

Ehil Muchnik With His Friends



In this photograph is my brother Ehil Muchnik (on the left) with his friends. This photo was taken during their pre-diploma practical training in Donetsk. He sent it home to Bershada for the memory, 1940.

My brothers Ehil and Velvl went to the Jewish school and this was where I went. This school was built as a Jewish gymnasium for girls by a wealthy Jewish woman before the revolution of 1917. The construction was completed after the revolution and became a Jewish school. In 1934, when I went to school, my brother had finished the 7th form and went to continue his studies in Donetsk since there was nowhere else to study in Bershada. He entered a factory vocational school.

Our favorite pastime was going to the cinema. I remember children's movies, movies about the Civil War and comedies. The boys were fond of the legendary hero of the Civil War - Chapayev [Chapayev, Vassiliy Ivanovich (1887 - 1919), Soviet commander, hero of the civil War. Played a significant role in the defeat of counterrevolutionary forces.] and there was a movie about him entitled 'Chapayev'. My brother Ehil watched it 15 times. I liked comedies 'Volga-Volga', 'Circus' and others.

After finishing school Ehil studied in the machine building school in Odessa. He studied well and stayed in the school hostel. There, in Odessa, were my brothers, when WWII began. Our family got to know that the Great Patriotic War began from the Molotov speech that the whole country listened to on 22 June 1941 at noon. On that same day the recruitment began. Mama was sobbing. She knew that her sons would be taken to the army and she would not see them. This was true - we never saw my brothers again. We know that Velvl perished during the defense of Odessa, but we know even less about Ehil - he disappeared during the retreat in 1941. We got this information after the war.