

Imre Farkas, Erno Marton And Josef Shanan



Here the one on the left is my brother Imre Farkas, at the back is my brother-in-law, Erno Marton, while on the right is my cousin, Jozsef Hertzlinger, now called Josef Shanan. The photo was taken in Kefar Sava in the 1980s.

My mother's sister Edit Deutsch was the wife of Jenő Hertzlinger, a Jewish pharmacist. They lived in Turda, close to the place where we moved during the war. They had a son, who was born on the same day as me, and his first name was Joska, too: two mothers gave birth to sons on the same day, and gave them the same name. They also had a daughter, Lili, who was three years younger than me. Joska ran away from his parents in 1945 and immigrated to Israel. He changed his name to Josef Shanan. He's still alive. Israel doesn't compel one to keep their name. When people made mass aliyah, it was even possible for people to change their birth date. They recorded whatever people said. When one arrived there, and he wanted another name, he could change it.

Here too, in the Jewish cemetery, the first name of the deceased is written in Hebrew on the gravestone, together with the first name of his father. For example, my first name is Joska and my father's is Mendel. Then my name would be something like Josef ben Mendel, and not Josef Farkas. This rule also applies to the girls. Sarah, the daughter of Menachen is Sarah bat Menachen. And based on this rule, in Israel it was possible to register whatever name one liked. For example, I had a girlfriend called Kirschenbaum who immigrated from Torda. It was pretty hard to register the name Kirschenbaum in Israel. And she registered herself as Duvdevani. This means Kirschenbaum, cherry tree, in Hebrew. Lili Deutsch lives in Israel too, in Rehovot. She's Lili Huszar, after her husband, and they have a daughter.