

Sarah Rutkauskene With Her Husband Benis Rutkauskas And Sons Romualdas And Andrus



This is I and my husband Benis Rutkauskas. We were photographed by our pals in front of the entrance to the restaurant, where we were celebrating a jubilee. The picture was made in Kaunas in 1975.

After WWII my husband was assigned the chairman of the municipal ispolkom. He got a large house, which was meant for high state officials. It was a wonderful two-storied house in the downtown of the city. Before war it used to be the residence of some diplomat. There were all necessary things in the house- the furniture, kitchen with the utensils and the dishes, stove, several bathrooms, Study with a great library. All of that pertained to the state, but we could live there for the period when his position was effective. In spring 1945 I gave birth to a son, whom we called Romualdas. This were good. I got a good food ration from special distribution. Unlike most people we did not starve after war.

When our son was born, Benis was relocated in a small town on the bank of Baltic sea Klaipeda, where he was assigned the chairman of municipal Ispolkom. I went with him. We also were given a wonderful mansion and servants. Benis worked very hard, he never shared his troubles with me. In 1947 husband was transferred to Marijampole, where he was also the head of municipal authorities. In this year I gave birth to a son whom we called Andrus.

Then one of the party activists from Panevezhis gave husband a call. He offered him a position of the brewery manager. So, we left for Panevezhis. Here we rented an apartment. Benis ran the

brewery so well that it became one of the leading enterprises though it was with losses before. We had stayed there for two years. In 1949 collectivization commenced, and again they needed people who were dedicated to the communist party. Benis was appointed the chairman of municipal ispolkom in Sirvintos, and we moved there. Since that time we often changed the places of residence. Benis was also appointed to manage crisis. Children and I were traveling with him. I had never been the member of the party, but I always listened to what my husband had to say, supported him, gave him advice. In a word, I was a real friend to him.

Husband was transferred in Jonava in 1956 where we stayed for four years. I had always been a housewife. I raised the children. I always had a baby-sitter and housekeeper, whom I supervised. We liked to mark holidays at home- our and children's birthdays, memorable dates. We marked no religious holidays neither Jewish nor Lithuanian. I did not like marking soviet holidays. There was no use in that as we always were invited somewhere. We often marked them in the town theatre or at some companies. Benis got the invitations and I accompanied him.

I practically had no friends. I had always lived husband's and children's lives. In those years I did not communicate with the Jews as it was not approved in the party circles. My biggest friend was my sister Janina.

We had lived in Jonava until 1960. Husband had rather acute deceases. He had ulcer. In 1960 at the age of 56 he retired preterm. We moved to Kaunas, where we were given a good apartment. Benis got personal pension. We had enough money, but he was not used to idle and soon he became in charge of security department of Lithuanian television. He had worked there until 1970s. In his last days Benis was sick. He died in 1986. His friends, old members of party - bolsheviks - came to his funeral.