

Busia Makalets And Her Friends



This is me, Busia Makalets (first from left), with Kubi, the son of my landlady, and his relative. This photo was taken in Chernovtsy in 1934.

After finishing school I went to Chernovtsy and entered this teachers' training workshop. I rented a room from a Jewish family: a widow and her two sons. I made friends with Kubi, the younger one. Kubi's family was not religious. They were leading a more secular way of life than our family. Anyway, I felt quite comfortable staying with them. Kubi helped me to study German and I started reading in German. I don't remember any anti-Semitism in Chernovtsy at that time, but it also needs to be mentioned that I was fond of Zionist ideas and socialized with Jews for the most part. I even knew a few underground Communists who had been in Doftan, the main political jail in Bucharest. There was one Gypsy in our organization. I knew about the following Romanian Fascist organizations: Iron Guard, Cuzists. When I was in Chernovtsy, the Iron Guard in Bucharest was defeated, and there were rumors about dead Iron Guard members in the streets of Kishinev. My favorite subject in the workshop was music taught by a professor, a former teacher of Josef Schmidt, a famous singer in Romania. When the professor was introducing his students to an official inspecting the workshop, he said about me: 'As for this girl, she will earn her living with her voice.'