

Solomon Epstein's Son



This photo shows my son Alexey.

It was taken in Leningrad in 1972. Here I'd like to tell you about my family.

Being a student of the last course, I met a girl among students at a party. I immediately decided to marry her. So I did it in 1953, a year after my graduation from the Academy.

My wife's name is Nina Pavlovna Iossilevich. She was born in Leningrad in 1924. She graduated from the College of Engineers of Railway Transport. All her life long Nina worked as a structural engineer.

In 1954 our son Alexey was born. We gave him his mother's surname (Iossilevich), because his maternal grandfather was in anguish at the fact that his family would come to an end. 6 years later our daughter Nina was born.

Our children were very good. They grew up and became remarkable persons. Alexey finished school specialized in mathematics. He used to win the first places in different contests in physics, therefore he had the right to enter any College he wanted without entrance examinations.

Alexey decided to become a student of the University (physical faculty). But unfortunately the same year a daughter of Victor Eskin (a known physics and my friend) was going to enter the same faculty.

Two Jews at once were too much for the University; therefore Alexey was given a flunking grade. Then he entered the Polytechnical College. After graduation he started working at ELECTROSSILA plant (they produced electric motors). He worked there at the theoretical department.

During his work at ELECTROSSILA Alexey wrote a paper about a certain physical effect known earlier, but not explained from the theoretical point of view. Alexey managed to explain that effect. He gave a report about it at the scientific conference in Odessa.

Academician Khalatnikov from the Moscow Institute of Theoretical Physics was present at that conference. He listened to Alexey's report and invited him to work at his Institute. Three months later Alexey defended his dissertation. It happened that the procedure was fixed for the day when Brezhnev died.

So Alexey was standing in the lobby of the Institute and all Institute employees condoled with him, but not upon the loss of Brezhnev, but upon postponing of the procedure. Later he defended his dissertation brilliantly.

Research workers spoke that Alexey's work was the high-water mark of contemporary physics. Alexey was suggested to be given a doctor's degree, but he refused. He explained that he did not want to outstart his coevals (colleagues).

My son defended his doctor's dissertation many years later. At present he often works abroad. He has got 2 sons of 20 and 13 years old.

My daughter graduated from the Academy of Arts, too. She is a graphic artist. Unfortunately she has difficulties with her work, because she is not able to scratch her way. She has got a son Eugeny (now Eugeny is 13 years old). They live in St. Petersburg.

When our children were born and rather long time after that we lived in a two-room apartment in Zhukovskogo Street. Both rooms were dim: the wall of the opposite building was 2 meters and 6 centimeters far from our windows.

And according to sanitary norms it was necessary to have not more than 2 meters for improvement of living conditions. Members of the Union of Artists put their artists on their own waiting list. I visited the secretary of the regional Communist Party Committee and he helped me.

I was suggested to occupy a workshop and an apartment of an artist who had left for Israel. Giving me the voucher, a local official told me with hatred, 'Is this apartment a runway for flying away to Israel?'

While our children were little, we used to spend summer vacations out of the city. Sometimes we rented dacha, sometimes lived at our friends.