

Semyon And Sarah Fichgendler With Max And Iosif Rosenthal



These are my parents, Sarah Fichgendler, nee Rosenthal, and Semyon Fichgendler, with my mother's brothers Max Rosenthal and Iosif Rosenthal. This photo was taken in Kishinev in 1967. I took this photograph at the railway station when we were seeing off my uncle Max, who was going to Moscow. Every fall, in September, Uncle Max visited Kishinev. About this same time his childhood friend Alexandr Kotyuzhanskiy was visiting his sister in Kishinev. The two of them traveled to Telenesti where they were born.

After my father retired, he received a plot of land out of town: one and a half rows of vines. He was growing grapes, tomatoes, cucumbers, anything one could imagine. My husband and I went to help him. Grigoriy made a kolyba hut for Papa from some planks to serve as a sun shelter. There was another pensioner working on the adjoining plot of land, from the Caucasus, either a Chechen or an Ingush, a very strong old man. They became friends. The neighbor watched my father working and followed his example in everything. He admired him: 'he is a magician.' My father always had good crops of grapes, and he sold some. One year he bought me a golden watch for the money that he made selling grapes; I still wear it in the memory of my father. My father always liked spoiling me.

After the first heart attack in 1966, my father grew weak and suffered from this very much. Once I came home from work: he was lying down crying. 'I can't work and if I don't work, I will rot.' But he always had an amazing memory. My mother helped me about the house. She also did the cooking. She died in June 1971. My father asked me to have her grave not too far in the cemetery so that he could go there. Actually, he didn't have much time left. He died in 1973. They were buried near one another at the Jewish cemetery, but not according to Jewish traditions. I didn't observe the traditional Jewish mourning, when they sit on the floor for seven days. I just wore black clothes.