guerrillas [antifascist orientated members of armed squads] visited our home in Plovdiv. I remember that one night Malchika [Malchika was the nickname of Adalbert Antonov, an active UYW member, who took part in the underground communist movement in Bulgaria. He was caught by the police and later executed.] came to our house. He was wearing a squash-hat and he came to instruct us to recruit people to join the party. My mother and father thought themselves modern and didn't observe the kashrut. I remember that my father didn't want to eat from the tough matzah on Easter and he secretly bought bread. He also didn't go to the synagogue - he thought that wasn't necessary. My mother used to go but just to meet people, or show off her new clothes.