

Anatoliy Shor



This is me. This photo was taken in â Bershad in July 2004, I am reading a prayer during the interview.

In 1946 I went to work as an assistant doctor in villages and later I got a job at the surgery room in the polyclinic in Bershad where I met my future wife. Beila Rabinovich was a little older than me. She was born in Bershad in 1918. After finishing school Beila worked as an accountant. I liked Beila a lot. We saw each other for a while and got married in 1947. I moved to Beila's home where we had a small room for ourselves. In 1948 Beila gave birth to a girl, but the baby died few days later.

My wife could have no more children. Beila and I had a good life together. We didn't observe traditions in my family, though we always celebrated Pesach and had matzah, but I did not go the synagogue. We celebrated all Soviet holidays and went to parades with our colleagues and friends. In the evening my friends got together at our home, my wife cooked dinner, we sat at the table telling stories, laughing, then danced, sang our favorite Soviet songs and had lots of fun. We were not that wealthy, but we managed to buy new furniture, a washing machine, a fridge and everything we needed on installments. The military registry office arranged for me to go to military recreation homes 6 times, as an invalid of the war. My wife and I went to the sea several times. Basically, our life was no different from the others.

I worked well and helped common people. My wife and I had a good life and I believe, I've had a good life in general. My wife passed away in 1990. I am alone now. Now Jewish communities, cultural centers and Jewish press are developing in Ukraine as a result of the perestroika and breakup of the USSR. Though I miss the great country building an ideal society, but I stick to the reality of today. I've become an active member of the Jewish community. I can say I've returned to my roots. Every day I go to the synagogue, this small half-ruined building that we, Jews, are repairing on our own. I pray putting on my tallit and tefillin. I have an old prayer book, the one that my grandfather Shmil had. I know the mourning prayers that I am often asked to recite over the deceased. I recite the Kaddish in the Jewish cemetery where my parents and my wife were buried. This is wonderful that the Jewish community has revived, that people can turn back to the religion and traditions of their nation, I am very grateful to those, who support this process in Ukraine, their assistance is very significant: from the material standpoint, but mainly, from the moral side: they help us, old people to get rid of this acute sense of loneliness. I have friends, who are alone like me, and we are clients of the Hesed. We celebrate Jewish holidays together, recall our past life and learn about Israel. I cannot help admiring this country and its people. I might very well move to Israel with a bunch of my friends, I would be reluctant to do this on my own.