

Judita Sendrei And Her Husband Pavel Sendrei At Their Golden Wedding anniversary Celebration



This picture was taken on August 31, 1997 in the small synagogue in Subotica at the golden wedding anniversary celebration of my husband, Pavel Sendrei, and myself, Judita Sendrei. When we were liberated from the work camp in Austria, we went to Bratislava. While filling out a form at the repatriation office for registration I came across the young Pavel Sendrei. When he heard my last name he asked me if we had relatives in Pecuj and it turned out that we were some sort of relatives, but not by blood. I was always hungry and Pavel took me for meals whenever he could, sometimes even three times a day. So that he could in some way repay him, my father would invite him to Subotica whenever time permitted. Pavel came to visit them in 1946 and in May 1947 he and I married. Immediately after our marriage, I went with Pavel to Czechoslovakia. On April 24, 1949 we had a daughter, whom we named Sonja. In 1956 the Jewish community received an invitation to a reception with the Israeli ambassador in Prague. Out of all of the members of the Jewish community in all of Czechoslovakia, my husband Pavel and I were the only ones who accepted the invitation. All the others were scared to reply. At the reception we met the ambassador's secretary who had moved to Israel from Czechoslovakia in 1938 and who my husband knew from before. He informed us that the JOINT was helping, as much as possible, elderly Jews who had survived the Holocaust, but that the money could not go through the Jewish community, but rather was distributed through individual volunteers who were ready to help. We accepted this work and did it until March 1957 when the Czech government arrested us on spying charges, and later claimed that Pavel and I undermined the Czechoslovak Republic, because we anonymously sent money to Holocaust survivors. Pavel was imprisoned from March 29, 1957 to March 29, 1959 and I from March 29, 1957 to November 29, 1957. It was so terrible in prison, that I prefer not to think about that period. After serving our sentences, life was very hard for us in

Czechoslovakia. I very much wanted to return to Yugoslavia because my mother Magda lived there. I spoke with Pavel and he accepted my suggestion that we move to Yugoslavia, that is to Subotica, in December 1962. After a year, I found work as the head of reception at the Palic Hotel. Later on the hotel changed its name to the 'Patrija.' I worked in that position until July 1980 when I became the acting director of the same hotel, holding that position until my retirement in 1983. Between 1983 and 1993 I volunteered in the Subotica Jewish community doing administrative work. When there are interesting cultural events, I very happily go to the Jewish community.