

## Mieczyslaw Weinryb



This is a picture of me in the palm house in Warsaw in the 1950s. At the beginning of the 1950s I became a member of the Budometal co-operative. In 1955 I went on an engineering course and received a diploma from Warsaw Polytechnic. At work everyone knew that I was Jewish, and suggestions started to be made that I change my name. Many people even changed their surnames, but I didn't want to, so I just changed my first name. Even before the war people used to hail me Mieczyslaw, Mietek [a diminutive of Mieczyslaw], so it stuck, and I struck the name Mordechaj out of my papers. I was still doing jobs commissioned by Jewish institutions, except that they were organized by the co-operative. It was easiest that way. I renovated the facade of the Nozyk Synagogue several times. They were commissions from the community authorities, and the funds for this work came out of foreign aid, if I remember correctly, from Joint. Just after the war we also built a matzah production line in that synagogue. We set it up in the women's gallery, put in machines to mix the dough and electric ovens, and that was where matzah was baked for Passover. The matzah production line in there operated for a few years. Then they started sending us matzah from abroad. I also renovated the Jewish community building on 6 Twarda Street. In the 1950s we were also commissioned by the community authorities to tidy up the Jewish cemetery. During the war the cemetery had been badly damaged. The avenues were buried in earth and the monuments overturned. So we cleaned up the main avenue. We put broken fragments of mazzevoth [tombstones] into a special wall. A few years later we also built some ancillary premises by the entrance. At the beginning of the 1950s I met Izabela, my wife. She worked with the trade union, she was a bookkeeper. Her father, Waclaw Tluchowski, left home to fight in the Warsaw Uprising [27] and never returned. He even has a monument in Powazkowski Cemetery [the most famous Catholic cemetery in Warsaw; many famous people are buried there]. Izabela is Polish and went to a Catholic school. We got married and in 1955 our son was born. We called him Eligiusz because it's similar to my father's name - Elias - and the times when he was born weren't auspicious for giving Jewish names.