

Nikolay Schwartz's Son Alexandr Ivanov



My son Alexandr Ivanov. My son was photographed on the day, when their diplomas were issued to them upon graduation from university. This photo was taken in Uzhgorod in 1984.

I met my wife by chance. I fell ill with jaundice. There was nobody to take care of me. My former school friend's wife was looking after me. There was a young Russian woman living in a neighboring house. She often came to see my friend's wife. She was a tall and beautiful blonde. I found her stories about life in the USSR interesting and besides, it was a good opportunity for me to practice my Russian. I didn't think about Nina as of my future wife. Some time later Nina visited me in my apartment that I was renting. She stayed to live with me. We didn't register our marriage. I was OK without an official marriage. I thought I had to be free. I was thinking of possible

emigration. So we lived till she got pregnant. There were few men after the war, and many women agreed to have a baby even without a husband. Nina kept telling me that she didn't want anything from me and that she would go to Leningrad and raise the child there. Of course, I couldn't allow it. Even though I didn't consider her to be my wife, a baby was a different story. In 1952 Nina gave birth to my son. We named him Alexandr. I tried to help Nina to take care of the baby. We had a visiting nurse who went for walks with the baby and did washing. Later I got to know that Nina gave our son her last name of Ivanova. She said she did it for our son to face no anti-Semitism, but it was a strong blow for me. I couldn't feel the same love to the child that I felt before.

In 1953 I was arrested. I was sentenced to 7 years of imprisonment in a labor penitentiary camp. I was taken to Drogobych of Lvov region to this camp. I was desperate, my life seemed to be over. In 1955 they released me for absence of corpus delicti. I was restored at work. After my arrest Nina moved to another apartment. In two years she never wrote me a letter. I don't know whether she believed that I was guilty or was just concerned about her safety. When I returned from prison, she was living alone raising her son. My son was raised knowing nothing about Jewish traditions or Jewish history. Nina got panicky even hearing the word 'Jew'. Of course, I supported her and tried to spend more time with my son, but I didn't feel like living together with her.

My son Alexandr graduated from the Mechanic Faculty of Uzhgorod University. Upon graduation my son married his co-student Galina, a Russian girl, whose parents moved to Uzhgorod after World War II. In 1982 their daughter Yelena was born and in 1985 - their son Nikolay. My son and daughter-in-law worked a lot and I spent much time with my grandchildren.