

Alexander Lukinskiy With His Friend Anna Epstein



This is my son Alexander Lukinskiy having fun dancing on the balcony of my mother's apartment with his friend Anna Epstein, who is currently living in Israel. The photo was taken in Vilnius in 1957.

In 1948 I gave birth to a son and named him Alexander. For a while my son and I were living with my parents. When our son turned seven months my mother-in-law – my father-in-law had passed away by then – exchanged her apartment in Leningrad for an apartment in Vilnius and we moved in with her. Our apartment was in the heart of Vilnius, consisting of two rooms and a kitchen. One room was taken by my mother-in-law and the other by my husband, son and me. My mother-in-law was a wonderful, clever and kind woman. She accepted me and loved me like her own daughter, helping me in everything, especially in raising our son.

My husband was a member of the Communist Party. I didn't join the Party as I had been in the occupation. At that time it was disgraceful. After my son was born, I kept working at the secret department for a while and in the early 1950s, when state anti-Semitism was rampant, I was told to quit my job because I wasn't a Communist. I found a job as an HR inspector in the Lithuanian Consumers' Council. At that time my husband was called to the military enlistment office and drafted into the army for the second time. He was to be sent to the border with China, but he was lucky. He met his friend from the army in the military enlistment office and he offered my husband to go to Leningrad to teach at some courses for officers.

My husband left for Leningrad and I stayed with my son. It was January 1953, when the Doctors' Plot was in full swing and doctors-poisoners were the most topical issues in the papers and radio. There was tittle-tattle among Vilnius Jews that there was an order to deport all Jews to Birobidjan. I called my husband in Leningrad and told him about these rumors and added that if I got deported, I would leave my son with my mother-in-law. It was a very hard time. I was calm only after Stalin's death. My husband insisted on my moving to Leningrad. We decided to leave our son with my mother-in-law and I moved to my husband. We lived in Leningrad for three and a half years.

Ekaterina Nikolaevna did well raising my son. My parents were also helping. Every day my mother came over to spend time with her grandson, but Alexander was missing his parents. I insisted that my husband should be demobilized as we had to come back to Vilnius and raise our son. In 1957 Vladimir was demobilized for the second time and we came back home. I found a job in the book-keeping department at a tinned food plant. I was promoted to chief accountant and worked there until my retirement. I left work in 1987.