

Michal Maud Beer With Her Best Friend Ruth Weisz



This is a photo of me, Michal Maud Beer, née Stecklmacherova (right) with my best friend, Ruth Weisz, in Prostejov at the Maccabi sports grounds on the cusp of 1940/41.

My best friend was Ruth Weisz. We met during Jewish religion class in the then Rejsek School in Prostejov. We became friends in Grade 3. I've since then never experienced such friendship again. Ruth's parents, Ethel and Simon, came to Prostejov from Slovakia. Mr. Weisz worked in the

Prostejov clothing manufacturing industry. He was much more devout than my parents, and often attended synagogue, the small, old one - not our large and modern temple. He prayed at home, and maybe even wore a cap; he was very strict. Ruth's mother was a pretty, kind and pleasant lady who led a kosher household. They spoke Hungarian amongst themselves.

Ruth was a very pretty girl. We were both precocious. Back then, Otik Hirsch photographed us while we were skating. Then he and his friend Luisek Schwarz escorted us from the Maccabi grounds to town. How proud we were that we, barely 12-year-old girls, were being accompanied by 20-year-old young men - and Otik was so beautiful! How afraid Ruth was that her father would see us!

It was a beautiful friendship; when the Nazis forbade us from going to school, we studied in groups, and Ruth and I were together every day. In 1941 her parents invited me for seder. We weren't allowed to be out in the street after 8pm, so I slept over at their place. We'd visit each other every day; as opposed to children today, it didn't even occur to us to talk on the phone - and even if it had, would we have gotten it from our parents!

Ruth had a grandma and grandpa in Slovakia, in Sastin - I often saw her mother read and write letters. A young woman, Hermina, arrived with her from Sastin, who worked in their household. In about 1936 Ruth's sister Eva was born, but died shortly after birth. Ruth remained an only child. We used to ride our bikes together to the Maccabi sports grounds and all over the place. Marie, who worked in our household, once forgot her false teeth in her home village of Slatinky. Ruth and I went to get them on our bikes. To this day I remember the trip through the beautiful Hana countryside - how we found Slatinky, God only knows. Marie's sister treated us to some goat's milk, which we town girls weren't familiar with. We saw a little cottage. Beds piled high with bedding. After that we had to turn our bikes over to the Germans.

Ruth and her family were deported to Terezin. They were there from 4th July 1942 to 28th July 1942. From there they sent them to the Belarussian town of Baranovici. The evidence points to them being murdered right when they got off the train. For a long time it wasn't known where the AAY transport had been sent, until they found luggage in Baranovice with Terezin transport numbers. In the summer the gas chambers were overloaded. Years later, some people found out that the people on the transport to Baranovici were shot in a nearby stand of trees for lack of room in the gas chambers.