

Judel Ronder With His Daughter Leya Ronder And Granddaughter Etel Ronder



This is I in the center. My daughter Leya Ronder is to the left from me and to the right is granddaughter Etel Ronder. The picture was made at my home in Kaunas in 2005, when they came from Germany for a visit.

In 1960 I was called by the municipal authorities and offered a job of a lawyer in a small shoe factory. I had worked there until retirement.

I did not keep Jewish traditions and marked no holidays, but I never forgot that I was a Jew. I met other survived Lithuanian Jews and we went to the places of execution and collected donations for the monuments in their honor. My idea was to make a so-called archive of the people who rescued Jews and those who murdered them. I have been doing it from the moment of my return in Lithuania and until now.

I always dreamed of immigration to Israel, but my wife was against it and I did not want to leave my daughter. My wife died in 1989. I did not marry again. It was too late for me to leave for Israel at my elderly age. My daughter Liya identifies herself as Jew and at the age of 16 she put Jewish nationality in her passport. Liya tried entering teachers' training university for several times and failed to it. She did not have a higher education. Liya's personal life was not happy. She was married for couple of times. Every time she married non-Jews and I was not pleased with that. Liya has my last name Ronder. To my shame she left Germany in the 1990s which was not acceptable to me. I refused to visit her. I think that after holocaust Jews cannot have anything in common with Germans, and have their sops. Liya has two children- the elder -Dovid, born in 1976, named after my brother. He is dreaming to go to Israel with me. My granddaughter Etel, born in 1981, is studying at the university.

When I retired I had worked for couple of years for Vilnius Jewish museum. By that time I had collected a pretty considerable material about holocaust in Lithuania, about the murderers and the rescuers. And helped many of them get the title Righteous among the Nations. I always kept an active civil position in this matter. I always was an ardent struggler against anti-Semitism.

The global community supports me. I have a sponsors, who assists Lithuanian righteous among nations. His parents got rescued and lived for Switzerland. He is currently living in the USA. He invited me there and I accepted his invitation. I was in the States for couple of times several years ago. I gave my documents - the list of murderers and the list of rescuers of Jews - to the Museum of holocaust in Washington. Thus, I completed my mission in the world.

Now I am living in the independent state [Reestablishment of the Lithuanian Republic]. Of course, it became easier for the Jews to live when they did not have to conceal their nationality, but still anti-Semitism is still there, and when it is discrete it is much more dangerous than open. I am an old and a sick person. I demised my apartment to the Lithuanian lady Stepha. She is the daughter to one of the righteous among nations, whom I helped quite a lot. Stepha is a wonderful lady. She became my custodian and looks after me as my own daughter. We often talk and she is always surprised at my ardent hatred to the fascists, Germany and some Lithuanians. Then I ask her if someone killed groundlessly killed her relatives, buried her mother alive, she sits pensively and does not say anything as she loves her family dearly.