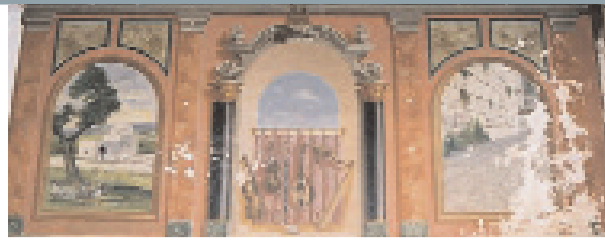


Finally came the highlight of our day, and for the Lvov Jewish community the highlight of the year. It was the rededication of a shul that had been virtually destroyed by the Germans and then left to rot by the Russians. Going into the shul, we were all struck by how beautiful it was. There were murals across the ceiling and columns supporting the galleries. It was a long ceremony but thoroughly enjoyed. The whole community had showed up and the shul was at capacity but no one minded. The people there were constantly thanking all of us but I think we should have thanked them much more for giving us this opportunity to help those less fortunate. On the long journey back I was able to reflect on the trip. It is hard to explain how we felt, but as someone put it to me later, had our great-grandparents not decided to come to England, we would be members of a community like that, if, and a big if, we had survived at all. *David Gottlieb, aged 13*



*Above and Below: A section of wall before and after restoration*



Something that I think I will remember was the new synagogue and seeing all of those Jewish people attending the special event. I thought it was also amazing thinking about all of those people that didn't give up during the Holocaust. The people that we heard about who always believed and found a way to survive. *Joshua Foley Comer, aged 12*



Our final stop was to see our twin community Lvov and the main synagogue which had been so painstakingly restored to ornate beauty. I shall always remember walking into that shul accompanied by a fanfare and band playing *Haveinu Shalom Alechem* and the way that they all were so happy to see us and welcomed "The Angels" from the UK. We ended the day with an emotional Chanukah concert and beautiful singing by Avromi. The young children all dressed so beautifully as Chanukah candles with little paper candles as head gear made everyone cry with their beautiful singing. The highlight was the presentation of the Torah and Megillah and lighting the Chanukah candles and some refreshments before we finally went home back to London.

I would like to thank the sponsors and Jeremy and Gill Freedman for making this trip possible. I learned a great deal about the city of Lvov and the people who used to live there and the present community. Even after so much destruction and hardship for the Jews and the terrible tragedies that occurred in Lvov, the Jewish community need our help desperately as there is still so much to do to help. *Joseph Greenwall Cohen, aged 13*

When I visited Lvov I noticed that there was anti-semitic graffiti written all around what is left of the Jewish area. Once upon a time there were many synagogues. Now there are empty spaces where shuls once stood. Putting all this aside, there is one thing the Jewish community in Lvov have which we don't. They have the courage to wear a smile on their faces in spite of the conditions in which they live, which shows their tremendous strength.



*During the war, German soldiers used animals on the ceiling for target practice*

I am so pleased we visited Lvov on Chanukah, the festival when we light the chanukiah and place it at our window to show the world that in spite of our enemies; Haman, the Greeks, Hitler, WE ARE STILL HERE!!! *Hannah Kingsley, aged 13*

The Shul was beautiful. I really enjoyed the ceremony, especially hearing my Daddy sing. But there was one thing that broke my heart seeing the people eating at the refreshments was so sad. They were stuffing their bags with cake. It was so upsetting and again it made me think of my life, how lucky I am that my parents can afford food. *Mindi Freilich, aged 11*

As we were leaving the school, Jeremy was exchanging envelopes of £10 worth of local currency, which we would have a chance to spend later in the day. We then boarded our coaches again and journeyed towards the old town of Lvov. We were given a guided tour. On our trek around the old town we came across a ruined synagogue. We were surprised to find that there was a Jewish community that used the house next door. It was very cramped and the facilities were basic.



We ended up in a market where we had a chance to buy Russian dolls and other local items. £10 seemed to go a long way in this market. *Jonathan B Garcia, aged 13*

I particularly enjoyed walking through the town along the beautiful cobbled roads and seeing the markets. I saw the living conditions their people there are living in and I really felt grateful that I have a beautiful home, school, family, friends etc.

The greatest thing to see was that everyone looked so happy and content although they owned barely anything which also brought me to be so satisfied with all that I have. *Yaeli Freilich, aged 13*

A visit to Lvov is far more than it sounds. A journey back in time to a once-glorious, then wiped-out, now newly-nascent community, to a place where Judaism, history, Holocaust, emotion and potential somehow all converge and form one interwoven thread of inspiration, contemplation, deep feeling and a sense of true purpose.

We boldly attempted in just a few hours to get a sense of Lvov's epic journey, a long, long story of unbelievable highs and horrific lows, perhaps most potently symbolised in the two most recent manifestations of tragedy and success, the Janowska Road Concentration Camp and the newly-reconstructed main shul in Lvov. *Yedidya Livingstone, aged 17*

One of the main things which struck us about Lvov was the sheer poverty and desolate nature of the place compared to what we are used to in our naive little life in London. However, when we saw the beautiful refurbished shul and the warm, selfless actions of Rabbi and Rebitzen Bald, we were inspired, and realised what an important and critical role they play in the community, and we would not like to imagine what life would be like for the Jews of Lvov without them there. *Vikki and Simon Weinberg (Madrachim for the day)*

I really enjoyed the trip and meeting all the people in Lvov.

It was a brilliant once in a life time opportunity trip and I am so pleased I was able to go, *Alex Barnett*

*The photographs are by Bernard Fromson*

