

Communella Bunikovskaya's Parents Gita Bunikovskaya And Michael Bunikovskiy



My parents Gita and Michael Bunikovskiy on vacation in Sukhumi, 1941. In summer 1935 we moved to Makeevka from Stalino, a small town of miners near Stalino. My father got a job and received an apartment there. My father worked at the Attorney office, but in 1936 during the period of repression he became head of legal department at a plant. My mother worked for the 'Worker of Makeevka' newspaper. My parents' friends' doctors, engineers and lawyers often got together at our home on weekends. They listened to music, danced and talked and children played in our room. We only had a radio at home and guests often brought a wireless and records with them. In 1939 my father went to the army. He took part in the establishment of the Soviet power on the territory of Poland that had joined the USSR shortly before. He was dismissed before term for some reason. When the war began on 22 June 1941 my father wasn't recruited to the army since he was in reserve. My parents probably didn't believe that Hitler would attack our country since they went to a resort in Sukhumi at the end of May and returned home few days before the war began. There were trenches excavated in our yard where we hid during air raids. In September 1941 we evacuated with the plant where our father worked to Barnaul Altaysk region [over 4 thousand km from Kiev]. We didn't take any warm clothes since we believed that we would come back home in a short time. There was a big carpet in our living room where my parents stored photographs, documents and some other papers and just few items of clothing. We traveled in a freight railcar in for about 3 weeks. We passed by a bombed train - I remember the frightening sight of wounded and dead people. We had a one-liter packet of caviar with us and this was all we ate on the road - there wasn't even bread; since then I hate red caviar. It was freezing in Barnaul when we arrived. Some people that came in evacuation had their ears or noses frost bitten on the first days. Few plants evacuated to Barnaul were installed together to form one bigger plant of tank engines. My parents worked at this plant. During the war my father became a member of the Communist Party. At the beginning of 1942 our father volunteered to the front. Our mother was assistant human resources manager at the founding shop. We grew potatoes, sunflowers, pumpkins and beans on our plot of land in the vicinity of the town. Our mother came from work late

and my sister and I got starved waiting for her to bring some food. She usually brought frozen potatoes, but sometimes she got sugar beetroots. My mother managed to write poems and arrange a literary club at the plant. She wrote mainly about patriotism of the Soviet people, hard work in the rear and about husbands and sons struggling for freedom of their Motherland.