

At Burgazada



This photo was taken at the window of our house at Cakiltasi street on Burgazada [the second of the Prince's Islands on the Sea of Marmara]. We used to rent that house for the summer. Our landlady was Mrs. Endokri and we rented her house for two- three years in a row. In the photo you can see my elder son, Selim on the left and his aunt, my wife's sister, Ester on the right. Ester was a married lady by the time this photo was taken.

My wife's sister Ester Akkoen, was also born in Kuzguncuk, and she grew up there. Ester used to work at a firm owned by a very rich man named Ahmet Diliboş, who had come from Russia. This man brought with him a lot of pearls, when he was escaping from Russia. He sold them here, and founded this firm. This is the way he used to tell us. This firm was engaged in export and import business. Ester worked as a secretary in this firm, for a few years. Later on she married Albert Eskenazi. They had three children named, Rifka, Suzi, and Moiz. When their children grew up, they emigrated to Israel in 1966. Rifka got married and she chose to be a housewife. Suzi got married, too and had children. She worked at one of the TelAviv branches of the discount Bank for long years. She continued working even after she had her children. She became manager of her department. She is still working at that bank. Ester's third child, Moiz turned out to be a no-good. He is the black sheep of the family.

We lost Albert in 2002 unfortunately. He is buried in Israel.

All my wife's siblings have close ties with each other, and love one another. We always liked spending time with each other, and we've always been like siblings. We still talk at least twice a week on the phone with each other, and meet once a year.

Selim was born in 1943. We had been living in Talimhane, Taksim since 1942, and raised our children there. We moved to Siracevizler, Sisli in 1958 [a neighborhood on the European side].

We used to speak French and Spanish, with my late wife. Of course we also spoke Turkish. We usually spoke Turkish with the children. In this way, the children became acquainted with these two languages when they were small.

We were able to give a good education to our children. Selim went to the primary school at Yeni Kolej. [Literally New College, it is a private Turkish school that has a reputation of being very easy to finish] He then finished secondary high school in Saint Michel [French Catholic school], and the high school in Saint Benoit [French Catholic school]. [In the Turkish education system, primary school was 5 years, then came 3 years of secondary school and then another 3 years of high school or lycee] He started the Faculty of Law of Istanbul University, and graduated from there. He is working as a lawyer. He married Verjel Abuaf, whom I love very much, and regard like a daughter, at the Neve Salom Synagogue, in 1971. They had two sons, from their marriage. In 1973, my first grandchild, Eytan was born. He was a very good student. He finished Robert College [20]. He then finished Business Administration at the University of Istanbul. He started his working life. He married Sibel Almelek, in May, 2004. They moved to Izmir [third biggest city in Turkey] and settled down there, because of their businesses. My youngest grandchild, named Koray (Selim's second son) is 17 years old, and still studying at the Jewish High School in Ulus.