

## Yako Izidor Yakov As A Camp Trumpeter In A Jewish Labor Camp



This is me as a camp trumpeter in a Jewish labor camp. The photo was taken in 1942 in Tryavna. In 1941, when the Holocaust began, I was sent to forced labor camps. My first labor camp was near the village of Chepino in Kara Tepe [black hill in Turkish] village. The famous Israeli conductor Haim (Ziko) Gratsiani and I were there together. Once I decided to escape and gave the trumpet to Ziko, to sound when it is time for lunch, otherwise they would notice that I was not there. So he took the trumpet. Thus he became the camp's trumpeter. He immigrated to Israel in 1949. We formed an

illegal UYW organization in the camp. Then I was in a labor camp in Tryavna. In 1942, a week after I returned from the camp in Tryavna, two policemen and three guards came to our house and started taking all our possessions outside. The table was laid for dinner, the burning stove was still on. It was a cold November day. But the house was not ours. We had rented it. During the Law for the Protection of the Nation it was given to the driver of the German consul. But our possessions were untouched. We managed to keep some of it in the basement, another part we left at our neighbors?. In 1943 I was sent to a third camp. I continued the illegal activities there. But we failed, because of a very good friend of mine, who made me escape from the camp. Marko Behar and the doctor, whose name I don't remember, gave me the address of Angel Vagenshtain in Blagoevgrad. We went to their place. His mother didn't know why we were looking for him and told us that he was not at home and he would not come back. We were four boys, having just escaped from the camp to become partisans: Miko Yulzari from Ruse, Miko Israel from Sofia, I and one boy from Lom, whose real name I don't know, but his partisan name was Gosho. We walked along the main street of Gorna Dzhumaya and suddenly the boy from Lom said, "That girl across the street is one of our girls, I remember her." We caught up with her and violated all rules of conspiracy; we told her we had escaped from the camp and wanted to get in touch with the partisans. She told us, "You, boys, are very lucky. On Friday Dzheki [Angel Vagenshtain] became a partisan. He is not coming back. I have replaced him and you met the right person!?" It was like in the movies! She took us back to Vagenshtain's house, his mother welcomed us, gave us food and we spent the night there. Then she took us to a boy at the end of the town, in a vineyard. An old woman, Gina, and her two daughters hid us in a hole and we, the four of us, spent 28 days in that hole. This woman brought us food all that time. Well, the UYW organization also helped us, gave us bread. They knew that the four of us were waiting to be contacted by the partisans. On the 28th day the political commissioner of the Gorna Dzhumaya partisan team came and together with him we crossed the Struma River on foot. Our fate after we escaped from the camp was the following: Gosho died, Miko Yulzari immigrated to Israel and became a merchant, but he was not successful and he committed suicide; Miko Israel taught Russian for many years in Gorna Dzhumaya and I returned to Ruse. I spent one part of my life in the army in Varna as fleet officer.