

Naum Linger



This is my husband Naum Linger. The picture was made in Riga in 1972 at our friends' dacha.

I got married in July 1940. I met my future husband Naum Linger near the cinema building during the weekend. He was a soviet military officer, senior lieutenant. Naum lived on military base in Liepaja. He was a Jew, his Jewish name was Nuhim. He took part in Finnish war [15], and after war he was assigned in Liepaja. The militaries were permitted to go in the city during the weekend. He was going to the cinema. I was strolling with my friends, and we also decided to watch a movie. He liked me and started a conversation. Naum was a handsome and an interesting man. He was seven years older than me. He was born in 1914 in Ukrainian town Dnepropetrovsk [about 500 km from Kiev]. I know hardly anything about his family. Naum had elder brother, whom I had never seen. He died in early 1950s. Naum graduated from some technical institute, worked as per mandatory job assignment for three years. After that he was drafted in the army for mandatory military service and then went to Finnish war. Then Naum was convinced to stay in the army. We did not date for a long time. Naum proposed to me rather soon. I loved Naum, and firmly decided to marry him. Naum was an officer, the member of the party, so there was no way we could have a traditional Jewish wedding. Our marriage was registered in marriage register and that was it. It was painful to my parents, but they were wise people and loved me, so they found strength to abide by that.

Naum finished the war in the rank of a captain. After WWII my husband was very reluctant to stay in the army. He managed to get demobilized in 1946. Husband had engineering education and he was assigned as a chief engineer at mechanic plant. In a while he became the director of that plant. Husband was a stunner and a dude. He liked to dress up and got dressed to the fashion. In

soviet times it was hard to get beautiful fashionable attire. I was rather indifferent to clothing and husband bought me outfits himself. Sometimes, the goods were taken to the plant and sold to the employees. There were things, which were not on offer in the stores. Naum could buy things over there. Thus, we had necessary clothes and footwear. We were not rich, but we had a calm and regular life.

I did not deny my Jewry even in soviet times. I have been a member of the Jewish community of Riga since 1946. It was very hard to observe Jewish traditions in postwar times. There was a deficit of standard products in the store, nothing to speak of kosher ones. The only thing I could do was not to mix meat and milk and not to buy pork. I lit candles in the house only on holidays, because it was even problematic to buy candles. On holidays my husband and I always went to the synagogue no matter that Naum was a party member. We tried to make contributions to the synagogue the way we could. Husband was never against it as he was raised in a religious Jewish family. He was a generous man in his nature, so he donated money without regret. Though, he could not do it by himself. He might have been fired for that. He gave the donation money to mother and she brought it to the synagogue. There was Jewish cultural life in postwar Latvia. Jewish singers came from Lithuania and Russia. We had never missed the concerts and the performance. Husband was the amateur theater-goer and I gladly went there with him. We were young, and feeling happy about everything.