

Sonia Leiderman With Her Friends



This photograph was taken during the first and the only vacation in my life, which I spent away from home. My employer awarded me a trip to the Kuyalnik recreation center in Odessa. I am standing on the right with other holiday makers. This photo was taken in Odessa in 1969.

In 1947 I went to work as the seller of a fish. So, I worked as a fish vendor in a kiosk at the central market for the rest of my life. I retired from there. It was hard work. There were no loaders and I had to carry heavy boxes with frozen fish and cut heavy briquettes into pieces. I never had a chance to sit down during the day: there were always customers lining up; I had no breaks. There was no heating in the kiosk: it was freezing in winter, and it was hot in summer. I didn't go on vacation trying to earn more. My customers liked me: I joked and was cheerful and tried to serve them as best as I could. There were 3 fish kiosks one next to another, but there were always people lining to my kiosk. It's a small town where people know each other, and I knew all of my customers.

I got married in 1952. Our neighbor introduced me to her distant relative Semyon Leiderman. There were not many young men around: many perished at the front and the others - in ghettos. Shortly after we met Semyon proposed to me. We lived in our little house with my parents and my younger sister Nyusia after the wedding. Our older son David was born in 1953, and our daughter Maya was born in 1957. We did not raise them Jews. We spoke Russian with the children. I spoke Yiddish to my parents and my husband and I switched to Yiddish, when we did not want our children to understand the subject of our discussion. We celebrated Jewish holidays, when we lived with our parents. Our parents also celebrated Soviet holidays with us: 1 May, 7 November, Victory Day,

Soviet army Day, the international Women's Day in 8 March. In the early 1960s the plant where my husband and father were working built an apartment house for its workers and we received apartments in this house. We could hardly make ends meet. Besides, I tried to save some money hoping that when my husband and I retired, we would travel and enjoy ourselves. I took these savings to the bank. We had never traveled on vacation.