

Judel Ronder And The Kedainia Jews The Survivors From War



This is the meeting of the Kedainia Jews in Vilnius, the survivors from war. I'm the second to the right below. In the center is Chava Revich, her maiden name is Schneider. She is currently living in Israel, then Dushkes. He is also living in Israel. The fourth to the right in top row is underground communist Upnitskiy. He died in the 1970s, then Verestein. He was in the lines. He lived in Vilnius, got married there. The second to the right is Gabile. All of them, but Dushkis and Chava, passed away....

In late 1949 I was employed for the position of the assistant to the chairman of the municipal authorities. Then I was transferred to the position of a legal advisor. I did not have a problem with employment. It was enough to come to HR department in military jacket with the awards. I never wash it and keep all awards on it. Besides, it was the time when they needed literate employees, who are fluent in Lithuanian and Russian. I have been living in Kaunas since then.

In 1953 I quitted my work in municipal authorities and was employed as HR manager at the factory. I entered extramural legal department of Vilnius university. I was defending my diploma and started looking for a job. In 1960 I was called by the municipal authorities and offered a job of a lawyer in a small shoe factory. I had worked there until retirement.

I did not keep Jewish traditions and marked no holidays, but I never forgot that I was a Jew. I met other survived Lithuanian Jews and we went to the places of execution and collected donations for the monuments in their honor. My idea was to make a so-called archive of the people who rescued Jews and those who murdered them. I have been doing it from the moment of my return in Lithuania and until now.

In 1960s I was fond of amateur art. There was a Jewish amateur theatre in Kaunas, which was about the only one in the USSR. We staged the plays of Sholom Aleichem, learnt and sang Jewish

songs. In 1963 we gave a large concert devoted to the 20 year anniversary of the mass execution of Kaunas ghetto Jews. After that active members of that theatre were called in KGB and threatened that it would be closed down and repressed. I did not fear anything. It must have been hard to make me submissive.

When I retired I had worked for couple of years for Vilnius Jewish museum. By that time I had collected a pretty considerable material about holocaust in Lithuania, about the murderers and the rescuers. And helped many of them get the title Righteous among the Nations. I always kept an active civil position in this matter. I always was an ardent struggler against anti-Semitism.

The global community supports me. I have a sponsors, who assists Lithuanian righteous among nations. His parents got rescued and lived for Switzerland. He is currently living in the USA. He invited me there and I accepted his invitation. I was in the States for couple of times several years ago. I gave my documents - the list of murderers and the list of rescuers of Jews - to the Museum of holocaust in Washington. Thus, I completed my mission in the world.