

Maya Pivovar With Her School Friends



I, Maya Pivovar, with my school friends, I don't remember their names, I am the first from the right. I loved being photographed. My mother gave me money for lunch at school, I was saving it for getting photographed. The photo shop was not far from our home. Kiev, 1939.

I, Maya Pivovar, was born in 1927. I was born and grew up in Kiev. We lived with our parents in a huge communal apartment before the Great Patriotic War. There were five other families living there. We had plain furniture: a desk, a divan with a high back and a cupboard. There was plain crockery. There was a plate-shaped radio hanging almost under the ceiling on the wall. We liked listening to the radio: there was always merry music on it. The desk was right beneath this radio plate and when there was an interesting program, I got onto this desk to be closer to radio to listen to the program. Our family didn't celebrate Jewish traditions. My parents were members of the party and atheists. In 1926 my father joined the Communist Party. My mother was a member of the communist Party since 1932. Our family spent our leisure time like many other Soviet families. My mother's relatives visited us - they were a big family. We got together on birthdays, on Soviet holidays and new Year. Of course, we went to the theater and to the cinema. I remember the theater of Red army in Merengovskaya, present Zankovetskaya, Street, and the Children's Theater in Karl Marx Street. Once all school children went to the theater. I don't remember what we watched, but I remember having bought an ice cream during an interval. It was wrapped in cellophane paper. I didn't finish my ice cream during the interval and was still having it, when the performance started. I was a brought up child and couldn't throw the cellophane under the chair, so I ate it slowly...

My father took me to the first form: my mother was working. This was an ordinary Russian school, the nearest to our home. I studied well and enjoyed it. I was good at all subjects. There were 40 children in my class, there were also Jewish children, but we never gave it a thought then, we were friends, ran to the beach in summer, played with a ball and there was no segregation before the war.