

Zosia Laks On Vacation



This is a picture of my sister Zofia on vacation. She's posing with someone dressed up as a bear, a kind of attraction for kids.

The picture was taken in Zakopane, a well known Polish resort in the mountains, in the 1930s.

Almost every year we'd go on vacation. We'd leave the city for at least a month, or two. We'd take all our stuff. We'd go near Katowice, to Bystra, to Cyganski Las, sometimes to Rabka, always to southern Poland, Silesia.

I never went to the seaside before the war. Our more distant family would go with us, too, and we'd spend time there together. We'd rent cottages from peasants.

I remember this hotel in Zakopane. We'd live there and eat there. It was a Jewish hotel. The owners were Jewish, the guests were mostly Jewish too.

We met a young married couple during one of those vacations, they were staying in that hotel with us. And then we hiked in the mountains together.

We'd hike mostly in the valleys with the little sisters, we'd climb the Gubalowka, never too high. We were not professional hikers, I didn't have any special clothing, I hiked in my school coat.

Zosia was very close to Natan, our brother. She adored him and he was nice to her, good and kind. Not like I was to her. I remember that I once took her hand and put it on a hot light bulb.

Zosia annoyed me, because I had to take her everywhere with me. When I went to the Organization [Mrs. Wygodzka used to belong to the Zionist Youth Organization Akiba], I had to drag her with me.

I think she was later a member of this organization as well, but this was already during the war, in Sosnowiec. Zosia also managed to go to the Berek Joselewicz school for some time.

When she was ten years old, the war broke out.