

Nina Polubelova And The Choir Of The Riga Philharmonic



This is a choir of the Riga philharmonic society having a performance. At that time well-known Lithuanian singer, the performer of Jewish songs Nehama Lifshitsaite (she is in the center in front of the microphone) came to Riga and I was invited to take part in the concert and sing in the choir. I am standing behind Nehama Lifshitsaite, to the left from her. I don't know the rest of the people. The picture was taken in Riga in 1959. After school Aunt Irina gave me music classes. She had taken lessons with a singing tutor and she taught me everything she knew. I always sang during school holidays. When I studied at school, I found out that there was a people's conservatoire in Riga, where gifted young people were admitted. Unlike in ordinary conservatoire here no diplomas were given, but the classes were taught by the professors from real conservatoires. I found out about the entrance exams. When I saw the members of the board, renowned singers and professors from the conservatoire, I lost my voice from fear. I was asked to sing, but I couldn't produce a sound. I turned back and left. Then Irina scolded me, and I didn't make any more attempts. I finished two terms at the Medical Institute and understood that it wasn't my cup of tea. I wasn't willing to work as a doctor all my life. I was lucky to transfer to the second course of the Chemistry Department of Riga Polytechnic Institute. I did well. I had excellent marks during the entire period of studies. I didn't feel anti-Semitism. Both teachers and students treated me fairly. I got married during my studies at the institute, in 1959. I'll tell you a funny story of how I met my husband. During my studies me and some of my group mates left for training in Leningrad. Of course, after work we took a walk along the city, went to the theaters, museums. We went dancing almost every night. I loved dancing as much as singing. I couldn't live without that. One guy from

Riga was my dancing partner. He wasn't from our institute. He left earlier than me and asked me out to the dancing club in Riga. I was shortsighted since childhood and was shy to wear glasses. I went on the date and thought that I saw my guy, white dance was announced, and so I asked that guy for a dance. It turned out that it wasn't the guy who had asked me out for a date. We got acquainted and danced all evening long. Then he saw me off. That guy was my future husband Vladimir Polubelov.