

## Maria Zabozlaeva's Sister Vera Belova



My sister Vera Belova. This photo was taken in Eilat, Israel, on 21 April 2003 when we went to the reserve of Timna at Purim.

My younger sister Vera was a weak and sickly child. Our cousin sister Elia Avgustevich took Vera to the synagogue for the first time. This was at Pesach. Vera was 6 years old. Vera wasn't religious, but she liked Jewish holidays. She went school #13 for girls in 1948. Since 1956 Vera got a job at a plant, because she failed at the competition to the Aviation College. She studied at the evening department of Saratov Aviation College and worked. She worked as production engineer and retired in 1994. Her husband had died and she needed to support her daughter Katia. She had to do something to earn more money.

Vera worked at the 'mail box' over 30 years. I think that her career failed due to her Jewish identity. Her boss always included her on his lists of employees to be submitted for promotions or a raise, and then he always said 'I can't understand why they crossed your name out of the list'..., but Vera knew. Vera married Alexandr Belov, Russian, in 1971 when she was 30. He finished the Faculty of Energy in Saratov Polytechnic College. He worked as an assistant and the faculty of Energy at the Polytechnic College. In 1972 defended his candidate's dissertation in Leningrad. After they got married they lived with our mother. In 1972 their daughter Katia was born. She finished the faculty of Biology in Saratov State University in 1994. She is a psychologist. She defended her dissertation in 1997. She is candidate of sciences.

About 8-10 years ago Vera began to identify herself as a Jew. She said this happened when she began to work in a Jewish project of the Open Jewish University in Israel. Our cousin brother

Semyon Avgustevich that was manager of Association of Public Universities employed her as project secretary in Moscow in 1996. Vera worked in this program for five years: she gained knowledge of the Jewish history and traditions. Vera studied the Jewish history. Employees of this project even studied 'Introduction to Torah'. This project lasted four years. Later Semyon started a new program 'Warm houses of Moscow' and made Vera coordinator of this program. They celebrated Sabbath, Pesach and other holidays in 'warm houses' ('warm houses': charity cultural program for those who cannot attend Hesed. It includes celebration of Sabbath, birthdays, attending lectures on various subjects, small concerts and celebration of all Jewish holidays) and Vera became a hostess of one of such houses and at that time her Jewish identity showed up. She took part in celebration of Chanukkah at the 'Russia' cinema theater in Moscow. At the previous Pesach that Vera conducted in her 'warm house' there were 100 guests. Young people from the community of young Jews conducted seder and hid afikoman. Working in this program Vera visited Israel several times. Her first visit took place in 1996. Vera was greatly impressed. She traveled for the 2nd time in 1998. During her 3rd visit Vera, her daughter Katia and Michael celebrated the new Year in Jerusalem. Vera met a nice Jewish man in Moscow. They got married and she moved to him in Israel in 2000. She is very happy. They live in Karmiel.