

## Peter Reisz's Wife Veronika Reisz



This is my wife, Veronika Balint (her maiden name, Berger, was 'magyarized' to Balint.). I think the photo was taken in 1954 in Kispest when Veronika graduated from the economic secondary school. I married my wife in 1960. We met through a friend in the technical school - I'd gone to school with him in Obuda too - and this friend was introduced to a girl at his relatives' place, and he asked her if she had a girlfriend, and she brought her girlfriend, who later became my wife. That's how we met, and both pairs ended up getting married. It was important that my wife should be a Jew. I always looked for Jewish company, and I believe my parents expected it too. When we got married we moved in with my wife's parents in Kispest. They lived in a very poor flat. The Arrow Cross had taken their flat from them in the Second World War, and they didn't get it back. My maternal grandfather had a sister, named Julia, who never married, and who stayed alone in her flat. When she grew elderly and ill, my aunt moved in with her. When Julia died, my aunt moved back in with

her mother, Grandma, and we got that flat. When I first went to my wife's family's home, I thought I'd pass out, because I saw that they had a Christmas tree. They always celebrated Christmas. Her father, when there weren't enough Jews in Kispest, always went to the temple to make a minyan, but he didn't know how to pray. My wife's mother was taken away in 1944. There was a lady from the country who had stayed with my wife's parents as a sort of live-in servant. After World War II my wife's father married this woman. As a matter of fact, my wife couldn't have had a Jewish upbringing from her mother. But I was really surprised by the Christmas tree. My grandmother wouldn't come to visit when she found out they had a Christmas tree. We have one daughter, named Judit, who was born in 1964, and one grandson. They also live in Obuda. I sent my daughter to England after she graduated, and she learned English well. She makes gifts with her partner now. They're entrepreneurs. I'm sorry I can't pass on Judaism to my daughter or grandson. They aren't happy to hear about it. I raise my grandchild telling him, 'You're a Jew,' and what it means. My daughter has noticed this, but she's not happy about it. When my daughter was small we had a Christmas tree. Now we don't, but her family still does.