

Naum Kravets Among The Members Of The Council Of Jewish War Veterans



Here I am, the 6th to the left with the cap in my arm, among the Jews, members of the Council of Jewish War Veterans in the Hall of Fame of the Moscow synagogue at Poklonnaya hill.

To the left is the chairman of the Council of the Jewish War Veterans, Hero of the Soviet Union, Moisey Marianovskiy. The picture was taken in Moscow in 2000.

After demobilization in 1950 I decided to look for a job. I got lucky. By chance I read the announcement in the street about a job opening in a design bureau for radar experts. I was offered a job immediately and was determined in flight test laboratory.

In the 1970s the bureau was turned into the corporation Phasotron-NIIR, scientific research radio institute. The corporation still exists, and I am still working there.

We didn't mark Jewish holidays after the war. Our family marked Soviet holidays such as 1st May, 7th November, New Year's Day, Soviet Army Day, Victory Day. I spent Victory Day with my family only in the morning, when we went to the Grave of the Unknown Soldier to lay down flowers.

Then I met with my front-line soldiers. Some of them lived in Moscow; others came here on the holiday. We remembered the past, drank to the victory, commemorated our comrades who didn't make it, and sang military songs.

I was happy to have been in Israel for several times. I went there for the first time when the USSR still existed. The Israeli Committee of the Veterans of War invited 30 front-line soldiers to go to Israel.

The chairman of the Council, Marianovskiy, assigned me the leader of the group. I stayed in Israel for a month. Apart from the official program I had the chance to buy tours throughout the country.

I was captivated by Israel. I liked everything: kibbutzim, towns and the desert. The country is beautiful and people made it beautiful. It was an unforgettable trip.

Later I went on a few more trips to Israel and was getting more and more fascinated with the country and its citizens. When I was in the Israeli airdrome of the armed forces the army commander gave me a tiny Torah. He told me that each officer, each soldier of the Israeli army is given such a Torah.

He said that I should always have it on me for me to be protected. There is a special small pocket for the Torah in the uniform of an Israeli soldier.

I don't have a pocket in my uniform, so my daughter made one for me. I keep my Torah close to my heart. If I put a jacket on, I put the Torah there. It is always with me. I don't think I'm religious, but I'm sure the Torah is taking care of me.

I took part in two parades in Moscow in 1995 and 2000, devoted to Victory Day. Recently I found out that I passed the medical examination and was permitted to take part in the Victory parade in May 2005.

They are even fixing the ceremonious uniform for the occasion. This is my last parade and I'm happy to take part in it. Frankly speaking I had a forlorn hope that I would make it.