

Genrietta Plotkina



This is my daughter from my first marriage, Genrietta Mikhailovna Plotkina, portrayed in the park of the Leningrad Polytechnic Institute (now University) where she is teaching mathematics. The photo was taken in 1969. I married my first wife Irina Nagibina in evacuation, in Izhevsk, in 1942. Our daughter Genrietta was born in August 1943. It was a compromise solution: a sonorous foreign name, neither Jewish, nor Russian. Our relations were very good at that time. The problems came later and after the war we got divorced. My children's youth fortunately fell into Khrushchev's thaw period, when all anti-Jewish restrictions were relaxed. They managed to obtain university education and make a lot of Russian friends. My daughter graduated from the Faculty of Mathematics?Mechanics at university, and our son graduated from the Faculty of History. However, I was always against his humanitarian interests. My daughter happily worked all her life as a teacher at the sub-faculty of Mathematics at the Polytechnic Institute and our son was constantly driven from place to place. My children were brought up in the Russian cultural environment. Their life is quite successful. They had some problems with their ethnic origin, especially our son. But they didn't dare to lose contact with their "pre-historic motherland" and start life all over. They began to take an interest in the life of their nation and the Jewish community in Petersburg during the last several years. They participate in the "Hesed Avraham" charity center programs: my daughter conducts one of the "warm homes" two dozens of old Jews come to see her every week to talk and spend time; my son collects materials for the Jewish museum. My grandchildren have a different fate. My daughter has two children: son Ilya and daughter Julia. In 1989 they were 20 and 17 years old correspondingly. They both announced that they are tired of "changing color" that they want to be real Jews, so they left for Israel. Ilya became an Orthodox Jew, he wears traditional clothes, is keen on Jewish mystics; he married a charming Jewess from a family of Orthodox Jews from Belgium. His wife gave birth to three wonderful children, my great-grandchildren. Julia turned out to be a very talented girl with a strong personality. She entered the Hebrew University in Jerusalem and defended a Master's thesis in sociology. Her dissertation was considered the best graduate's work of 2000 in the field of sociology and anthropology in Israel. Now she is working for a Doctor's degree. I see the future of our family in our grandchildren and I like this future. My daughter has been to Israel four times to visit her children. My son also has been to Israel at the Yad Vashem seminar. They brought back brilliant, unforgettable impressions.