

Tsylia Shapiro With Her Friends



Here you can see my wife Tsylia Shapiro, nee Potieskaya, with her friends. This was actually how I met my future wife - she came to our association's photo shop to be photographed. This picture was taken in Korosten in 1946.

In fall 1946 I saw three pretty girls at my work. They all looked nice, but one of them was like my destiny walking to meet me. The girls went to have their photo taken at a photo shop of our association. When they left I asked our photographer to make an extra picture of the girls.

Korosten was a small town and soon I found out that the girl's name was Tsylia Potievskaya and that she lived in Malin. She came to Korosten on a visit. On that very night I went to meet Tsylia. I had never met a prettier girl in my life. She left home and we corresponded for about two months. Then I went to Malin to meet her mother and propose to Tsylia.

We had a small party and left by freight train to Korosten on 1st January 1947. We had a civil wedding ceremony at the registry office in Korosten. When Tsylia and I arrived Fania was at the station to look at Tsylia. In due time Fania married her cousin brother and became friends with my wife.

Tsylia was born in Malin, Zhytomir region, in 1924. Her father worked at a furniture factory. He died in 1936. During the war Tsylia and her mother were in evacuation in Yangiyul, near Tashkent, Uzbekistan. Tsylia's brother was at the front.

Tsylia's father wasn't religious while her mother observed all Jewish traditions and raised Tsylia religious. Although Tsylia was a Komsomol member it didn't interfere with her strive to observe Jewish traditions and celebrate holidays. She fasted at Yom Kippur. Tsylia didn't complete her secondary education due to the war. After the war she worked as accountant assistant and then as an accountant at the post office.

In Korosten we had a wedding party where we invited my friends. My mother wished we had a traditional Jewish wedding, but since I was a manager and religiosity was persecuted by the Soviet authorities we couldn't have it. If my management found out that we had a religious wedding I would have had problems at work and with my party authorities. I could have been expelled or reprimanded. Actually I was an atheist.