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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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

### ***Restoration of Asbury Delaware Church in Buffalo – “Babeville” - to be honored***

ALBANY, NY – May 5, 2009 – The Preservation League of New York State has selected the restoration of the former **Asbury Delaware Church** – now known as “**Babeville**” in Buffalo 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 handsome 1870s Medina sandstone building looms large at the intersection of several historic districts in downtown Buffalo. What was once a derelict candidate for demolition is now a proud symbol of what can be achieved when public and private sectors work together,” said Jay DiLorenzo, President of the Preservation League. “This former Episcopal church is now home to a performance space, art gallery, and recording studio. Further, this project illustrates a creative solution to an all too common challenge; what to do with an abandoned inner-city religious structure.”

Contributing to the success of this project were Righteous Babe Records; Flynn Battaglia Architects, PC; Architectural Resources; Syracuse Engineers; Wiss Janney Elstner Associates, Inc.; M/E Engineering; and Del Resources. Major financial support was secured through Federal Historic Tax Credits and New Market Tax Credits; the New York State Empire Zone Program; and the Buffalo Economic Renaissance Corporation.

New vibrancy has been brought to the neighborhood surrounding this long-closed sanctuary and parish hall through the introduction of work, exhibition, performance and community space. According to Peter Flynn, Preservation Architect with Flynn Battaglia Architects, PC, “At a time when congregations are abandoning many inner city churches, we are

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very happy to be the designers for a project which creatively adapts and faithfully restores an historic resource with the rich architectural tradition of the Asbury Delaware.”

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 rebirth of the Asbury Delaware Church in Buffalo as ‘Babeville’ 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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