

Grigoriy Fihtman, His Wife Raisa Fihtman, His Son Leonid Fihtman And Leonid's Wife Natasha.



This is me, Grigoriy Fihtman with my wife Raisa Fihtman, son Leonid Fihtman and his wife Natasha. This photo was taken in Odessa in 2003. Every year on Victory day we come to the monument to the unknown sailor in Shevchenko Park. We bring the red tulips and put them near the monument. On this day I put on my best dark suit. In that very day I felt weak and my son Leonid brought me there with his car. Victory Day has been the dearest holiday for me and also, for my family.

Perestroika gave a start to the rebirth of Jewish life in our town. I remember the first meeting of the Jewish community in the cinema theater 'Sickle and hammer' in Mizikevich Street in 1993. The situation was still alarming and we were guarded by a militia unit so that nothing happened, God forbid. The association of Jewish culture was established. Ten years passed. There are few dozens of such organizations and I can't even name all of them. There are even more of them than needed. There used to be two hundred thousand Jews living in Odessa at some time and then there was fifty thousand of Jewish residents, but not now. However, there are two rabbis in Odessa. I think one would be sufficient.

In 1999 my younger son Leonid won competition for the position of assistant director in the Gemilut Hesed, a Jewish charity association in Odessa. V. Goldman, director of the association died in 2002 Leonid became director of Gemilut Hesed.

My wife and I enjoy assistance of Gemilut Hesed. She receives monthly food packages as a former ghetto inmate. Sometimes the courier asks us: 'Would you like me to help you with cleaning the house?' We can still manage ourselves, though. When the synagogue in Osipov Street in the center of the town began to operate my wife and I went there on holidays several times, but in January 1998 I had a second heart attack. They actually returned me to life from another world. I stayed in

the Jewish hospital 20 days after this heart attack. On the eve of my release from the hospital I had another heart attack. After this we didn't go out since it's difficult for me to seat somewhere for a long time.