

Larisa Shyhman



I, Larisa Shyhman (nee Trachtenberg). A portrait from the board of honor of Zhuliany airport. This photo was made in Kiev in 1972.

I arrived to Kiev in 1945 from evacuation and went to work as a radio operator in Zhuliany airport. I worked there until retirement. I got married in April 1954. On 8 December 1954 our son Leonid was born. I wanted to stay at work. I liked my collective, I enjoyed it there and my colleagues liked and respected me. So after my second son Gennadiy was born on 17 March 1961 I returned to work at the airport.

We had a good life. I was cheerful and pretty. I danced in the ensemble of the Civil Air Fleet. We danced folk dances. I think we danced well. I shouldn't boast, of course. I also danced solo... We gave concerts in the Harrison and in Aviation College... We performed a lot. I liked reading and going to theaters and cinema. I always had many friends.

Actually, I never faced anti-Semitism. My colleagues respected me at work. Only once, during the period of 'doctors' plot', one colleague used to talk about it whenever head of department came in and then repeated: 'Do you see it now? Do you?', but then another colleague said: 'Just leave her alone'. And that was all. Well, Stalin's death, the 20th Congress. Yes, I can tell, it was a shock, but then it passed - there were other things to think about.

My husband's name was Abram Shyhman. We met at work. I didn't even think about him. Frankly, I didn't want to get married. Why marry? I knew plots and danced in my group and always had enough admirers. I was afraid. I didn't like housework, it wasn't for me. I liked reading and going to

theaters and cinema. I always had many friends. Misha was smart, and it was interesting to spend time with him. I was fond of astronomy and he told me interesting things about stars...Then we had a walk in Podol and were passing a civil registry office and he said: 'Let's go in', and I said: 'Let us'. So we registered our marriage. No parties, no traditions. We were poor. My aunt, when she heard about it, she ran out to buy me tights; mine was all patched. We got married in April 1954. On 8 December 1954 our son Leonid was born. I wanted to stay at work. I liked my collective, I enjoyed it there and my colleagues liked and respected me. So after my second son Gennadiy was born on 17 March 1961 I returned to work at the airport.