

Ella Perlman And Her Sister Joheved Katz



This is me (on the right) and my sister Joheved at the Riga seaside. We were members of the Spartak sport society. We have the Spartak uniform on: red T-shirts and white shorts. This photo was taken in Jurmala in 1946.

We were very poor and even starved at times after World War II. My father received a low pension of an invalid and Mama didn't work. I was the only one to work, but I had no vocation. I got a job at the invalids' garment shop, making shirts for men and children. This was not the best paid job, but then each kopeck counted. I joined the Komsomol in this shop. I was eager to study. I had finished six grades of the Jewish school before the war. There were no Jewish schools left after the war. They became Russian schools. My Russian was poor. I learned to speak it during evacuation, but I could hardly write in it. So, instead of going to the 7th grade, I had to go to the 5th grade of a Russian evening school. My sister and brother also went to the 5th grade, and so it happened that we were in the same grade, with the only difference being that they went to the daytime school.

I liked school. My favorite subject was Mathematics. I was the first to solve any problem in my class. My teacher of Mathematics always praised me. History was very difficult. I had problems remembering dates. My sister and brother finished eight grades of the Russian general education school. I studied for two years and had to quit school after getting married.

Some time later I quit work in the shop and became an apprentice at the garment factory. It didn't take me long to learn the profession. A very nice lady was the forewoman of the shop. She had no children, and treated me like her daughter. She cooked at home and brought me lunches. The factory provided free lunches to its employees. In fall employees helped farmers with the harvest. This was a good time. We were young and went to swim in the Daugava River or had dancing parties after work.