

Manya Borukhovna Shneerova, Sophia Shneerova, Arkady Shneerov, And Ilya Abramovich Shneerov.



This photo is of our family: my mother - Manya Borukhovna Shneerova, than me at 4 years old, my brother Arkady Shneerov at 14 , and my father, Ilya Abramovich Shneerov. I was born in 1956 because my father wanted another child very much. Mom was already 36 years old. They already had a ten-year-old son, Arkady (Alik), and they were very limited financially. But Daddy wanted a daughter very much. And a daughter arrived. I went to all Pioneer and other recreation camps when in kindergarten and school, because, unfortunately, I did not have grandparents and there was nobody else to look after me. At seven I started school, and I completed 10 grades in a secondary school. I was a good student, in spite of the fact that neither Mom, nor Daddy could really help me. Mom, for example, checked my English. She checked my notebook exercises. I learnt later, though, that Mom did not know a word in English ? she just pretended to be an expert. Mother also 'helped' me in my Russian. When I was trying to enter the Leningrad Construction Institute, I passed all my examinations and received an average admissions mark. But when they published the lists of admitted students, my name was not there. At that time Uncle Evsei, the one who had rescued Mom during the siege of Leningrad, was on the faculty of the Institute in the 'Water supplies and water drainage' department. He was a senior lecturer. Mom called him up and asked, 'Why isn't Sophia in the lists of admitted students? The acceptance mark was 18, she scored 19.5, but she is not on the list. Is it because we are Jewish?' Uncle Evsei was a communist, and he was convicted that there was no anti-Semitism in our country. He told Mom, 'Manechka, it is impossible. There is nothing of the kind in our institute!' But still, he went to the institute to see the

dean, and heard, 'Evsei Vladimirovich, why didn't you tell us that she was your grandniece?' - 'And why was I supposed to tell you?' he replied. The next day my name was inserted with a ballpoint pen in the general admissions list. When I was 10 years old, in 1966, doctors discovered that Mom had cancer. They said she did not have any chance of survival. Dad gave his written consent for her to undergo an operation whose outcome was uncertain. It was performed by a 28-year old graduate of the medical institute, because no doctor, even the most experienced, would take the responsibility. The operation was carried out, and Mom survived -- she lived for another 30 years. She died in 1996. Now daddy is over 90 years old, and for 2 years now he's been living with my family. In his childhood Daddy studied in a Jewish school, so he can write Hebrew. After the war and while he was still able to walk ? that is, until the 1990s - he regularly attended synagogue, where he had his own seat. Now, because of his age, he can't pray, or go to the synagogue.