

Fira Shwartz With Her Fellow Employees



My fellow employees and I (2nd from the left) at the shoe factory. We were celebrating winning the first place in the socialist competition of 1967; a red banner was handed over to the factory at the celebration. In USSR there were annual competitions between enterprises in every branch of the industry. The group that produced the best products was given a red banner. This was an honourable award. The best workers were put on a board of honor, and were sometimes given a valuable gift, such as a watch. After finishing the Library Faculty at the College of Culture and Education in 1954 i got a job assignment in the village of Vysokoye, Zhitomir region [200 km from Kiev]. Graduates usually got assignments in distant locations. I returned to Kiev in 1957, but I couldn't find a job as a librarian there. I couldn't live at my uncle's expenses and thus went to work in a shoe factory. At first I was a laborer at the storage facility, and later I became a laborer at the shop of the factory. I liked my job. The majority of the employees at the factory were Jewish. The director and chief engineer of the factory were also Jews. Of course, there was no anti-Semitism at the factory.