

## Mendel Kreimer At A Gymnasium Party



This is me at a gymnasium party, 100 days before finishing the commercial school. This photo was taken in Kishinev in 1940. This was a tradition in tsarist Russia. This party was called a 100-day party. 100 days before finishing school, schools for boys and girls had joint parties, having lots of fun, dancing and getting photographed. My father sent me to the elementary school in Kishinev: 'Magen David Jewish gymnasium for boys.' There was Hebrew taught there and a few Judaism-related subjects in Hebrew. When I finished four grades, my father realized that he couldn't afford to educate me any further. He decided a man had to learn a profession and sent me to a commercial school. This was the way it happened during capitalism: how the human mind worked. I had to pass the exams in the Romanian elementary school in order to enter this commercial school. I need to say that my generation of young people in Kishinev was lucky to have great teachers. They were the best lecturers of Russia who had escaped from the revolution of 1917, and King Ferdinand I of Romania gave them shelter. After Bessarabia was annexed to Romania in 1918 they taught Russian in gymnasiums for five or six years before they learned sufficient Romanian to teach in it. They were well-educated and good people. I must say, I had some talents, but I didn't care about studying. Eberwei, the director of our gymnasium, was a German teacher. Eberwei and Scheibler were authors of all German textbooks in Romania. Scheibler was our English teacher. We also studied French. In May 1940 I successfully passed the exams for a Bachelor's degree. We had to know everything by heart and demonstrate good intellectual skills. At this time the Soviet troops came to Bessarabia and I went to work as an accountant in the Border Forces Construction Agency on the bank of the Prut River, the new borderline between Romania and the USSR.