

## Samuel Birger And His Family



The picture was made before departure of the family of my daughter Marina for Israel. From left to right: my son-in-law Gennadiy Zaher, next to him is my daughter Marina, I, my grandson Ilia Bondar, brother's wife Faina Abel, my brother Natan Birger, my son in law Boris Bondar. I do not know the couple to the left. They are my daughter's friends, I do not know them. To the right sitting is my daughter Raisa Bondar holding Marina's son Roma. To the left sitting is my wife Maya Birger. The picture was made in Jonava in Vilnius in 1988.

In 1954 I found a job rather quickly as I was the candidate to KPSS which was rare in Lithuania. I was hired as a locksmith -assembler by electric welding equipment plant. I did very well. I was raised in my class and made pretty good money. When mother turned 55 I insisted on her retirement. I was admitted to the communist party and again I was offered social work. Soon I became the party officer of the second workshop, where welding machines were produced.

I got married in 1957. Now I was married, had children, therefore I ought to earn more. I left the plant and went to work at furniture factory, where the salary was higher. I was also involved in social work. I was in charge of brigade, which daily patrolled the streets helping militia with detecting sots and hooligans. I was involved in civil defense. In a word I was an active member of society. At the factory I acquired the skills of sanitary technician and took up that profession. It was rather lucrative as I started having odd jobs in school and at the factory. I provided a rather good living for my family. I was one of the first who bought Zhiguli car. Now I have a German car and make some money as a driver.

I have wonderful children. Elder daughter was born in 1957. She was named Raisa. At home we call her Raya to commemorate grandmother Haya as those names are euphonic. The second Marina is eight years younger than the elder one. My mother helped us raise daughters. She plied them with love to Yiddish and Jewish holidays. My daughters went to a Russian school. There were a lot Jewish students there, but Raya and Marina made friends with Jews as well as children of other nationalities. Raya and Marina did pretty well at school. Both of them, finished book-keeping and industrial production faculty of Vilnius University in due time. Our family had a pretty good living.

Of course, at first it was hard for young family, but I always worked hard and never found it disgraceful to make money from odd jobs. After retirement I kept working in several places. Every year we went to the resort in Palanga with our girls. Sometimes we went to the Black Sea.

Both of my daughters married Jews. My sons-in-law graduated from one institute Vilnius construction engineering. My elder daughter's husband Boris Bondar has his business in Vilnius. Raya and Boris have son Ilia, born in 1980. Ilia is a businessman as well. He graduated from business school. Ilia is married. Recently his daughter Rita was born. Thus, we are having a great granddaughter.

Marina and her husband Gennadiy Zaher immigrated to Israel in late 1980s. Marina's elder son Roman was born in Vilnius in 1987. He is called Rubi in Israel. I was present at barmitzvah ceremony of my grandson, taken place in Israel. I am happy that my grandson is a true Jew. The second son of Marina and Ilia Itai was born in Holon in 1996. Marina and her husband successfully work in Israel; Marina is a commercial manager of a large firm.