

## Stanislaw Wierzba At His Home



This picture of me, Stanislaw Wierzba, was taken at my home in Warsaw in 2005.

Until this very day I still have obsessions of being a Jew. Two years ago I went to the opening of the commemorative plaque at the Gdanski Station [plaque commemorating the forced emigration of Jews from Poland after March 1968]. A few days later I ran into my old neighbor, from where I lived before. I saw you over there, at the station, she says... It was easy to see me because they showed snippets of it on TV. I didn't know this, but she saw me on TV. I have been in hiding. I was afraid, and until this day the feeling has stayed inside me, this secrecy, though things are so different now. I don't feel so tied up by it all any more, and anyway both my daughter and my daughter's mother-in-law, and my son-in-law, and my grandchildren - they all know I am Jewish. My daughter even said to me once, dad, it makes me feel proud. And so I don't hide it any more, but somewhere deep inside me there is still something like a fear.

And here is how it began. I am awfully grateful to [Halina] Elczewska [Jewish social activist] because it is thanks to her that I began to go there [to The Association of Jewish War Veterans and Victims of Prosecutions during World War Two]. She had to drag me over there, and I was still young at the time. It must have been in the early 90s. When my wife died, I was left alone, my daughter busy with her own life - this is when I began to get more involved. Eventually I was so much a part of it all that when they had their elections, I was chosen as board member, and I am on the board for the Warsaw section of the Association. I am so much used to it that I don't think I could live without it...