

Bernat Sauber's Family



This photo was taken in my office in Marosvasarhely, in 1980. My wife Maria Zikh, our adopted daughter Zsuzsa and myself are in it. Both me and my wife are dressed in robes. The robes were black, and on my robe there is a gold-plated badge with a blue inscription. The inscription is 'Lex' [Law]. The clerks didn't have these badges, only The Bench and the prosecutors. My desk was there, you can even see it in the picture. My wife was greffier at the court. I think Zsuzsa just came from school. I think she was 16 here and attended the arts school. One of our colleagues, Lajos Vitos, the head of the criminalistics department, just entered the room with a camera and said to us: 'Come on, stand next to each other!' Unfortunately Lajos died young. He used to take pictures. The criminalistics department, which functioned within the prosecutor's office, for example, even had a motion-picture camera, and we had a VCR from the end of the 1970s. There were no movies at that time, our only amusement was that we put him to record the meetings, and then we watched it at home. We had some good laughs, too. We really enjoyed these tapes. I met my wife, Maria Zikh here in Vasarhely. She was originally from Nagykaroly, and she worked as greffier at the court. She wasn't Jewish, just my father-in-law was originally Jewish, but his parents (my wife's grandparents) convert to Roman Catholicism - I didn't try to find out when and why they convert. My father-in-law was a trader, originally from Csernovic [Chernowitz, in today's Ukraine], he bought eggs and fowls, he transported and sold them. I didn't know him, because he was already dead. Her mother worked at home, then she came to Vasarhely, she stayed with us for a while, then she moved to one of her little sisters and later she died. We observed the Jewish holidays. My wife doesn't light a candle on Saturday, in stead she uses to cook a festive dinner. We use to celebrate their holidays, as well. She used to come to the synagogue: when other people come along, she used to come, too. She doesn't come anymore, since two years ago, because she is ill. In the communist era we didn't use to celebrate Chanukkah at home, only after 1990. Now I'm

celebrating it regularly. It is a simple ceremony: I read the prayer, light the candles, and that's just about it. We have an adopted daughter. Zsuzsa is the daughter of my wife's cousin. She was four when we adopted her and brought her with us, and she is with us since. Her mother lives in Nagykaroly. Zsuzsa was born there. Her father died, and she has an older brother. He graduated the arts school. It is my fault, I insisted on her choosing the lawyer career, although she would have liked to enter the arts school, but we knew then what meant to graduate the arts school: if one wasn't a sheer talent, they would end up as drawing-teacher in some village. When my wife retired, she was exactly 20, and replaced her mother as court greffier. Currently she is working at the court of appeal. She is in charge with the statistics and she also works as greffier. She is working since 1981. Unfortunately she didn't want to get married. She may have been influenced by the situations she saw at the court, how easily marriages are broken, and probably this discouraged her, although she is a very warm-hearted and friendly character. She stays in her own apartment and has her own life, but she comes over for dinner or supper, of course. We even made her snacks, so she doesn't have to spend money on food. To tell the truth, we raised her as atheist, but still she attends Ivrit classes. On every holiday when young people come to the synagogue, she comes, as well, she is rather attracted to my side.