

Halina Najduchowska



This is me, Halina Najduchowska, nee Szwarc. It is a studio portrait taken in Lodz in June 1947.

The first thing I did after the war was to join ZWM, the Fighting Youth Union, and to sign up for school. I went to school half-legally.

I wanted to join straight away the fourth year of gymnasium, although I had only completed elementary school. I thought there was no point for me, at my age, to start with first year students.

One of my friends told me about this teacher who had taught in a gymnasium before the war, and whose ambition it was to be able to recognize all her former students.

I went to see her. She pretended to recognize me immediately, claimed to remember me, she said I sat at the third table by the window. Of course, I confirmed that indeed this is where I used to sit and I got the permit.

I went to school, the fourth year, and for half a year I couldn't work because I was catching up all those missing years. I did complete that fourth year of gymnasium then, and without any 3s [C's].

For that matter, I didn't have that many 5s [A's] either. But I decided that this school does not satisfy my ambitions, and I went to one that did.

Before the war this was a boy's school named after Pilsudski, and after the war they turned it into the 3rd City Gymnasium on Sienkiewicza Street. This is where I completed two years of high school, while working full time at the ZWM.

I passed my final exams and enrolled in the university, the physics faculty. I wanted to study electricity, but it turned out to be too difficult, after all, to both work and study electrical engineering, so I finally opted for physics, because I thought it would be easier.

But after the first semester, I found I couldn't manage that either, even though my friends were helping me.

In Lodz there was a faculty of social pedagogy, and I began to study there. I kept at it for a year and a half, and then I moved to Warsaw, to take a position in the main headquarters of ZMP, the Union of Polish Youth.

I moved to Warsaw on 1st March 1949.