

	<p>Object: Torah cabinet from the synagogue in Rheinböllen</p> <p>Museum: Ehemalige Synagoge Laufersweiler Kirchgasse 6 55487 Laufersweiler 06762 5269 info@synagoge-laufersweiler.de</p> <p>Inventory number: o. Inv.</p>
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Description

This plain, box-shaped wooden cabinet was once located in the synagogue at Rheinböllen (the pedestal was added later). That synagogue was constructed between 1830 and 1841, but is used today merely as a workshop and storehouse. The building wasn't destroyed during the "Reichspogromnacht" (Night of broken glass) in 1938 only because the last head of the local Jewish community, Simon Grünewald, had already arranged for its sale to a master painter from Rheinböllen and the transaction had already been officially concluded in October 1938. Worship services were no longer being held at this time. In 1933, only about 20 persons of Jewish faith lived in Rheinböllen, but these, too, all left the village over the following years due to the growing disfranchisement and economic boycotts, which meant living there any longer was virtually impossible. Simon Grünewald and his wife were among the last to leave Rheinböllen, but only after succeeding in sending their three sons to safety abroad.

A Torah scroll is stored in a Torah shrine or a Torah cabinet in every synagogue. The Torah shrine is located in an elevated recess, facing east and covered by a curtain; symbolizing the „sacred ark“ that housed the 10 Commandments.

This Torah cabinet is most likely the only object of its kind still preserved today. Other Torah cabinets throughout the region were stolen, destroyed or publicly burned during the "Reichspogromnacht". This plain cabinet is typical for the modest living conditions prevalent in the rural Jewish communities throughout the Rhine-Hunsrück region and is a rare symbol of their sacred culture. Before becoming part of the collection at the synagogue in Laufersweiler, the cabinet was in the possession of the evangelical parsonage in Rheinböllen; yet it isn't clear how it got there.

Basic data

Material/Technique:

Wood

Measurements:

Events

Created	When	1840s
	Who	
	Where	
Was used	When	Until 1938
	Who	
	Where	Rheinböllen

Keywords

- Antisemitism
- Cabinet
- Jewish ceremonial art
- Synagogue
- Torah