

Hana Rayzberg With Her Class Tutor Ella And Schoolmates



These are my schoolmates at the picnic out of town, arranged by the school on Lag Bayomer holiday. I don't know all of them. There were children from the 1st and 2nd grades, and I went to the preparatory grade. Our class tutor Ella, I don't remember her surname, is in the 2nd row. We addressed her as Ms. Ella. I am standing on her right. The 3rd on the right in the first row is my classmate Hertz Frank. This photo was taken in Ludza in 1933.

I was born on 1st January 1927 and was given the name of Hana-Leya after my paternal grandmother. My parents were religious and observed all the Jewish traditions. Of course, some Jews in Ludza attended the synagogue twice a day, but not our family. My family went to the synagogue on Sabbath and on Jewish holidays. We spoke Yiddish at home. We celebrated Jewish holidays according to the rules. We also celebrated birthdays in the family. Mama had her birthday in summer, and we always had birthday parties in the garden. We only had some wine on Jewish holidays, and on birthdays we had tea, sweets and desserts. Adults talked and sang Jewish songs, and children played in the yard.

At the age of six I went to the preparatory grade of the Jewish school. We learned to read and write in Hebrew. We had Hebrew classes every day, and all subjects were taught in Yiddish. I studied in this school for six years. We also had religious classes where we studied the Tannakh and Torah. I did well at school. I had a happy childhood. These were the happiest years in my life. We weren't quite wealthy and Mama could not afford to buy a piano for me. I attended a music studio where I had classes. I also performed at school parties playing the piano. I played pieces by Brahms and Beethoven.

There were a few lakes in Ludza, and children spent most of their time in summer on the banks of these lakes. We bathed and went rowing, picked hazelnuts on the opposite bank in the woods. My cousin sisters and brothers spent their summer vacations with us. It was a happy time!