



Klezmer and choir will bring musical close to L'Chaim exhibit

Owen Sound, ON – Sunday, June 28 is the final day to see the award-winning museum exhibit *L'Chaim (To Life): the Story of Beth Ezekiel Synagogue* at the Grey Roots Museum. Ensuring the exhibit closes on a joyous note, klezmer group The Gypsy Jive Band, together with the Beth Ezekiel Synagogue Choir, will provide musical entertainment from 2pm to 4pm.

During its two-and-a-half year run at the museum, L'Chaim proved to be both popular and noteworthy, earning the Grey Roots Museum and Archives a prestigious *Ontario Museum Award of Excellence* in 2007. The exhibit is a sensitive portrayal of Jewish pioneers and the contributions they made to the local community. It tells of a burgeoning congregation enjoying religious life and observance free from the persecution that dogged its founders in Eastern Europe at the turn of the last century. And it tells the story of a synagogue on the verge of collapse, seemingly destined to follow dozens of other small town Jewish communities into oblivion.

That story took a positive turn however, with Beth Ezekiel prevailing over attrition and becoming in the process, Canada's last small town synagogue. It remains in Owen Sound, which is by far the smallest community in Canada to still have an active synagogue, as the final reminder of an institution that was once a familiar fixture in small towns across this country.

L'Chaim was conceived and designed by Grey Roots staff, with creative input from architectural historian the late Bob Greenberg. The congregation of Beth Ezekiel hopes to preserve many elements from this exhibit in hopes of creating a future exhibition and archival space within the synagogue building.

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