

Stefan Guth



This is me, when I was 16 years old. I call it my 'James Dean' photo because many people told me I look like him! I really don't, maybe only here, in this photo. The photo was taken by a friend of mine, Kurt Sapira; he was the son of a famous doctor in Brasov, a Jew who came from Cernauti. Anyway, he took this picture near Tampa, where we, the Jewish kids from Brasov, used to play football. We were rather good football players, the community from Brasov had a football team - Hacua was its name. I was born in 1931 in Brasov, and I went to the Jewish primary school here, in Brasov. I was a bit shocked when I entered the first grade of the Jewish elementary school because I got to know a category of Jews I had never met before: the Orthodox Jews, who, with their look, their payes, appeared stranger to me than my Romanian buddies I played out in the street with. I didn't have any favorite subjects, I was more fond of the breaks. But I was a good pupil, even if I

didn't study at home: I caught up during classes. I started high school in 1942, but of course Jews weren't accepted to state high schools, so I went to the Jewish high school: it had an industrial profile, but it was just the name, nothing more. We only had to have a workshop, where we had to file different pieces of metal. When the war was over, I went to an ordinary state high school. In high school I became involved in a Zionist organization, Gordonia. It was a left-wing social-democratic organization, but not an extremist one. My father had nothing to do with me becoming a Zionist; the truth was very simple: I played ping-pong, and Gordonia had the best ping-pong table in town. So I started to go there, and the whole gang followed me there. And we stayed there, we were very united and Gordonia started to have a very good reputation. One very important role that it played was that we made contact with young Jews from Bessarabia, from Cernauti, like Manin Rudich, Melitta Seiler, Erika Seiler and others. We were so united at Gordonia, we could hardly remember who was from where. This was an important role of the Zionist organization back then, in the early 1940s. And I remained a social democrat in my political convictions ever since.