

Lev Mistetskiy



This is me during my mandatory military service. The war was over, but I had to finish my mandatory military service term. This photo was taken in Krasnograd, Kharkov region, in 1946. At the end of the war I had the rank of senior sergeant. The war was over and peaceful life began, but this was not the end of military service for me. The recruits, born in 1924, were to finish their compulsory service. After I was released from hospital in September 1945 I received an assignment to the 159th artillery fortification unit in Ostrog Rovno region. I was appointed commanding officer of the communication unit. Later this unit was disbanded and I was sent to the school of aircraft electric equipment mechanics in Vinnitsa. From Vinnitsa this school moved to the town of Dubno in Rovno region. I had almost all excellent marks in this school. After they sent me to serve in Chkalov, present-day Orenburg, 2000 kilometers away. In Orenburg I was sent to the Air Force fighter school. I was to become a mechanic. I lived in a barrack with other cadets. After a year of my service a few military came from the Air Force school in Krasnograd, Kharkiv region. They

selected several people, including me, for their school. I moved to Krasnograd. I studied there for some time and then the school was disbanded. They sent me to finish my studies in Vilnius, the capital of Lithuania. I was to demobilize in 1950. I didn't have a place to live. What was I to do? I decided to stay for additional service to earn some money. I received a salary of 550 rubles. This wasn't much, but I didn't spend much either. I was provided meals and I could save a little and send my sister some money to cover her rent. I served for a year and one month before my service was over I was promoted to the rank of junior lieutenant. I must have been worth something. In 1952 I got an offer to take up training in Germany. I considered it: I was 26 years old and if I were to go to Germany and start training again, how would I be able to achieve something? And I got tired of living without a home and a family. Of course, I was rather concerned about a civilian life. I was familiar with life in the army, but I was to face uncertainty there, but I made up my mind. I demobilized.