

## Milena Prochazkova's Wedding Photo



This is my wedding photo. I was married on 10th March 1951 at the Old Town Hall in Prague. My husband, Petr Prochazka, was born on 15th May 1928, in Prague. We met at dance evenings when he was 19 and I was 16 or 17. On Narodni Trida there used to be the Metro cinema and a dance hall. We used to go there, I remember that the dance-master was named Oplt. I know exactly what on him first caught my attention. I used to go to dance evenings together with Anita Frank. Back then a few of these guys would always come up to me and say: 'Listen, tell that Anita, that my parents don't want me to go out with a Jewess. But say it to her so that she doesn't feel hurt.' But on me my Jewish origins were never apparent. Then, when I met my husband and we were together for about the third time - we were walking around Prague, and this was on the Lesser Town Square - I said to him that I'd just like to tell him that I'm a Jewess. And he turned to me and said: 'Well, I'd like to know why you're telling me this.' And that was the beginning. It's terribly dangerous to fall in love, and then a half year later find out that... well, it also used to happen, that

a boy would come and say: 'My parents would like to meet you, but you can't say that you're Jewish.' Well, I then got to know his family and he, because he had lost his mother, became close to mine. You can't choose whom you fall in love with, but what I'm saying is that the first impulse, that this could be it, was that sentence of his. My husband wasn't of Jewish origin, but in light of the fact that we didn't live in a Jewish fashion either, it wasn't a problem. On the contrary, our children are even baptized, as he had wished. He was baptized, but he wasn't religiously inclined at all, and didn't go to church. It was more I who dragged the children to midnight mass, so that they'd see it. When I was still a little girl, when I lived on Letna, down on the ground floor lived some family, the Mareks, and their Marie used to go to midnight mass. So I would go with her. I even sang with her in the organ gallery at St. Anthony's Church on Strossmayerovo Namesti [Strossmayer Square], where we used to go. My husband used to say that his mother, if she had been alive, would for sure have wanted them to be baptized. He often reminisced about this mother. He lost her as a young guy, when he was about sixteen. And he said that it would certainly have made her happy. So why wouldn't we make her happy? After all, it's no big thing. But even his mother wasn't particularly religiously inclined.