

Israel Eskenazi



My father Israel Eskenazi in Derventa (Bosnia), 1925, two days before his wedding. Sometime in December-January 1931 we moved with my parents to Zagreb. My father, the son of a Sephardi lawyer, worked for a Jewish man as a travelling salesman supplying materials and pieces of material. They sold everything in bundles which his boss obtained in Zagreb where he had a big warehouse. The two saleswomen in the shop were his two daughters: my mother, Vida Kabiljo, and her sister. My parents married on August 10, 1925. My mother was a housewife and never worked.

I was born in June 1929 in Slavonski Brod. My parents lived in Bosanski Brod, but there was no maternity hospital, so they moved to my grandmother's and lived there. My sister was born 16 months later. I was not even 2 years old when we moved to Zagreb. Our entire childhood in Zagreb was fully involved in Jewish activities. My sister and I went to the Jewish school, and were active in all events. We had religious studies and Hebrew language lessons. There were Jewish youth societies, Hashomer Hatzair and B'nai Akiva. We also had a Maccabi sports club. We had some famous, first-rate athletes. Leo Polak, the boxer, was first in the Balkans. Someone said he had been the best Croatian boxer of all time, even though he was a Jew.