

## Yakov Bunke With His Wife Dalya And Sons Evgeniy And Leonid



This is my family: my wife Dalya and sons- Evgeniy to left and Leonid to the right, late 1950s, Plunge.

In 1947 I was send to work as an instructor of rifle department of Dosaaf [Volunteer society of assistance of Army and the Front]. I did not work there for a long time, less than a year. Then I found job in some company as a joiner. Since childhood I dreamt to become an artist. I made complex furniture, then I became a foreman and ran production. I had a chance to be creative in my work- I made carving and inlay. Since 1962 I started taking part in the competitions and was conferred with the title- people's artist.

My private life turned out to be pretty good. I often went to ispolkom on various matters and I met the secretary there- a young Lithuanian lady -Dalya Baitkute. Dalya was born in Plunge in 1925 in the family of a launder lady. In her childhood she often delivered washed clothes to Jewish houses and she made friends with Jewish girls. She even spoke Yiddish. During the occupation, Dalya was in Plunge and saw what wrongdoings fascists did. Dalya was divorced and raised a son born in 1947. In 1949 we met and fell in love with each other. Our parents - my mother and Dalya's parents were at first against mixed marriage, but soon they agreed and -in 1950 I married Dalya. My sisters were married off before me, and Dalya with me lived in mother's place. Having high military awards, I was given a small apartment. When we had kids, we got a good three-room one. We are still living in it.

I adopted Dalya's son Virgilius and he treats me like his own father, though he knows that I am not his natural father. In 1952 our elder son Evgeniy was born. Then in 1953 - Leonid. He named him Leibl after my dad. My uncle Dovid always helped us a lot. He sent us parcels from the USA. We had a modest living. We had neither dacha nor car. My sons went to school, when they had to choose which nationality should be put in their passport, even my mother said that they should put Lithuanian to be able to enter the institute without any hindrance. Though, at the age of 16 they

got passports with Lithuanian nationality, they identify themselves as Jew as they love me and respect Jewish history.

Having finished school Evgeniy entered Vilnius university, the journalist department and graduated from it. He married Lithuanian Danute, who having graduated medical got a mandatory job assignment in resort town Lavylai. Evgeniy is living there with his wife. Evgeniy works as a journalist. His son Darius is also a journalist. He is living in Kaunas with his family. Evgeniy's daughter Marina is working and living in Vilnius.

My younger son Leonid finished polytechnic institute. He is an engineer. He is living and working in Palanga. His wife Roma is also Lithuanian. Leonid's daughter Sandra finished economy department in Vilnius university, left for the USA, married there and became an American citizen. Leonid's younger daughter Evelina recently obtained masters degree in architecture. My youngest grandson- Leonid's son is named after my uncle Dovid. The boy goes to secondary and to music school. he has a great artistic talent. His paintings were selected for exhibition in Sweden. He is going there shortly. He takes first prizes at the exhibitions of children's art.