

Bluma Shumiacher And Her Sister Mena



This is me on the left and my older sister Mena Shumiacher. This photo was taken in Tallinn in 1959. After returning to Tallinn from evacuation I went to work as a medical nurse in the Navy hospital. My sister Mena was a manicurist at a hairdresser's. Mena was single and lived alone. I got married in 1950. I met my first husband Victor Vatis at a dancing party at the Palace of officers. Victor was a jealous husband, and insisted that I quit the hospital, because many of his patients were young men. I went to work as a medical nurse in the railroad children's recreation center. I got pregnant, and my pregnancy took a complicated course. The labor didn't go normal and the baby was stillborn. After that we started keeping aloof. We were no longer a family. We were just two people sharing a room for some vague reason. We divorced in 1953. After returning to Tallinn our family observed Jewish traditions. There was no possible way to follow the kashrut, though. Well, we did not buy any pork or pork sausages, but there was no place selling kosher meat. We bought beef, veal and poultry, then. Actually, we did that, when meat became available in stores some time after the war, of course. We celebrated Jewish holidays at home. My mother made matzah for Pesach. We did what was possible. The synagogue in Tallinn burned down in 1944. My grandmother and mother went to a small prayer house on major Jewish holidays. My sister or I didn't go there.