

Minna Birman, Her Husband Revmir Cherniak And Their Daughter Yekaterina Cherniak



This is me, Minna Birman, with my husband Revmir Cherniak and our daughter Yekaterina Cherniak. This photo was taken in Kaspiysk in 1953.

After the war Revmir returned to Odessa in autumn 1945. We became a husband and wife, but we didn't register our marriage. In 1946 our daughter Yekaterina was born. Only then we registered our marriage to obtain a card for the baby. It was a card for 400 grams of bread. My husband entered the Mechanic Faculty of Odessa Polytechnic College. I entered Communications College and received a stipend. In 1951 our son Mikhail was born. We didn't doubt that my husband would get a job assignment in Odessa after finishing his college since he was an invalid of war and had two children.: However, he was the only one of all graduates to be sent to Petropavlovsk [in Kazakhstan] in the north. Of course, this had to do with my husband's nationality. It took us quite an effort to have them change my husband's job assignment. We moved to Kaspiysk [in Russia now]. I commuted 20 km to work in Makhachkala. I worked as senior technician of international telephone communications. I continued my studies as extramural student in Odessa Communications College.

In 1953 in Kaspiysk we got to know about Stalin's death. The only thought I had had about Stalin was "Let him die!" I lived with a constant oppressive feeling as if the sky was on my head. When Stalin died I felt as if this sky lifted up. I felt so happy! However, my husband cried. He easily subdued to influences. When he joined the Party I asked him how he could do it and he replied: 'My commissar was so good and we were friends!' 'But you laughed at him saying that a political officer was nobody!'