

Larisa Shyhman With Her Colleagues



My 50th birthday party at work in Zhuliany airport. These are my colleagues. I, Larisa Shyhman (nee Trachtenberg), am the third from the right. This photo was made in Kiev in 1975.

In 1945 I went to work as a radio operator in Zhuliany airport. I worked there until retirement. I got married in April 1954. On 8 December 1954 our son Leonid was born. I wanted to stay at work. I liked my collective, I enjoyed it there and my colleagues liked and respected me. So after my second son Gennadiy was born on 17 March 1961 I returned to work at the airport.

We had a good life. I was cheerful and pretty. I danced in the ensemble of the Civil Air Fleet. We danced folk dances. I think we danced well. I shouldn't boast, of course. I also danced solo... We gave concerts in the Harrison and in Aviation College... We performed a lot. I liked reading and going to theaters and cinema. I always had many friends.

Actually, I never faced anti-Semitism. My colleagues respected me at work. Only once, during the period of 'doctors' plot', one colleague used to talk about it whenever head of department came in and then repeated: 'Do you see it now? Do you?', but then another colleague said: 'Just leave her alone'. And that was all. Well, Stalin's death, the 20th Congress. Yes, I can tell, it was a shock, but then it passed - there were other things to think about.

My husband's name was Abram Shyhman. We met at work. I didn't even think about him. Frankly, I didn't want to get married. Why marry? I knew plots and danced in my group and always had enough admirers. I was afraid. I didn't like housework, it wasn't for me. I liked reading and going to theaters and cinema. I always had many friends. Misha was smart, and it was interesting to spend time with him. I was fond of astronomy and he told me interesting things about stars... Then we had a walk in Podol and were passing a civil registry office and he said: 'Let's go in', and I said: 'Let us'. So we registered our marriage. No parties, no traditions. We were poor. My aunt, when she heard about it, she ran out to buy me tights; mine was all patched. We got married in April 1954. On 8 December 1954 our son Leonid was born. I wanted to stay at work. I liked my collective, I enjoyed it there and my colleagues liked and respected me. So after my second son Gennadiy was born on 17 March 1961 I returned to work at the airport.