

Surviving survival? Londoners honour Leon



Charles Green

True to his word Leon spent his life speaking to thousands of school children, students, police cadets, nurses, fire fighters and teachers about his experiences during the Holocaust. His work was honoured by the Queen in 1998 when he was awarded an OBE for services to education.

When Leon died many Ilford residents expressed their wish to erect a permanent memorial in nearby Valentine Park to honour Leon's courage and lifetime of work fighting racism. Chris Carter, editor of the local paper The Ilford Recorder led a campaign to raise funds for the memorial.

'While in the concentration camp I made a promise to God that if I survive I would live to tell the world what took place here.'

Leon Greenman

'Apart from singing, watching episodes of The Weakest Link on TV, Leon loved pottering about his local area (Ilford) doing his shopping in the High Street and the market, bumping into the local grocer, dentist, newsagents and chatting to local people. He really loved living in Ilford.'

Friend of Leon Greenman

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'A memorial in Leon's honour felt the right thing to do and our readers' response put the seal on that. The response was huge.'

Chris Carter

Donations came from all sections of the community. A memorial stone was laid in the Peace Garden in the park on 17 September 2009.