

Mihaly And Andras Mestitz



This is a picture of my brothers Mihaly and Andras Mestitz and their wives. It was taken in Bologna, Italy, probably in the early 1970s. My younger brother Andras, on the right, wears a light-colored suit, beside him is his wife, Julia Mestitz, nee Kiss. She is originally from a village near Marosvasarhely. On the left, beside my older brother Mihaly is his wife Clara Mestitz, nee Maletti. They were probably on a trip and visited my older brother. They sent the picture to me. It has 'Juci' written on the back. They were always sending me pictures of everything. There was quite a big difference in age between my brothers, but they were on very good terms. My older brother was born in 1909 - three weeks after my grandfather died, that's why he was named Mihaly, after my grandfather. Otherwise Jews aren't allowed to give the same name to a child or grandchild, if the person they are named after is still alive. Misi wanted to become a doctor at any cost and he was 23 when my father eventually gave in, after he saw that his son would never give up. He graduated in Hungary, and that wasn't enough to enter a Romanian university. He met a guy here who had been to Italy, and he told him a few things. Misi then went to Italy. He completed the six years schooling in five. However, he managed to play for time for about eight years pretending that he had work to do in the hospital because he fell in love with my sister-in-law, who had just graduated from high-school. They got married in 1938 in Bologna. Andras got married in 1950. In the 1950s he requested to be allowed to emigrate to Italy. My husband, Jeno Schonbrunn, and I agreed with Andras to go with them, initially to my older brother's place, and then we would have decided what to do next. As Andras' family already had four members - they already had two children - and they were going to Misi's father-in-law, we couldn't really go together. In 1960 he got permission and they emigrated to Bologna. My husband didn't want to go because, he said, he had already spent eight years in captivity and he didn't want to go; he had been away from home enough. That's how I stayed here, although all my girlfriends told me I would be the first one to go. Misi was there in Bologna and provided everything for Andras: he prepared an apartment for them. After two months, Misi got a job at a motorcycle factory as an accountant, and found an error in the calculations they had been looking for, for two years. He was very appreciated and well-paid. In those days Italy was living through the cold war and so he said he didn't want to stay there. He left

the company after he had been there for ten months, because he registered to emigrate to America or Canada: he said he would go to whichever one gave him the answer sooner. Fortunately it was America. They moved to Minneapolis in 1961. He is still in accounting, and used to have an accounting office at home. There were two non-Jewish female employees working for him who went from company to company and only came to him if there was something urgent. Julia always liked Jews, she preferred to go to the synagogue with Andras whenever he went, she didn't go to the Protestant church much. Later, when it was more difficult for Andras to walk, they stopped going at all.