

Bernard Knezo Schönbrun With Young People At The Swimming Pool In Michalovce



This photograph was taken in 1937 or 1938 at the swimming pool in Michalovce, where local young people used to meet. The first on the right was named Molnar. He was the first in town to do a grand circle on the high bar. The thing on his head is a hair holder, so they wouldn't get in his way during sports. Standing beside him is Velgos, the son of the regional chief. I'm the third. On my right is Stasko. The last is Gluck, who worked for the Office of the President after the war. He was the personal secretary of several Czechoslovak presidents. He was a very educated, intelligent and on top of that good-looking guy. His father was the manager of a bank in Michalovce. After the war he didn't associate with anyone. Not even with his closest friends. It's interesting that despite his ?bourgeois? background, he was good enough for the former regime, and we, wretches, weren't. Poor guy, he died in Prague not long ago. In 1940 I finished high school. We were the last Jewish graduates. I played sports in high school as well, I was even one of the two best Jewish athletes. Thanks to sports I got to the Eastern Slovakia high school championships in Presov. I was the only Jew from our school who was eligible for a place in this event from a standpoint of performance. It was sometime during the years 1936-1937. As a Grade 10 student, I even got onto the relay team, as its fourth member. I battled for the position with a boy who was two years older, by the name of Stasko. All the non-Jews were rooting for him, and I defeated him in a race, and back then I was very proud of myself. This photograph also shows that we were all friends, despite being rivals in sports. For example, I competed with Stasko as to which of us two will represent the Michalovce high school in the relay at the high school games in Presov. Despite the fact that I won, he was better in other sports.