

Anna Eva Gaspar



This is me in 1942 in Nagyvarad. I think I was in twelfth grade. I was in many pictures back then. This was taken by a photographer, and I sent it to my relatives: to my brother in Kolozsvar, to my uncles in Tasnad, Kolozsvar and Romania [Zerind]. My uncle from Romania [that is living in Northern Transylvania] sent it to me, it is a copy too.

The studio was called Foto-Revu, and we took the photos there to be developed. There were more studios, but this was the best known, because the word had it it made the best pictures. The owner was a Jew, but I don't remember his name anymore. His studio was really well equipped, and I had this picture about me at the graduation ceremony made there.

I graduated in 1942, two years after the annexation. After that I wanted to become a doctor but I wasn't admitted to the university. I asked my uncle, Vili Molnar, who was the director of the Jewish hospital to employ me as a nurse. And he told me: 'While I'm the director, I'll not hire you.' I was a weak, puny and sickly child. And what to do now? I had to learn the sewing. My mother suggested that. And then I went to a sewing-tailoring course. I had my certificate somewhere among the photos, that I could work as a tailor or a sewing woman, but I never used that because I got married.

We had a company and I spent my free time with them. There were three Romanian boys and the others were Jews. We were six girls and I think more than six boys. My [second] husband was among them. We gathered here and there but mostly at our place, because we had the largest yard and garden and the company felt very comfortable there. We spoke only in Hungarian. We

used to go to the dancing-school also. There we learnt modern dances, not Jewish dances. We learnt tango, waltz and they introduced later the Charleston. I don't know Jewish dances. We didn't dance in the school or in the Jewish school. So we were raised very worldly.

I went in for sports also. I swam, moreover I took part even in swimming matches at county level. I tell you straight, that's why I'm still alive at this age. There was a very nice lido in the park, and later they made it wider. I used to go to the lido early in the morning, when nobody was there. The water was clean, and I remember that the bottom of the pool was painted blue, and the water seemed nice blue from that. And then I swam a few hundred meters. This happened every morning in the summer, from age 7 until I got married. And in wintertime I skated. I liked very much to dance also, and I used to go to rhythmic gymnastics together with my cousins, twice a week. I played tennis frequently in the summer holiday, because my uncle had a tennis court in the end of the garden. We went there every morning with my cousins and the neighbors. I used to play tennis in skirt. We used to go on excursions, although there weren't forests around Varad. But only we, the young people went on excursion, my mother never joined us. My father never came with us also. He was busy all the time with his estate. He had no time for holiday, too. He said he was happy there. My mother let me went on excursions, she wasn't afraid, she put her trust in me. We were boys and girls [together], so my mother raised us in a very modern way.