

Anatoli Kraemer With His Wife Mayli And Cousin Ilana



These are my cousin Ilana, my wife Mayli, and I in my place. There is my portrait in the background. When I was five, my mother ordered this portrait from a painter. The photograph was taken in Tallinn in 1994.

There is an interesting story connected with this picture. When our family was evacuated, we did not take the portrait with us as it was too big. When Tallinn was occupied by Germans, they came to arrest us, as we were a Jewish family, but we had left Tallinn by that time. They took all our things from the house, including the portrait. When I was in Tallinn in 1945, I saw the portrait in the commission shop. I went in there and found out who brought in my portrait. It turned out that the portrait fell from the truck, where Germans loaded our things, and it stayed outside. One passerby took it, but he did not want to sell it at that time as it was clear that a Jewish boy was painted on it. When the Germans left Tallinn, he took the portrait to the store. I found the person and he gave me my portrait back. It has been in my apartment since then.

In 1965 I was offered a job as editor of the photo department of the news agency Eta, which provided materials for almost all printed editions of the Baltic countries. Eta was actually a political organization. We had to adjust all news from the different parts of the world for the Soviet press and of course make a certain coloring. Soon I was assigned chief editor of the photo department. When I was working in Eta, I was compelled to go through training in the Higher party school. I retired in 1994.

My wife Mayli worked in the kindergarten, then she was offered a job in a seamstress vocational school. She worked there for a long time. Her teacher's salary was skimpy, and she had to think of her pension. Mayli went to work as person in charge of the warehouse at the milk factory. She worked there for ten years and retired in 1988. When Estonia became independent, life was getting difficult. There was not enough money and Mayli started working as a librarian at school. She

stopped working in 1998.