

Daniel Bertram, Renata Zisman And Henryk Halkowski



This picture was taken when Renata Zisman, nee Springut (in center) and me (first from right) were walking in the Market Square in Cracow and met Henryk Halkowski (first from left), a friend from the Jewish Community here.

Renata didn't want to be alone. She was a widow when I met her. Her first husband had died; he was 22 years older than her. We were together a long time, 20 years. We couldn't get married because I told Renata that there was no rabbi. At that time there really was no rabbi. And secondly - I don't know whether, if there had been a rabbi, he would have let me marry a widow. I'm not allowed to marry a divorcee; as to a widow I don't know. [Mr. Bertram is not sure whether he could marry a widow, but in fact - according to the law- he could.]

My wife died on 30th July 1999. I had to organize her funeral. It was very hard for me, because the chairman said the funeral would be soon, and he set the date. I had too little time. Some people came back from vacation especially for the funeral. My wife had an awful lot of friends. And there was a speech at the grave. The chairman's wife, Ribenbauer, spoke. And as well as that there was an article in the press; it could have been Gazeta Wyborcza [a Polish national daily]. And there was one in a Warsaw Jewish paper as well. It was on 2nd or 3rd August 1999. I had a tombstone made, a beautiful one. And I listed all the camps: her name and surname, and her maiden name, and the date of her death. The Jewish community organization took care of funerals. There had to be a minyan, ten people, at least. And there was this one guy, Fogel and either he recited the Kaddish or 'Eyl mole rakhmim' [El mole rachamim - God full of mercy] at the cemetery, or Stein did [Wlodzimierz Stein, cantor in the Cracow Jewish Community]. Since Fogel's been gone [dead], Stein recites it. But it's getting harder and harder to get a minyan together in Cracow.