

Bela Ishakh Together With A Group Of UYW Members



Here I am with friends of my age, Sofian Jews, who were interned to Ruse under the Law for the Protection of the Nation. From left to right you can see me, Sami [Samuel Levi] and Violeta, whose family name I don't remember any more. I don't remember the name of the boy who is squatting in front of us. This photo was taken in the ghetto in Ruse in 1943.

When I was young, I was an active member of the Union of Young Workers, or short UYW. That was in fact the reason why I met my future husband, Aron Gavriel Ishakh, who was also a member of the UYW. We met in our club in 1945. We had to prepare a wall-newspaper then, but I can't remember any details except for that we gathered in the UYW club on Gurko Street. He saw me home and we became friends. We married on 19th September 1945. We are proud that our wedding was one of the first civil marriages that took place in Ruse.

I clearly remember that all the young Jews these days shared common leftist views of communists. To put it otherwise - we were members of the Union of Young Workers. We gathered together, passionately discussed the books we had read, predominantly Maxim Gorky, Victor Hugo, Chekhov. We loved walking together in the park close to the Danube River.

During the Law for the Protection of the Nation I remained in the Jewish ghetto of Ruse, where I made social contacts with the young Jewish boys and girls who were interned from Sofia. All of us were then supporters of the Union of Young Workers. My friends' names from this period were Violeta, Sami, Moni, Stela and others, but I can't remember their family names any more.

There was also Galiko, who was interned from Sofia. He was handicapped. That was how he was born - with tangled legs and strangely twisted arms. Our Jewish community looked after him and

regularly walked him in the town in a perambulator.

Our gatherings of the Union of Young Workers often took place at his house. We often discussed the idea of the foundation of Israel, which meant we were Zionists to a certain extent. I remember that the house he was renting was right opposite to Maccabi. In spite of the terror, I think this period was romantic.