



**Preservation
League of NYS**

Cochecton Pump House Receives a 2022 Excellence in Historic Preservation Award

This award from the Preservation League of NYS recognizes the best in the field of historic preservation

Contacts:

Katy Peace, Director of Communications, Preservation League of New York State
kpeace@preservenys.org | 518.462.5658 ext. 17

Dave Lieber, Co-Owner, Cochecton Pump House
davelieber34@gmail.com | 917.295.7384

EMBARGOED UNTIL 6:30 P.M. MONDAY, NOVEMBER 7

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Cochecton, NY, 11/7/22 — The Cochecton Pump House has been named one of this year's Excellence in Historic Preservation award winners. Since 1984, the League's annual Excellence Awards program has allowed us to shine a light on the people who are using historic preservation to make all our lives better — through exemplary restoration projects, indispensable publications, individual action, and organizational distinction.

Additional information about the 2022 Excellence Award winners, including interviews, videos, and more, can be found on our website: <https://www.preservenys.org/excellence-awards>

"The response from the community was incredible," said **Cochecton Pump House Co-Owner Dave Lieber**. "We had so many compliments from all ages. It was as popular with the Instagram crowd as it was with the octogenarian. It quickly became a place to meet and see a show, it created jobs, and lifted other local businesses."

The Cochecton Pump House was built in 1879 as a pump house for the Olean Bayonne Oil Pipeline. Abandoned when the oil fields ran dry, the structure was scraped for steel in the 1930s and left roofless thereafter. Set back off State Route 97, the building was hidden from view and forgotten. Over the ensuing decades, the structure was overcome by vegetation.

Located in the Delaware River Valley, the Cochecton Pump House has transformed an abandoned ruin into a one-of-a-kind community space. This unique property could never have been "restored" in a traditional sense. But by being stabilized, it has found new life. The revitalized Cochecton Pump House keeps the history alive in a thoroughly unique restaurant, bar, and open-air event space.

When the owners took on the project, they worked with the Department of Environmental Conservation and an environmental consultant to clear the property and ensure there were no environmental issues left over from the oil pumping operation. A local architect and engineer were consulted to ensure stability of the walls. A mason was hired to handle the loose upper courses of bricks, and at one point three generations of masons were involved on the project. They ran electricity, had a well drilled, and excavated the area to make it more accessible. With the walls secured, the space has found a new life and purpose, capturing the imagination of locals and tourists alike.

"The Cochecton Pump House is a truly unique project, unlike anything we've seen nominated for our Excellence Awards before," said **Preservation League President Jay DiLorenzo**. "The ingenuity it took

to see the potential in this ruin is inspiring, and we applaud the project team for turning the site into an amenity for the community.”

The Cohecton Pump House project team included: **Dave Lieber** and **Jin Zhang**, Owners; **Rob Orr Masonry**; **Tom Coacci**; **Frank Kratz**; **Narrowsburg Electric**; **Augello Excavating**; **Hook Well Drilling**; **Rob Kuta RSK Fabrications**

Recipients of the Excellence Award represent the very best of what the League stands for and supports in historic preservation. They exemplify best practices in the field and demonstrate how preservation is integral to building stronger neighborhoods, boosting local economies, tackling the affordable housing crisis, mitigating climate change, opening our eyes to overlooked history, and saving the places that are special to all of us. Our shared cultural heritage grounds us and unites us. The Excellence Awards celebrate those who work so hard to protect that shared heritage.

2022 Awardees:

- **Gowanda Hollywood Theater** | Gowanda, Cattaraugus County
- **Opendore Restoration** | Sherwood, Cayuga County
- **Art's Cafe** | Springville, Erie County
- **The Pavilion at Fort Ticonderoga** | Ticonderoga, Essex County
- **The Church of St. Luke & St. Matthew Exterior Restoration** | Brooklyn, Kings County
- **Edgemere Development** | Rochester, Monroe County
- **Rehabilitation of the Little Theatre** | Rochester, Monroe County
- **Steve Jordan** | Rochester, Monroe County
- **East Harlem South / El Barrio Reconnaissance-Level Historic Resource Survey** | Manhattan, New York County
- **Cohecton Pump House** | Cohecton, Sullivan County

The 2022 Excellence in Historic Preservation Awards are sponsored in part by Mr. Robert A.M. Stern, FAIA | Robert A.M. Stern Architects, LLP.

About the Preservation League of New York State

Since its founding in 1974, the Preservation League has built a reputation for action and effectiveness. Our goal has been to preserve our historic buildings, districts, and landscapes and to build a better New York, one community at a time. The Preservation League of New York State invests in people and projects that champion the essential role of preservation in community revitalization, sustainable economic growth and the protection of our historic buildings and landscapes. We lead advocacy, economic development, and education programs across the state.

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