

Beila Gabis With Her Husband Motia Gabis And Their Children: Semyon Gabis And Rimma Gabis



This is me, Beila Gabis, my husband Motia Gabis and our children: Semyon Gabis and Rimma Gabis. This photo was taken after Rimma finished the 10th form in Ternopol in 1968.

In 1945 my husband Motia became director of military trade supply agency and was a teacher in an evening school. He studied at the extramural department in a College in Vinnitsa. After finishing it he got a job assignment in Ternopol. We moved to Ternopol. In 1948 my son Semyon was born there and in 1951 - a girl. I named her Rimma after my grandmother. Motia took good care of the children and me. He worked hard and created wonderful living conditions for us. Motia also insisted that I didn't go to work. So, I stayed at home with the children. We didn't observe Jewish traditions, but I raised the children as Jews. They knew about the great suffering their nation had to go through.

We've never been interested in politics. No members of our family ever joined the Party. We lived our life and didn't care about any political occurrences in the country. We spent our summer vacations in the Crimea. Most of our friends were Jews, but we didn't segregate people by nationality. It just happened to be so. We didn't observe any Jewish holidays or celebrate Soviet holidays. We only celebrated calendar New Year, birthdays and Victory Day, 9 May when our friends visited us. We had a small party and sang songs of the wartime. My husband, my brothers and I drank a shot of vodka on the memorable day of 14 March, the day of liberation from the ghetto.

My son Semyon finished a Polytechnic College. He worked as a car engineer for many years. Now he works at a private company. Semyon divorced his first wife. His second wife Galena, is a Jewish woman, has two children from first marriage. Semyon was kind to them. They live not far from us in Ternopol and we often see each other.

My daughter Rimma met her future husband Alexandr Rozenberg in college. They got married in 1973 when they were students. There were many guests at their wedding, but it wasn't a Jewish wedding. Rimma and her husband worked at the Lvov TV factory Electron. They moved to Israel in 1990. Alexandr works in Sokhnut and Rimma is a housewife. They like their new life very much. My husband and I had the same opinion about emigration. We were happy about the establishment of an independent Jewish state. Like all other Jews we followed the events and struggle, particularly, during the Six-Day-War. We wished happiness to all those moving to Israel or America, but we ourselves did not want to go to Israel. Neither Motia nor I ever wanted to live our life among only Jews. Besides, our home and family graves are here.

I think I am a very happy woman regardless of all ordeals that we had to go through. My husband and I were always together and we were close. He died in 1994. It was a huge loss for me. I buried him beside my mother's grave at the town cemetery. I am very happy for our children and glad that their life is different from ours.