

Eva Meislova's Cousin Harry Karny With His Son Michael Karny



This picture was taken in Tel Aviv in 1985 at the bar mitzvah celebration of my cousin Harry Karny's son Michael. Harry sent me this photo. Harry was the son of my mum's brother Frantisek Kraus. He was the only one of his family who survived the concentration camps. After World War II my mum had an apartment in Tabor and lived there with her nephew, who had returned from the camp alone. His name was Harry Kraus, and he was born in 1933. He was the son of my mother's brother Frantisek. Due to the war, Harry had lost several years of compulsory education. My mum sent him to the gymnasium in Tabor after the war, so that he could complete his studies. However, he cared more for girls than for his studies, so she organized an apprenticeship for him in some weaving factory in Ceska Trebova in 1948. He didn't feel comfortable there either, and in the end some friends persuaded him to go to Israel. It was legal emigration, organized by a man, whose name I can't remember. A group of young people, who had survived the war and stayed alone, went to a kibbutz called Hachotrim. The kibbutz was near Tel Aviv and close to a Czech kibbutz named Masaryk. Hachotrim was mainly an agricultural kibbutz; they were breeding hens there. Well, Harry was kind of a wild person and wasn't able to keep up with the discipline there, so he left. He spent some time in Haifa and then moved to Tel Aviv, where he worked in some laundry. Harry got married soon after he arrived in Israel at the age of 19. His wife, Lilly Kleinova, was two years older than him. Lilly originally came from Slovakia, her family ran a quarry there. She couldn't have children, so they adopted a three-month-old boy. My husband and I visited them in 1969 for a month, and Harry tried to persuade us to stay for good. But firstly I didn't really like it that much, and secondly we didn't want to emigrate because of my mum, who was already severely sick. We made a deal that we would come back to Prague, and after that we could eventually try to figure out how to manage the aliya. When we returned, the borders were closed, and I'm glad we didn't stay there.