

## The Kohen Family Visiting The Revah Family



From right to left you can see my parents, Iafa Benjamin Kohen, and Benjamin Shemtov Kohen. In front of them from left to right is my sister Milka and her husband Rofat Revah. I do not know the other woman, but I think she is a relative of Rofat. This photo was taken in 1977/8 in Tel Aviv.

I do not know how my parents met. But I know for sure that their wedding took place in 1919, when my father was 37 years old and my mother - 29 years old. My parents' brothers and sisters were kind people. My parents kept in constant touch with them. They met on holidays, weddings, celebrated holidays together, visited the ill relatives. My father's sisters are Ester Benjamin Kohen [her maiden family name] and Victoria Benjamin Kohen, but I do not remember anything else about their families or about them. My mother's sister's name was Rashel Rahamim Levi [her maiden family name] and her brothers' names were Mordehay Rahamim Levi, Leon Rahamim Levi and Ruben Rahamim Levi. I have no information about them.

My nice sister Milka became a social worker in Israel (she had a university education in Bulgaria) and now she has two lovely sons there: Izak Rofat Revah and Benjamin Rofat Revah. Currently Izak lives in Canada. He works as an engineer there.

I have been to Israel three times. I visited my relatives, friends and acquaintances. I remember that when I first arrived in Israel, I was welcomed by a sequence of sunny, bright, fresh and hot days. I was most fascinated by the thriving greenery in Israel, which was everywhere - in the cities, kibbutzim, flats, on the roofs, roads, in the synagogues and parks. I also noticed that the beautiful magnolias, rubber plants, jasmine, hedges, grass and all flowers were looked after with love not only by the common people, but also by municipal employees.

If someone dared to tear a flower from a bush, he would be scolded right away by a child or a passer-by. The terraces and gardens in Rishon le Zion, Rehovot and in the kibbutzim Hazorea, Shvaim, Nevo Betar fascinated me with the wonderful greenery in the midst of the desert where

Israel is located. I found the Mediterranean Sea very warm, even in the end of the year. The scenery of Tel Aviv's seaside is magnificent and inspiring, especially now. One visit of a stranger like me is enough to make him feel at home. The warm 'boker tov' ['good morning' in Hebrew] used to greet everyone you meet, the cordial 'shalom' when parting, the common 'you' melt the ice and make you a part of Israeli society. To be honest, I did not find it dangerous there and did not feel afraid of the threat of terrorism. Young children would play tennis, ride bicycles, go swimming, eat and drink and have fun under the watchful monitoring of planes and ships. I remember that one day the sea was a little bit dirty. I was walking along the shore with my husband, when looking at our feet we heard a voice from the loudspeakers saying to us, 'Don't worry, sir and madam, next to the changing rooms there is a device, which will wash away the bitumen. The device turned out to be a simple cylindrical brush soaked in petrol.