

Sophie Pinkas At The Graduation Ball With Jewish Classmates



This photo was taken in Vidin in 1942. I am first from right in the first row. When we graduated from high school in 1942 because of the Law for Protection of the Nation we were not allowed to take part in the graduation ball of our high school. So, we, the Jewish students, decided to organize our own party and gathered in our house. We had a big hall where we organized it. We decided not to wear official costumes, but black uniforms with white collars for the girls and the uniforms with the high officer's collars for the boys. All my Jewish classmates are on this photo. There are also some boys who had not yet graduated, but we invited them as well. Since there was a curfew at that time, we partied the whole night until the early morning hours. The girl with the accordion in the middle of the lower row is Pina Mashiah, who played the instrument very well. She played and we danced. We also had a gramophone. I am the first from right to left on the lower row. Third from left to right on the uppermost row is my friend Jina Kirova, nee Mashiah, and to the left of her is Neli Levi. The second from right to left on the second row is Ester Panova, nee Moshe, who graduated in geography and in the middle of the first row is Adela Arie. On the right in the uppermost row is Marko Primo, a lawyer who didn't emigrate and still lives in Vidin. Mayer Alhalel also remained in Vidin; he is on the right in the first row. Almost all had progressive views. The whole Jewish street shared these beliefs. Adela Arie was a UYW member. She was in charge of our branch and collected the membership fee. We were good students, received excellent marks and we had no problems graduating. Yet, we weren't allowed to apply for university. So, we remained with our high school diplomas until 9th September 1944. Then almost all of us applied to universities.