

## Gherda Kagan, With Her Husband Yevgeniy Grinblat



This is me, Gherda Kagan, with my husband Yevgeniy Grinblat at our acquaintance's Nadezhda and Yakov Furman silver wedding. This photo was made in Odessa in 1982. Our friends invited us to the restaurant then. I was an active member of the party and was fond of public life. I was responsible for the wall newspaper and I also participated in a team of agitators during elections. Of course, I knew how useless and insignificant my efforts were. When voters didn't appear at elections my senior comrades pushed their bulletins into boxes before my eyes. When I was a member of district commissions, they sent me home before the day was over. I had no objections and one could only guess how they wrote those minutes or signed them. No decent person likes to take part in forgery, but I understood that if I wanted to leave the Party, it was like the end of one's life: everything would be threatened - one's work and attitudes of surrounding people. So I kept quiet. My husband continuously faced discrimination: they never gave him permission to travel abroad due to his national identity. He was sure that KGB had information about his aunt who moved to America before the revolution and sent her relatives in Odessa minor money amounts via a bank. When new director with anti-Semitic convictions came to the plant, my husband began to have problems. Perestroika started for me with a feeling of more freedom. In 1987 I traveled abroad for the first time in my life. I went to Czechoslovakia and Germany with a tourist group. I couldn't travel abroad before. In Czechoslovakia young people expressed their obstruction to our group of Soviet tourists. It was more than unpleasant. Gorbachev was nice compared to Brezhnev. He seemed like a sun to us at the beginning. We were happy that he was accessible. It was my understanding that the meaning of perestroika was to make things good and right. It was nicely said, but it was done as before, that's it. People are the same and same are their attitudes, particularly in Ukraine.