

Tsyliya Spivak With Her Husband Naum Spivak



This is me with my husband Naum Spivak during our tour in Leningrad, standing by a common grave of soldiers who perished during defense of Leningrad during the Great Patriotic War; 1952. In 1949 I finished 10 grades with a good certificate. I could go to any higher educational institution like Kiev University, for example, considering its high prestige, but I had to start work to earn money as soon as possible and this made me go to Chernigov 2-year Pedagogical College. In 1951 there was a job assignment distribution. I was prepared to go anywhere since my mother was going to follow me anyway. I chose Zagoryanovka village near Kherson hoping to be able to often go to Kherson. When I came to the regional department of education its chairman looked at me (and I was a thin short girl) and said: 'I don't think it's worth for you, girl, to go to Zagoryanovka. It's not the place a young girl would like to be at. I will send you to Tehinka. There is big construction there. They need teachers with diplomas and this place is better than Zagoryanovka'. So I went to Tehinka. They welcomed me warmly and showed me the school. I rented a room from nice Ukrainian people: Marusia and Kolia who liked me, too. The department of education paid my rental fees and gave me money for wood and kerosene. So I was a desirable tenant. Three weeks later my mother joined me. She lived with me ever since. Teaching was easy for me. I taught in the 5th, 7th and 8th grades. The 8th grade was the first year of higher secondary school. They were the children who wanted to have a complete secondary education. They listened to me with attention and I was eager to inspire love to the Russian literature in them. As for the 5th grade those children didn't bother to listen to me. Why did they need Russian? They were noisy and caused problems. Once I lost my temper and pushed one of those hooligans. I forced him out of his desk and pushed him out of the classroom. They began to respect me then: 'Hey, she can fight!' and were quiet at my lessons. After working for a year I got a transfer to Daryevka, a neighboring village. I didn't mind since Daryevka was even bigger than Tehinka and there were more comforts there. I spent a few more weeks in Tehinka and met a Jewish girl. Her name was Fira Spivak. She had her job assignment in this village. I supported her since I was well aware how hard it was for a girl from a town to live in the village. Her brother Naum Spivak came from Kherson to visit his sister

and so I met my future husband. Naum began to visit me in Daryevka. He courted me very nicely. Naum Spivak was born in Kherson on 22 April 1925. His father Tsala Spivak was a really religious man. Although Naum was a Komsomol member, he used to go to the synagogue with his father before the war and knew Jewish customs, traditions and holidays well. However, Naum wasn't religious and didn't observe traditions, but he knew them. When the Great Patriotic War began, Tsala joined Territorial Army, and Naum, his mother and sister Fira were in evacuation in Saratov region (today Russia). His father perished in occupation. After Kherson was liberated Naum returned to his hometown. Before evacuation Naum finished 8 grades at school and when back in Kherson he passed his exams for a higher secondary school extramurally. At the age of 16 he entered the Agronomist Faculty of the Agricultural College. After finishing it he went to work as chief agronomist in a kolkhoz and in 1952 he already was an agronomist of the agricultural department in Kherson. I fell in love with him and we got married on 3 October 1952. Almost the whole village was invited to our wedding. It was a joyful wedding party. Many young people attended it. Almost immediately after the wedding he was sent to support agriculture improvement following the decision of Khrushchev to send specialists to villages. We went to Sadovo, a big village where I went to work at school. A year later on 19 September 1953 my daughter Inna was born. We lived in Sadovo four years. Here in 1956 my second daughter named Ella after Naum's grandmother Elka was born. Shortly after she was born my husband was transferred to Nikolaev region and I went to work as a teacher there too. We always followed my husband. In 1958 my husband was transferred to Kherson. In the first years we rented an apartment and later we invested in construction of a cooperative apartment. This is where I live now. I was very happy with my husband. He was an amazing person: kind, cheerful, very smart and an erudite. It seemed there was no existing subject of discussion that he couldn't talk about and no questions he didn't know answers to. My husband always had good positions and earned well. We had an interesting life going to the cinema, to theaters and spending vacations at resorts. I had everything I ever wanted. I was always in public as a teacher and later deputy director at school. I joined the Party and was secretary of the Party unit. I wouldn't have made a career otherwise. I always dressed in trend and beautifully. Naum enjoyed buying me new things.