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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

EXCELLENCE IN PRESERVATION AWARD WINNERS ANNOUNCED

Fred L. Emerson Foundation and Foundation Historical Association to be honored for stewardship of Seward House Museum

ALBANY, NY – May 4, 2009 – The Preservation League of New York State has selected the **Fred L. Emerson Foundation** and the **Foundation Historical Association**, both of Auburn, to receive a Preservation League award for organizational *Excellence in Historic Preservation*.

This statewide awards program recognizes individuals and organizations for demonstrating an outstanding commitment to the preservation of New York State's irreplaceable architectural heritage.

"The Emerson Foundation is to be commended for its longstanding commitment to the stewardship of the William H. Seward House in Auburn and the resulting professionalism and high preservation standards at the museum," said Jay DiLorenzo, President of the Preservation League. "In addition to its stewardship of Seward House Museum, the Emerson Foundation has provided important support to the Aurora Free Library and Powers Library in Moravia, as well as the Fort Hill Cemetery, Cayuga County Museum of History and Art, and Friends of the Howland Stone Store. This impressive list of preservation success stories truly illustrates the Foundation's commitment to protecting New York's historic structures."

Contributing to the success of these organizations were Randall T. Crawford, AIA, Crawford & Stearns Preservation Architects; Daniel Labeille, former managing director of the Museum; and Michael H. Long, a 27-year resident of Auburn who now serves as Administrator for the City of Poughkeepsie.

The Emerson Foundation's support for the Foundation Historical Association and the 1816-17 house, which served as the primary residence for William Henry Seward and his family, began with an initial appropriation of \$25,000 nearly sixty years ago. Since 1951, the Emerson Foundation has invested over \$7.5 million in Seward House for operations, capital projects, and an endowment for operating and preservation expenses.

(more)

“In 1951, William Seward’s grandson left his family’s homestead to the Emerson Foundation with a request we operate the home as a public memorial to his father and grandfather. The Emerson Foundation has been distinctly privileged to support this effort – in cooperation with Foundation Historical Association – for almost sixty years. It is an honor to be recognized by the Preservation League of New York State for this important work,” stated Anthony D. Franceschelli, president of the Emerson Foundation.

”Seward House has flourished under the stewardship of the Foundation Historical Association and with the support of the Fred L. Emerson Foundation,” added Peter Wisbey, executive director of the museum. “The Preservation League’s recognition is particularly timely given the renewed national interest in William Seward and his role in Abraham Lincoln’s cabinet and in the purchase of the Alaska Territory.”

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 13th** at the historic **New York Yacht Club, 37 West 44th 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 21st 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 Fred L. Emerson Foundation and the Foundation Historical Association the statewide recognition they deserve.”

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.