

With The Members Of Mishne Torah



1943'te Idare Hey'eti Gençler Komisyonu ile toplu halde.

This is a photograph of the members of Mishne Torah taken all together. The year is around 1940. In this photograph, both the members of the board of directors, and the members of the youth commission, both girls and boys are together. I am on the bottom row, first from right, they accepted me in the community when I was only about 16 or 17, before I was accepted as a member. Because in the picture, the third person in the row behind the young ladies, is my father. On the very top row, the person third from left is my older brother, he was also president of the youth commission in the community. In the front row of ladies that are seated, the second from left is my older sister Regina Modiano (her last name then). The others in the photograph: I remember the names of most of the young and the old still. The general president and founder is seated right at the center. The first on right is Mr. Aciman, next to him Pilosof, next to him my father, seated below Mizrahi, on the very top the deceased Alber Tovi, vice-president, next to him Moiz Kosuto, next to him my older brother. My brother, Mario Mair Modiano, was born in Salonika in 1921. When he was only six months old, my parents decided to move to Istanbul. He began studying at the French St. Benoit High School when he was six. He had to transfer to an Italian high school when he was at the seventh grade because of the 1932 Mussolini official notification. He completed his education at the Italian Lysee, and graduated with a degree in Commerce. After high school, he attended the Istanbul University's Business and Commerce School. He graduated from the university with a degree in Commerce. In 1942, he and one of our neighbors in the apartment became partners, and opened a wholesale dried-goods store. This continued until 1950, when he resigned because of irreconcilable differences with his partner. That was when he and I started working together. We founded our own store, and named it the 'Terakki House of Dried-Goods - Mair and Eriko Modiano.' We worked together until 1958. That year, my brother decided to move to Canada. He had gotten married to Nina Eskinazi in 1948. He became diabetic because of all the stress he endured during his last partnership. The disease later spread to his eyes, and he unfortunately lost his sight. I always thought of him as a very brave person for undergoing eye surgery only two years after losing his sight. After the operation, one of his eyes regained about

25% sight. He had this operation in Canada. He was a very alert-natured person. He always liked responsibility and being busy with something. This is probably why, after he lost his sight, he enrolled at a local university and became interested in photography. He studied the art of photography at the university. After he regained 25% sight on one of his eyes, he took many beautiful photographs. I remember him going through really hard times when he first moved to Canada, but he did not give up. He worked as a regular employee at several different companies. After a while, he became partners with a friend of his, and the two of them founded an import business for men's and women's shoes. For the business, they imported a wide variety of shoes from East Asia, Italy and France. He had a son named Sonny Modiano. Sonny completed his education in Montreal, Canada. After graduation, he initially began working with his father, but he was not entirely interested in the job. Therefore, he decided to move to Detroit in the United States with his wife and two children. Today, he still lives in Detroit, and operates a successful yoghurt manufacturing business there. My brother got really sick after catching a virus. He passed away despite all efforts to save him. That was in 1992. My sister was born in Istanbul in 1923. She attended both elementary and middle school at the Saint George Austrian High School. She later attended the American Robert College for high school, but she had to drop out because my father's financial situation had steadily deteriorated. She got married to Edgar Tabah in 1946. Her husband's job was not going too well, and therefore, their financial situation was not too comfortable either. In 1955, they were forced to immigrate to Israel to start a new life. Their son, Albert Tabah, had already immigrated there some time before. He had served in the military, and fought during the Six-Day and Yom Kippur Wars. Because of wartime conditions, he decided to move to Canada - near my brother. Later on, the two of them ended up moving together to California, United States. My sister's daughter, Marcel, ended up staying in Israel. She got married, and gave birth to a daughter and a son. My sister passed away in 1983. Unfortunately, my sister and I did not really get along well because of some monetary problems. As to my relationship with my brother, we always treated each other with respect and compassion.