

Yuri Bogdanov



That's me. This picture was taken in 1940 when I was on the leave from the army and at home with my parents.

The photo was taken in Moscow in 1940.

In 1939 I finished the tenth grade of compulsory school at the age of 18. Many lads of my class of graduates entered military schools. A military career didn't seem attractive to me and I decided to have military service for a regular term and then enter the institute.

I was allocated to Narofominsk, a town outside Moscow, to the communications squad of the infantry regiment of tank division #14. It was the time when the war in Poland was over and there was an annexation of Polish territory.

Then the Finnish campaign commenced, and my mother was really perturbed that I would be dispatched there. Our division didn't participate in the Finnish events.

There was a radio platoon in our squad and being compared to the others I was rather educated - ten classes - so I was taught to work with radio matters.

The army had some radio stations for communication with the battalion. I was good at sending with a key, broadcasting six groups, which was rather proper for those times. In May 1941 I became a sergeant and a radio operator.

The soldiers' mode of life was rigid. There wasn't enough room for the squad soldiers in the barracks. Three soldiers slept on double-decker bunks.

Other than that it was the ordinary life of a soldier: military alarm, sports, duties, training and political classes. At times we were given permits to leave. Sometimes my mother and my beloved came to see me, either both of them or separately.

We had certain expectations for the future without knowing that war would sever us.