

Bluma Lepiku



In this photo I was photographed by my husband during a stroll in the park in Tallinn in 1970. I got married in 1950. I met my first husband Victor Vatis at a dancing party at the Palace of officers. Victor was a jealous husband, and insisted that I quit the hospital, because many of the patients were young men. I went to work as a medical nurse in the railroad children's recreation center. I got pregnant, and my pregnancy took a complicated course. The labor didn't go normal and the baby was stillborn. After that we started keeping aloof. We were no longer a family. We were just two people sharing a room for some vague reason. We divorced in 1953. In the children's recreation center I contracted dysentery bacillus from children. I could not go to work with the children before I fully recovered, and I quit working at the center. I went to work as a typist at the railroad office. I issued train and load tickets. I thought it was going to be my temporary job, but when I fully recovered, I did not feel like going back to the center. My work there involved night shifts and continuous nervous tension? So I stayed at my new job. There I met Ilmar Lepiku, my

second husband. He was Estonian. He was a loader. We got married in 1962. Ilmar worked at a factory until the late 1940s, when he went to work as a loader at the railroad. He earned a lot more as a loader. Ilmar was a sportsman and a very strong man, and hard work did not bother him much. He was very honest. He told me other loaders were stealing, when unloading trains. It was common for Soviet people to steal at work. I saw that, when I was in the railroad staff. I thought then: 'It's none of my business. Let them do what they want.' Ilmar did not even think about stealing things. When he quit his job, his supervisor said he was so sorry that he was leaving. There are few people like Ilmar. When we got married, I quit my job and went to work as a controller at the Salva toy factory manufacturing dolls with Estonian folk costumes. The factory was located in the yard of our house, which was very convenient. Shortly before I was to retire I went to work at a toy shop. They paid a higher salary to the staff of shops, which was better from the point of view of my future pension. When my retirement time came, I was assigned the highest pension rate in the country, which was 120 rubles. My husband and I got along very well. They say mixed families face the risk of confrontations due to their national differences, but I believe this all depends on the spouses themselves. Behave decently, respect your spouse's national identity, respect his/her people's traditions, and there are going to be no problems. This is how we believed it was proper. I never heard a mean word spoken by my husband against Jews.