

Boris Rubenstein's Medical School Graduation Class



My friends and me at the medical institute. I submitted documents to the First Medical Institute of Leningrad, passed entrance examinations successfully and was admitted as a first year student. Our student group was very large. There were many Jews, both from other cities and locals. There were many guys who went through the war. The time of my study in Leningrad was the golden time of my life. Leningrad itself, the student atmosphere, learning new things - all that was interesting and significant. Unfortunately, my financial situation was rather tough. I was badly dressed and it prevented me from going to parties and entertainment events and to fully use the advantages given by Leningrad. Nevertheless, in some degree I could afford the museums, theatres, concerts and so on. The student's life in Leningrad was very interesting with its friendship and communication. I participated in amateur art performances, was engaged in public work in a trade-union, and of course, I was a member of Komsomol. Having entered the institute in 1947, I finished it in 1953. I combined study and work all those years. I worked as a hospital attendant and later as a laboratory assistant. 1952 and 1953 were the years significant in the life of the Soviet Jews. It was a peak of anti-Semitism, and in 1953 the so-called "doctors' case" was in its full swing. Many of professors, instructors of our institute, Jews by nationality, and, at the same time, some non-Jewish employees, were disgracefully excluded, fired from work. Subsequently, when they were rehabilitated, the director of the institute, Major-General Ivanov, payed visits to each of them, apologizing. When the "doctors' case" was closed, many of Russian teachers of the institute, and in my clinic, expressed their compassion, their solidarity with me as a Jew.