

Tamara Koblik With Her Colleagues



This is me (first on the left) with my colleagues Valentina Kirian (in the center) and Lidia Balan on the parade on 1 May. This photo was taken in Kishinev in 1972.

I had my first pulmonary hemorrhage in 1967. Later these hemorrhages repeated. I went to the Institute of pulmonology in Moscow to consult them. They didn't make the final diagnosis, but they ordered me to avoid exceeding cold or stress and take a mandatory rest in the south of the Crimea, when it's not too hot there [the Crimean climate is favorable for people with lung problems]. I was 32 years old, I had two small children, and my goal in life was to live as long as 50. I begged the Lord to let me live till I turned 50 for my children to have no stepmother. We spent all our savings for the Crimea. I went to recreation homes each year, or my husband, my daughters and I went

there and rented a room. I had to take up a less tiring job: and I went to lecture at Kishinev Medical School.

Ella and Sopha went to a nearby school. They studied well: they were neat and disciplined girls. I attended parents' meetings at school and spent time with the girls. They were sociable and had many friends of various nationalities. Like me, they never segregated people by their nationality. I enjoyed arranging my daughters' birthday parties. They invited their classmates and neighbors. Mama and I made cookies and cakes, bought sweets and fruit. There was particularly plenty of fruit on Sopha's birthday: she was born in summer, on 2 July. I made fruit cocktails for the children: these were the first cocktails in Kishinev, they were new to the people then. I asked Monia to buy me a mixer as an 8-March [Women's Day] present. I bought tall glasses for cocktails - Czech glasses with musketeers on them. Cocktails were the high spot of the parties: somebody wanted a pink one, another wanted an orange cocktail, with cherry jam or apricot jam. I enjoyed those celebrations no less than my daughters and their friends.

I also liked, when my friends visited me. We celebrated birthdays and Soviet holidays: 1 May, October holidays and New Year, of course. According to our family tradition, we also celebrated Jewish holidays. My mama, who lived in Kishinev then, went to the synagogue, and had a seat of her own there. Each Jew is accustomed to have his own seat. On Rosh Hashanah they bring money in 'schisl' [basin, Yiddish], and mama always made a contribution. On Yom Kippur she stayed at the synagogue a whole day fasting. My girls and I came to take her home from there. My girls recalled after she died: 'mama, do you remember how we accompanied grandma?' I remember the synagogue was always overcrowded, when we came for my mother, but after 1989 there were few Jews attending it - many Jews had moved to Israel. One couldn't fail to notice this. On Pesach mama bought a chicken at the market and took her to a shochet. She made a special liqueur and took out her Pesach crockery. She had a beautiful dish to serve pudding in it. On Chanukkah we gave Chanukkah gelt to our girls. I told them this childhood story of mine, when my sister and I got different coins. I always gave my daughters the same amount of money. On Purim mama and I made hamantashen. So my daughters knew all Jewish traditions.

In the 1970s, when Jews started moving to Israel, many of our relatives went there. Mama was eager to move there, but my husband and I decided against it since my daughters didn't want to go there. So, it never came to it with us.