

Anatoliy Shor With His Wife Beila



This is me with my wife Beila. This is our first family photograph taken in the middle 1950s in Bershad.

In 1946 I went to work as an assistant doctor in villages and later I got a job at the surgery room in the polyclinic in Bershad where I met my future wife. Beila Rabinovich was a little older than me. She was born in Bershad in 1918. Her father Naum Rabinovich owned a butcher's store. After 1917 he worked in a store. After finishing school Beila worked as an accountant. At the beginning of the Great Patriotic War their family evacuated to Tashkent where Naum, the head of the family, died.

Beila, her sister Yeva and their mother Esther Rabinovich returned to Bershad after the war. Beila's older brother Israel perished at the front. I liked Beila a lot. We saw each other for a while and got married in 1947. My fiancée and I were Komsomol members, but Jewish traditions were more important for us. We had a ceremony in the chuppah at the synagogue in Bershad, though nobody, but our families knew about this event. We had a traditional wedding party with klezmer musicians playing the whole night in Beila's home. I moved to Beila's home where we had a small room for ourselves. There were three rooms in their house: one was of my mother-in-law, and Yeva's family lived in another. In 1948 Beila gave birth to a girl, but the baby died few days later. My wife could have no more children. Beila and I had a good life together. We received a room from my work.

The first postwar years were marked with hunger and life was hard. Gradually the situation began to improve. Though I was engaged in medicine, the anti-Semitic campaigns of the late 1940s-early 1950s [Doctors' Plot] had no impact on me. I don't think there was as much anti-Semitism in Bershad as in bigger towns. Perhaps, this had to do with the fact that Jews constituted the major part of the population before and after the Great Patriotic War. I took an active part in public activities, but I never intended to join the party. I was a propagandist, agitator, a member of the local trade union committee and public control. I always supported the line of the party and the government. The Jewish traditions that we always observed in my parents' home gradually elapsed in the course of time. We didn't observe traditions in my family, though we always celebrated Pesach and had matzah, but I did not go to the synagogue. We celebrated all Soviet holidays and went to parades with our colleagues and friends. In the evening my friends got together at our home, my wife cooked dinner, we sat at the table telling stories, laughing, then danced, sang our favorite Soviet songs and had lots of fun. We were not that wealthy, but we managed to buy new furniture, a washing machine, a fridge and everything we needed on installments. The military registry office arranged for me to go to military recreation homes 6 times, as an invalid of the war. My wife and I went to the sea several times. Basically, our life was no different from the others. I worked well and helped common people. My wife and I had a good life and I believe, I've had a good life in general.