

## The Gaspar Family At Abbazia



This is not one of my photos. I have it from my husband Andras Gaspar, Andris. He had more photos about his family than me. It is from an old album, he used to collect photos. We moved many times, but my husband used to say we should bring the photos with us to prevent them from being thrown away. There are many photos I don't know anything about, but I kept them anyway.

About this one I know it was taken in the period of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. My mother-in-law is in it, she holds the small child [in the back row, holding the baby up high, in front of the bald man], probably Andris... but it could well be Laci [Laszlo], his brother, because Andris was a very thin child, and Laci was that moon-face type. I don't think the child was older than four or five. The picture was taken at the Abbazia, a spa they used to spend the summer holiday. They never really talked about the old days, but I know the man [the father] was earning pretty good money as lawyer and when the poor man died, the mother had a very difficult time as widow. He left nothing to inherit, so they probably spent everything he earned.

Laci, Andris' elder brother, has not been deported, because he, for the sake of his wife, converted to Christianity and he wasn't taken away because he wore the white armband. [Editor's note: The white armband was worn by the Christians of Jewish origins, that is the ones who converted, and whom, according to the anti-Jewish laws in force were considered Jews. They have been deported to forced labor units for Christians.] Andris was a late-born, her mother was 43 when she gave birth to him. He had an elder sister, who was 16 years older than him, and she didn't come home, neither. And none of his relatives, especially his mother. His father was a lawyer, but he died of heart-attack when Andris was in twelveth grade of high school, and he left them nothing. By then his bother was already working and he had to help out his mother, while Andris had to sustain himself: he gave lessons to the weaker students for money.