

Juliet Saltiel With Her Cousin Frida Bokumska



This is me together with my cousin Frida. The photo was taken in 1941 in Sofia.

Frida is the elder daughter of auntie Berta and uncle Morits Bakumski. They left for Israel in 1948. Frida's children are called Miriam, who has four children on her turn, and Iris who has one child. They all are now living in Israel.

My family voluntarily moved to live in Asenovgrad [1942] just before the anti-Semitic Law for Protection of the Nation [promulgated in 1941] was actively enforced in Bulgaria. We decided to do it after we read the announcements that appeared in the daily newspapers and on the radio that warned of a forthcoming law for forced internment of all Jews living in Sofia to places in the country [Although Jews living in Bulgaria were not deported to concentration camps abroad or to death camps, many were interned to different locations within Bulgaria.].

We moved our baggage to the house of the sister of my brother Ruben's wife. Ruben had just married in Sofia. That happened in 1941. My brother was then at around 19 years of age. His wife's name was Ester (nee Sachi) and her sister was called Lili Videva (nee Sachi). At the beginning we lived in Lili's two-storey house, where also her family lived. They were three of them then (she had just given birth to his first son Vassil). And we were seven (together with my brother, his wife and my half-brother); that is - three different families that had to live together. Of course, this situation could not continue for ever, so Lili Videva and her husband found for us a separate rented house in another district, which was however close to their place. I remember there were a lot of Turks in

our district, fewer Bulgarians and Jews (who already wore the disgraceful yellow stars); no Armenians lived there though. Despite the mixed origin of the residents we lived well together. Our house was small of course, with low ceilings - a typical Turkish house. There were two rooms and a kitchen. We used logs for heating. My brother Ruben once lost his wedding ring in the pile of logs in the yard.