

Matilda Cerge's Family



This picture was taken in Belgrade in the 1980s, a few years before my mother died in 1990. Here is my extended family. From left to right: my brother-in-law, then my sister Breda Simonovic (nee Kalef), my mother Dona Kalef, my granddaughter Sara, myself and my older granddaughter Leana. Very soon after the war my sister and I joined the Jewish community. We were working and couldn't go often. We went periodically. Now that I am free I can go more often. But all the time we were members of the Jewish community. My sister even sang with the choir and went to Israel with them in 1952, '54, '56, '58. Breda was also in Israel for six months performing with the Israeli Opera Company from September 1964 to March 1965. My husband and I have a daughter, Edit. We never put pressure on her to identify herself as a Jew or not. We left it up to her to decide. She was a member of the Jewish community as long as I paid for her. I no longer pay for her. We live under the same roof, but we have our own apartments. My daughter built an apartment in the attic for herself. My older granddaughter, Leana, went to the Jewish community for a while. And for some time I took the younger one, Sara. They have drifted away from this and I don't know why. Leana studies acting and the younger one, Sara, is still in high school and very busy. She would like to do Israeli dance and I tell her to go. But she says, 'Grandma I really can't.' We live far away; she goes to school, comes home, has extra courses in German and goes to music school. She is so overextended, she really doesn't have time. Maybe when she begins university she will have more time. I also try and convince her to join the choir because she has a nice voice.