

**Hermann Wassen** (1913-1993) - bookseller and art dealer, member of the first freely elected city council in 1946, honorary councilor of the city because of his many services to the common good, founder and promoter of the cultural workshop, local researcher, chronicler - and his wife **Christel, née Loogen** (1921-2010), have had a major impact on the city's cultural life.

The focus of their work and efforts was on the life and memory of the Jewish citizens of Geilenkirchen. As early as the 1950s they made contact with surviving Jews in Europe, Israel, North and South America. Their many contacts by letter prompted a number of them to visit their former hometown. They welcomed the visitors to their house, accompanied them through the city, led them to their former parental homes, to the synagogue square and to the Jewish cemetery.

In 1982, Mr. and Mrs. Wassen endowed the memorial stone on Synagogenplatz (synagogue square) to commemorate the Jewish place of worship, and donated for the commemorative plaque at "Haus Basten" - a memorial for the destruction of the synagogue and Jewish houses in the pogrom night of 1938, the expulsion, persecution and murder of Geilenkirchen Jews.

**Hermann Wassen** documented the history of the Jews in his city since the beginning of the 18th century in the book "The Seven-branched Candelabrum" and archived his various researches. He had been visiting school classes since the 1970s to report on the Nazi terror and to pave the way for a better future. He established, cultivated and shaped the culture of remembrance in our city with great commitment.



***Regina Gottschalk,***  
*a Jewish lady from*  
*Geilenkirchen, survivor of the*  
*Holocaust, a guest at the*  
*Wassen home in 1990.*