

## Sara And Izidor Benbasat



In this photo are my good friends Sara and Izi Benbasat in front of their house in Dor Bunar. It was taken in 1944. This is a typical garden from the poor Jewish quarters in Sofia. There is a running water tap outside and Izi is leaning on it. Behind them are the clothes hung out to dry. As a matter of fact most of the taps in those quarters were outside, as well as the toilets. I met Izi and Sara for the first time in the Jewish Chitalishte in 1938. At that time there were a lot of activities there. On the back of the photo there is an inscription in ink: 'We are giving you this photo. Let's whenever you look at it, you, Roza and Larry, get a recollection of us - Sara and Izi. 14th 1944. Ferdinand.' The photo was probably sent in a letter from Ferdinand, now Montana, where they were interned, to Vratsa, where we were interned during the Holocaust. I became a member of UYW in 1939. I got involved in the organization without realizing it at first. I was friends with Izidor Benbasat, Isak Talvi, Aaron Meshulam and we frequently met in the Chitalishte. The others who were older than us were already members of the Party. An entertainment party was organized every Sunday in the Jewish organization. We visited each other and organized dance parties at our places, too. Everyone would sit wherever possible. We would play the gramophone. The Comparsita tango was popular at the time: Asparuh Leshnikov and Albert Pinkas. We used to dance tango, foxtrot, waltz, 'horsey' - a dance which involved standing in a line and lifting our feet, something similar to letkiss. During the breaks between the different records there were some lectures, we read poems, made some issues clearer and tried to attract the disoriented youngsters who we called 'boulevard youngsters.' As a matter of fact, beside these general enlightening activities, a lot of communist and socialist ideas about social equality were put through and these ideas actually made us join the UYW movement with our older friends who were already members. Everything was illegal and took place in secret. In that way, with some of my closest friends, we created several UYW groups. On completing such activities I made some friends. One of my friends, Aaron Galvi, became my brother-in-law when he married Stella, my future wife Rosa's sister, and the other one, Yosif Galvi, became a partisan and died afterwards.