

Boris Rubenstein's Fourth Grade Class



It is a photo of my fourth class. Nikolaev was a multinational city, and a big part of the population was made of Jews. I had many Jewish classmates. But none of us knew about Jewish traditions and Jewish history very much. When I became older, it turned out that I had a very good hearing for music and good musical memory. A private teacher was hired to teach me violin. But I was not persevering and I was impatient and very soon I insisted that these lessons be stopped. Later, in elementary school, I was a member of a musical and rhythmic orchestra. There I played percussion instruments and sang. I had quite a pleasant voice. In the beginning of the war I was just a 12-year old boy. At first I was even amused with shells blowing up. We, children, used to run about and collect splinters of anti-aircraft shells. But, certainly, it was not long before children could also feel all the burden, all the cruelty of war.