

## Etta Ferdmann



That's me, a graduate of Tallinn Teachers' Training Institute. The picture was taken in 1959.

I finished school in 1955. I was not willing to leave Tallinn to go study anywhere, not even at the famous Tartu University. Moreover, I was an only child in the family. After school I entered the history and philology department of Tallinn Teachers' Training Institute. I easily passed the entrance exams and was admitted. My nationality was not an obstacle as there was no state anti-Semitism in Estonia, of course it was the politics of the Soviet Union since key posts were taken by Estonians, but still they did not share the politics.

When I was in the fifth year in 1960 there was an announcement for the students of the fifth course to teach Russian language and literature on the islands of Estonia. There was a high demand for teachers there. Those, who agreed to go there, were to defend their diplomas separately and have

open diplomas, that is, without mandatory job assignment. The terms were attractive. Besides, I wanted to try my choice of profession. I chose the island Hiiumaa in the north of Estonia and headed there. I remember how my parents were seeing me off in winter time. I had to take a small plane, where only ten people could fit. I was given a very warm welcome at school. I had work there until the summer holidays and then I came back to Tallinn. I defended my diploma and graduated.