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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **EXCELLENCE IN PRESERVATION AWARD WINNERS ANNOUNCED**

### ***Restoration of Astor Courts, Rhinebeck to be honored***

ALBANY, NY – May 4, 2009 – The Preservation League of New York State has selected the restoration of **Astor Courts** in Rhinebeck, Dutchess County, to receive a Preservation League award for Excellence in Historic Preservation.

The League's statewide awards program honors notable achievements in retaining, promoting and reusing New York State's irreplaceable architectural heritage.

"This marvelous restoration project brought back Stanford White's Astor Courts, to the delight of not only the homeowners but to civic groups who have been generously granted access to the landmark building and grounds in recent years," said Jay DiLorenzo, President of the Preservation League. "In addition to stripping away inappropriate changes which had occurred incrementally at the house, the effort also restored significant elements of the estate's landscape, most notably clearing the site in order to restore the original and critical sense of open space surrounding the house and re-opening the views of the river. Given the extreme development pressure that has led to the demise of so many of the Hudson Valley's architectural jewels and the subdivision of so much green space, this project is particularly gratifying."

According to Samuel G. White, principal-in-charge of the restoration of Astor Courts for Platt Byard Dovell White Architects, "Astor Courts was created by a great American architect for a major Gilded Age landowner. It was designed to enhance the glory of its Hudson River setting as well as the entertainment of the weekend guests of John Jacob Astor IV. It is not every day that you get to combine social and architectural history with beauty and fun, but Astor Courts has all of these qualities in abundance."

(more)

The award will be presented at the Preservation League's Annual Meeting and Awards Ceremony in New York City at 6:00 p.m. on **Wednesday, May 13<sup>th</sup>** at the historic **New York Yacht Club, 37 West 44<sup>th</sup> Street**.

The complete list of award winners is: Astor Courts in Rhinebeck, Dutchess County; Christ Episcopal Church in Poughkeepsie, Dutchess County; Asbury Delaware Church – “Babeville,” in Buffalo, Erie County; The Emerson in Manhattan, New York County; The Guggenheim Museum in Manhattan, New York County; the Theodore Roosevelt Executive and Legislative Building in Mineola, Nassau County; and The Chapel of the Sisters in Prospect Cemetery, Jamaica, Queens County. The Fred L. Emerson Foundation and Foundation Historical Society in Cayuga County will be honored for organizational excellence, and Dr. Robert B. MacKay of Cold Spring Harbor, Suffolk County, will be honored for individual excellence. *The Olmsted City – The Buffalo Olmsted Park System: Plan for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* (University at Buffalo, 2008) will be honored as an outstanding publication.

“Excellence in Preservation Awards are our principal means of honoring the preservation community and educating the public about the important contribution that historic preservation projects make to our quality of life throughout New York State,” said DiLorenzo. “Each year, we are impressed by the number and variety of laudable projects, and this year was no exception. We are delighted to give the restoration of Astor Courts the statewide recognition it deserves.”

*The Preservation League's Excellence in Historic Preservation awards program is funded by a generous grant from the Arthur F. and Alice E. Adams Foundation of Miami, Florida.*

*By leading a statewide preservation movement, sharing information and expertise and raising a unified voice, the Preservation League of New York State promotes historic preservation as a tool to revitalize our neighborhoods and communities, honor our heritage and enrich our lives.*

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