

Margarita Kamiyenskaya



This is me (left) on my excursion to the isle Saaremaa. My travel companions are next to me. I didn't know any of them. This picture was taken in Saaremaa in 1980. In the 1970s a new wave of immigrations of Jews to Israel started. I sympathized with those who had made up their minds to leave, and later I was happy for them when I found out that they had settled in well. I couldn't think of immigration for two reasons: my mother was feeble and started feeling unwell with age. She wouldn't have been able to survive the change. I was the only one she had. The other reason was that I could never stand heat. I couldn't even sunbathe on the beach. When I turned 55 I had to resign. My mother was seriously ill by then and I couldn't leave her alone. It was impossible to live on two skimpy pension benefits. I stayed home for a couple of months and realized that both of us would starve to death. There was a telephone station by our house and I went there to work as a janitor. It was hard work for me. There were high ceilings and I had to climb the step-ladder every day to dust them. I didn't want to lose that job because it was nearby. If my mother had a fit, she called me and I ran home. It happened almost every day. Then there was a time, when I couldn't leave my mother even for an hour and I had to quit my job. It was hard. I sold my jewelry, silverware, even our silver goblets for pascal seder, and books. My mother died in 1991. There was a burial plot for my mother next to my father's grave. Before her death she told me to have her buried over my father and leave the second empty lot for me. That was the way I did it. Of course, my mother was buried in strict accordance to the Jewish rites.