

A Lady In A Hat



This photo shows my mother, Alzbeta Urban, in 1936 in Vienna. It was taken at the photo studio Schnecc Foto, Trude Schachner, Salzburg, Mekartpl.

My mother's name was Alzbeta Urban, née Grünfeld. She was born in Trnava in 1913. I don't know how many siblings she had. We knew only one of her brothers. He appeared at our place after World War II. It was a very hectic time. I can't even tell you anything more about him.

I don't know how my parents met, but before my brother and I were born, they used to go on various outings and vacations. I've for example got a ton of photographs from trips and vacations in Georgia and Italy. Of them bathing, and on a motorboat. My parents had two sons. First I, Ladislav Urban, was born in 1934, and in 1938 my brother Tomas. Our mother tongue is Slovak, but in our family everyone also spoke German and Hungarian. Before the war we didn't have a chance to play much together, as my brother was still little. Here and there, we'd go for a walk in the park. I used to attend Maccabi [7](#) with my older friends. We used to play ping-pong, or go on outings. We used to go into the hills around Piestany, and in the winter there'd be skiing on Cervena Vez [The Red Tower]. We were of various ages. I was still quite small, and there were even 20-year-olds among us.

In 1942 they rounded up all the Urban women. They were looking for my father, and set up some sort of financial maneuvers to get at him. They didn't find him, so they took all the women, except for Gizi Klinger. She alone wasn't in Piestany. They took them all to Ruzovy Mlyn [The Pink Mill]. It was a big mill where they were gathering all the Jews from Piestany and its surroundings. From there they transported them to the collection camp in Zilina. My father and I set out to go look for

them. They tried to have them released in all manner of ways. In Zilina we booked into Hotel Polom. There we hid out. My father tried to make some contacts and get my mother and his sisters out of jail. That same night that they were supposed to set them free, a different event took place. Partisans broke into the jail in Ilava, and freed about a hundred prisoners. The same night, they also broke into the collection camp in Zilina. They got in over the fence, and were pressed for time. They looked for them there, but there were lots of people there. The mission was unsuccessful. My mother's parents were there at that time. In the end they all ended up in the Majdanek concentration camp in the town of Lublin. My mother and her parents were murdered in Majdanek in 1942.