

Igor Lerner And His Wife



This photograph shows me and my wife. It was taken in 1961. Here I'll tell you about my family life.

I got married in 1954. My wife's name was Etella Yosefovna Lipina. She was born in Leningrad in 1928. She graduated from the Conservatory and worked as a teacher at a musical school. We got acquainted the following way. Once I felt severe pain in my coccyx. Doctors told me that an operation was necessary. I was in a hospital and my girlfriend visited me. One day my girlfriend could not come and sent her friend instead. We liked each other, started to keep company with each other and got married later. In 1955 our son Alexander was born. First time after our marriage we lived at her parents' place in the city center. It was very convenient for me, because at that time I was a student of the Technological College and my way to the College took not much time.

The family of my wife had relatives in Germany. In 1972 my wife's uncle, who lived in Germany died. He bestowed a fortune upon the family of my wife and she went to Germany to come into the inheritance. But the uncle's German relatives managed to evict the most part of property, therefore my wife received only a one-room apartment. During all these events my wife suddenly died and was buried there in Germany.

My son Alexander graduated from the Shipbuilding College in 1977. [The Leningrad Shipbuilding College was founded in 1902.] He worked at the design office of the factory producing escalators for underground. I wanted him to work in GIPH, but he refused flatly. At that time I did not understand him, but later I realized that he planned to emigrate to Israel, and his possible work in GIPH could become an insuperable obstacle. He knew that GIPH employees had a let-pass and

were permitted neither to go abroad, nor to communicate with foreigners. Alexander took it into account.

But there was another difficulty. I had to grant him an exit authorization. Alexander brought a paper for me to sign. I realized that the next day after signing the document, I should be fired. Therefore I refused. Then my son sent me an official certified document by mail. It read the following: I was obliged to list (in written form) my claims to my son. If I failed within 2 months, it meant my consent automatically. I addressed some people in GIPH (experts in such affairs). They confirmed my fears saying that if my son left, I would be fired immediately. OK, I listed my claims. Several years later (already under Gorbachev) the same people said 'Now let him go'. I signed all the papers, and my son left. At present he lives in Chicago. He has got a daughter.

After my first wife's death I thought I would never marry once more. But I was carried along by my destiny. My second wife also worked in GIPH, she also held a high position. We got married in 1965, and in 1967 our son Oleg was born. We did our best to give Oleg everything possible: when he was a boy, I went with him to hockey and figure skating training groups; he studied at a musical school and finished it successfully. We visited puppet theaters, and usually bought season tickets to the Kirov Opera and Ballet theatre. I think we put our souls into him and he grew up a very good person. He does not smoke, does not drink, he has got a good family: 3 children. All his children are girls, therefore I think they will give birth to more and more children, waiting for a boy. Oleg graduated from the Technological College (like me). At present he is a businessman.

Here I'll get back a little. When Oleg was 16 years old, he had to receive his passport. His patronymic was Izraelevich. I went to the local civilian registry office and asked to change my name Israel for Igor (on account of disharmony). They examined my application very long, but after all they complied with my request. I changed all my documents. Oleg got patronymic Igorevich, but Alexander did not want to. My old friends call me Israel (of course), but I introduce myself to new ones as Igor. I already got accustomed.