

Surviving survival? Leon's later life



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Above is the London home of Leon Greenman. Leon did not remarry but lived alone. He didn't care for too many home comforts – he made do with the basics. He didn't have central heating or other 'luxuries'.



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Leon earned his living as a London market trader. He spent his last twenty years devoted to educating young people about his experiences during the Holocaust. Despite two knee operations he opted to travel unaided to the many schools by London Transport. Leon led many educational tours to Poland visiting the site of Auschwitz-Birkenau.

He also spent time campaigning against the growth of neo-Nazi organisations in the UK. He wrote 'An Englishman in Auschwitz' a book about his story and spent Sundays at the Jewish Museum London where he volunteered as a guide touring visitor through an exhibition about his life.

Leon began building a personal archive of Holocaust related material. Piles of images, newspaper cuttings and Holocaust books surrounded him in his home. He spent time typing letters to MPs about racism and social injustice and answering letters sent to him by school pupils about his experience of the Holocaust.

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Ilford Recorder

When Leon was 83, he received death threats from 'a racist terror group.' This was reported in the local newspaper.

A right-wing extremist group allied to British National Party (BNP) smashed the front window of Leon's home at 11pm 19 June 1994. Leon managed to escape injury. Following the incident his windows were fitted with steel mesh and his house was protected with security lights and an alarm. He never drew open his curtains again.



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Stones Leon had retrieved from the earth at Auschwitz while leading educational tours were placed by him in a prominent position in the hearth of the fireplace at his home. Next to these stones is part of the brick thrown through the window of Leon's front room in the 1994 attack.

'It's amazing that after 50 years, after saving myself and getting out of the camps, the Nazis still want to kill me.'

Leon Greenman.