

The Friedmann Family In Their Garden



This photo was taken in the courtyard of our house in Eger in 1942. My dad Ferenc Friedmann and my mom Aranka Friedmann, nee Pollak, are sitting in the front. My sister Bozsi's little daughter Julika Spiegel is in my dad's lap. The smiling girl behind my mom is my oldest sister Piri Deri, nee Friedmann and next to her, the girl with the eyes cast down, is my sister Rozsi Schwarz, nee Friedmann. My third sister Bozsi Spiegel, nee Friedmann, is standing behind my dad. Bozsi married someone from Pest. Pal Spiegel was recommended -matchmaking was common in those days.

Spiegel had a pickle-producing workshop, they made pickles. Bozsi didn't work. Her husband provided for her. Their daughter, Julika, was born in 1939. Pal committed suicide because he had asthma and couldn't sleep at night, so he jumped out of the window. Bozsi returned to Eger and lived with Mom and Dad and sew clothes for people. She had to make a living from something. We never thought that things [anti-Semitism] would degenerate to this point. It really took us by surprise. We read the anti-Jewish laws but we would have never thought that such things would happen. We were so naive. In our previous life, so to speak, we had never experienced that we would be told that we were crap, the lowest of the lowest because we were born Jewish. There were warning signs but we were so naive that we simply weren't prepared for this and, to tell you the truth, the leadership of the Jewish community should have been more decent and honest with its members and could have told us what they thought about this, if they thought anything at all. But they took the rich Jews out of the country. They didn't have to hide, they paid and they went abroad. But we stayed because we were nobodies.