

Gyula Foldes With Friends



This is a picture of a circle of friends in our apartment around 1952-53. From left to right are my brother Endres, or Bandi Foldes, Gyuri Karpati, who is a dentist and director today, me, then Peter Nador, who lives in America today, and Peter Horanyi, who was a classmate of mine alongside Karpati. We are playing cards. Mostly we got together in our apartment. We also went hiking quite often, to the Pilis mountains. [A hill range near Budapest.] Two relationships survived from elementary school. One, Peter Held, now lives in New York and we have been friends since September 1939. We started school then and indeed lived in the same building. The other went by the name of Pali Hollander, who also lives in America, a university lecturer, who is now retired. On 6th October 1948 I went to a brothel for the first time with Held, during the fall holidays, to Madame Clarisse on 84 Kiraly Street. We went there several times until the brothels were closed and Peter left in 1949. At the end of the 1940s it was completely normal for young boys to go to brothels. My father's cousin, Uncle Arnold, who was a rich man, gave me some money for it, 100 forint. Then we would visit each other to play cards, with Szinetar, Peter Polgar, Sommer, Gyuri Szabados - my classmates. Miklos Szinetar's father, Erno, was a psychiatrist and the director of the Janos Hospital. Peter Polgar became a tax expert. I entered university in 1951. They didn't want to take me, despite the fact that my mother was a party member; at the Csengery Street surgery she was even party secretary. At that time there was a 'wise' party directive that medical dynasties weren't encouraged. But one of my mother's cousins, Imre Zador, held a high post in the medical union, he was on friendly terms with the dean of the Medical Faculty, and so I was accepted into university without any problems. There was an anti-Semitic current at university. The university party leadership was a People's College crowd. But there were many Jewish lecturers at university. We believed the Rajk trial and then again we didn't. We guessed that something was wrong, but truth is it didn't affect us. We didn't pay attention to the scale of deceit going on. There was an antisemitic current at the university. The university party leadership was a People's College crowd. But there were many Jewish lecturers at the university.