

## Liza Lukinskaya



This is my recent picture taken in Vilnius in 2004 for some documents.

My son served in the army, entered the university and finished the Economics Department. During the Soviet regime he was in charge of the bureau of heating appliances of the largest plant. That plant went bankrupt and Alexander doesn't have a permanent job. He is involved in small business. My son divorced his first wife, who bore him a daughter, Yulia. She finished the Philology Faculty. She is fluent in English. Yulia is a business lady. She has a daughter, my great-granddaughter Anastasia. My son married for the second time, a Russian woman named Natalia. The most important woman for my son is me, his mother. He loves me dearly and comes to see me every day. My son buys me all kinds of scrumptious things I like and helps me about the house. My son started taking special care of me after my husband's death in 1998.

Since that time I am on my own. Jewish life was revived in the period when Lithuania gained its independence in 1991. I think it was the only positive factor of perestroika and the breakup of the USSR [1991]. I don't like the altercations in the Lithuanian parliament. It seems to me that every member of the government is thinking only of himself. Life in Lithuania became bleak, and there is no sense in leaving for Russia as my motherland is here, and nobody is waiting for me in a different place.

My husband, who had always been friends with Jews, suggested leaving for Israel in the 1970s. I didn't want to as, unfortunately, during the occupation I saw different Jews - some of them were starving, others were making money on that. That is why I don't want to live in a purely Jewish

environment, though I have been to Israel and liked it a lot.

As a former ghetto prisoner, I receive a pension from Germany and I have a pretty comfortable life. I can even help out my son financially. Now I am a member of the Jewish community of Lithuania. Every week I come to the department of prisoners of ghettos and concentration camps tour community and perform different assignments. I celebrate Jewish holidays with my friends. This way I revived my Jewish life. I don't feel lonely.