

Arkadi Yurkovetski



I, before demobilization from the army. I am wearing a uniform of the time of the great patriotic War in the picture. This photo was taken in Chernovtsy in 1954.

My mother died in April 1953. In 1954 I demobilized from the army. I couldn't go back home. My father remarried a year after my mother died. His second wife's name was Zelda, of course. I understood that my father and brother needed some support at home and I didn't blame my father. Zelda was a very nice and kind woman. However, it hurt to see another woman in my home. I went to my mother's sister Ida in Uzhhorod. I went to work as senior commodity expert at the Association Enterprise of Deaf People where I worked 10 years. I also finished an extramural department of the Trade Technical School in Uzhhorod. It is now called Commercial College. After I received my diploma I went to work as logistics manager at the Mechanical Plant in Uzhhorod. I worked there until I retired.

In 1957 I got married. My Russian wife Rita Shumkova was born somewhere in Russia in 1938. I met her at my friend's wedding. Rita worked at the same plant as I. Rita was 18 and I was 27 years old. Rita's parents approved of our marriage while my father was against my marrying a Russian girl. However, I couldn't change anything. Our older son Ilia was born in two months after we got married in 1957. I couldn't allow my son to have no father. We lived with Rita's parents. When my older son turned 5 I received a 2-room apartment from the plant. In 1963 our son Pavel was born. We had everything we needed for life at least, by the standards of that period of time. During my service in the army I distanced myself from observing Jewish traditions and from religion. I was an ordinary Soviet person and I didn't have to change any habits when I married a non-Jewish wife.

Religious habits were not appreciated at the time. We celebrated Soviet holidays at home and at work. We enjoyed meeting with friends. I had Jewish, Ukrainian, Russian and Hungarian friends. I never bothered about nationality. I've always valued human virtues. We spent vacations visiting my father in Tomashpol. He was very happy to see us, but he couldn't accept my wife into his heart only because she was not a Jew.