

Malvina Balaszova And Jozef Balasz



This is a portrait of my parents Malvina Balaszova, nee Neumannova, and Josef Balasz. The photo was taken in Kosice in the 1920s. My father worked in a bank as a clerk and my mother studied economics in school and after she graduated, she worked in a bank. I was born on 25th May 1922 in Kosice. We lived in a three-bedroom apartment. My social circle was completely Jewish and as a girl growing up, I belonged to different groups, like the Maccabi, which even had a center where we could meet. Or, if there was no organized group, like, say, for ice skating, my Jewish friends and I would go together. Things turned bad for us beginning in 1938. My father was fired from his job after the Hungarians arrived. All the relatives in his family started helping each other in every way they could. I don't know the circumstances, but I never heard the issue of emigration being discussed. Still, I went to school and I graduated from high school in 1941. When the Germans came here in 1943 my mother and I escaped to Budapest. My father arranged all this for us in advance, and he was to come later, but first he had to help his own family out. He didn't make it.

He was deported from Kosice in 1944. My mother and I survived in the Budapest ghetto. While there, I was grabbed and taken to the train station, on a transport bound for Germany. My mother came to the station and she just pulled me off. This happened in 1944. When the bombardment started my mother and I hid in a cellar. She really didn't look like a Jew, and I think that's partly what saved us.