

Semyon Gun



It's me, Semyon Gun. This photo was taken in Odessa in my office in 2002. In 1990 I suggested that we should open a fashion salon in our affiliate in Novoselskogo Street. I've become director and co-owner here. I design the repairs and improvements to be made. One peculiar thing about our salon is that we make clothes with one try on. The client selects one ready model and tries it on. An employee puts down all necessary alterations to be made, the client selects fabric from our assortment and then comes next time to pick up a ready item. I began to develop this method in the 1980s. This is a timesaving production process. We make men's and women clothes of all sizes. It's a bit difficult now due to competition, people have little money and there are unreasonable laws that impede business. I am not religious: I do not observe kashrut and observe few Jewish traditions, but we got together at my sister's Bella place on the Jewish New Year [Rosh Hashanah] and Pesah. The Jewish life revived in the 1990s. It was like a ray of light in a realm of darkness. Before these things were done sort of under a blanket and now people could do them openly. As for me, I do not have any personal contacts with any Jewish organizations. I do not do anything about Gmilus Hesed, but I do appreciate any support and assistance provided to older people. Our salon also provides assistance to older people, even if they are not Jews. We send clothing to the town executive committee that distributes it to the needy. In 1999 something happened to me: I had a surgery for intestine obstruction. The surgery was unsuccessful. I was taken to Kiev and had 5 more surgeries within two years. I was having a hard time, but I managed. Now my wife Annetta and I live in a 3-room apartment in Sophievskaya Street in the center of Odessa. I have a big collection of books on art, history, philosophy and world classics. I have another hobby. I collect

unusual and rare alcohol drinks. I spent every Sunday at the seashore. In 1967 I began to do yoga. I jog to the sea every morning. Similar health enthusiasts gathered into a group that was registered as a public organization named Samson in the 1990s. Our president Valeri Khmelnyuk is the mayor of Illichevsk. There are interesting people in the group. We are friends. We celebrate holidays and birthdays at the seashore. We need to be strong. We have to fight through each day. My favorite holiday is a holiday that you feel in your soul.