

Kurt Kotouc And Pavel Sensky



This is a picture of me and my cousin Pavel Sensky. The photo was taken in 2004 in my apartment in Prague. In 1989 there was so much happening in Europe that there was reason to believe that it would come here too, although in earlier years I didn't hope that I would live to see it. I was incredibly thrilled about November, I even participated in the famous student march from Albertov. Since then my life has changed completely, even though the change-over reached me at a time when I was an older person. When I was of an active age, I was lucky to be able to do work that I enjoyed. From this point of view, it was a beautiful time. However, the feeling that came with the return of a democratic regime meant a lot of things to me. After 1989, I visited America, Israel and Canada. I visited Israel as a delegate of the Terezin Initiative. An exhibition about the literature of the prisoners was created as part of the Terezin Memorial, I contributed to it with Marie Krizkova. Recently, we prepared a traveling exhibit about the magazine Vedem. I also worked in the Terezin Initiative that was founded in 1990. The initiative publishes its own magazine and played a large role in the creation of the Terezin Memorial. The initiative has done and continues to do very good work and was a key player in the battle for compensation that I also received. Like many survivors, I didn't tell my children much about the concentration camps. This is because, a person who went through a concentration camp lived through the complete devastation of a human's character and that is an extremely humiliating experience. When the book 'Je moji vlasti hradba ghatt?' came out in 1995 my son read it and found out many things that he knew nothing about before that. Many people are disappointed with the post-November developments, but I am not. I'm a sceptic thanks to my lifetime experiences, and so I didn't paint some kind of a rosy future. Right at the beginning of the new regime, I didn't assume that things would develop the way people imagined that they would. The difficulties that we face today leave me indifferent. We live in freedom, we travel abroad, as we want to, we can read freely, talk and do everything that a person wants to do and I see that as a really important thing.