

Ida Goldshmidt And Her Friend Luba Degtiaryova



This is my friend Luba Degtiaryova and I (left) having a walk. Luba is Russian, she came to Latvia with her parents before the war. Her parents perished during the war. We had our uniforms that all children wore in the children's home. This photo was taken in Daugavpils in 1946. In 1943 our former pioneer camp and current children's home arrived at Ivanovo. In Ivanovo we attended Russian classes. Children learn fast. All children of different nationalities spoke Russian to one another in this international children's home. We faced no anti-Semitism in the children's home.

There were so many different children at this home, that nobody looked foreign. Of course, life in the children's home was no idyll, and I would never believe those who say they were happy there. However, we knew we had no alternative, and that we would have died, if it hadn't been for the children's home. Actually, we had sufficient food and clothes, we studied, had clean beds and were treated all right. I was continuously ill in Ivanovo. The doctors really saved my life at the children's home. I became a pioneer at the children's home, and I was very proud of it. I studied from the 3rd to the 5th grade at school at the children's home. I was doing all right at school. I had friends there. We knew the war was coming to an end. In 1944 Soviet forces advanced as far as Latvia. We looked forward to the day when Latvia would be free and we could go home. In 1945 children from Latvia left Ivanovo for the Daugavpils children's home. In autumn I went to the 6th grade. After finishing the 7th grade well, I was awarded a trip to Moscow. Ten children and a tutor went on this trip. This was the first time we went to Moscow, and everything was interesting. Moscow was reconstructed, but theaters and museums were open. We went on excursions and to the theater. This was the first time I went to the theater, and I loved it. Our boarding school tutors took efforts to find our relatives. One Sunday children from Riga were taken to Riga hoping that we might find someone we knew. We had an appointed place to meet in the evening, and I went walking along the streets. I went to our neighborhood, walked along familiar streets recalling my childhood. An older woman looked at me closely and asked, "Are you Buna's daughter?" Buna was my mother's name. Everybody said I looked like her. The woman recognized me. She told me that my family had perished, but my uncle Boris was alive. He returned from the front.