



FROM: Preservation League of New York State
44 Central Avenue
Albany NY 12206-3002
www.preservenys.org

CONTACTS: Colleen M. Ryan, Director of Public Relations
Preservation League of New York State
518-462-5658, ext. 17; cryan@preservenys.org

Joe Martens, President
Open Space Institute
518-427-1564; jmartens@osiny.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

EXCELLENCE IN PRESERVATION AWARD WINNERS ANNOUNCED

Stabilization of MacNaughton House in Newcomb to be honored

ALBANY, NY – May 1, 2008 – The Preservation League of New York State has selected the **stabilization of the MacNaughton House** at the historic Adirondack Iron Works site in Newcomb, Essex County, to receive its prestigious Excellence in Historic Preservation Award. 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 Preservation League has a long history of assisting in preservation efforts in the Newcomb area, including support of a detailed building conditions study in the early 1990s that noted the historic and architectural significance of the MacNaughton House, despite its poor condition,” said Jay DiLorenzo, President of the Preservation League. “The Open Space Institute is to be congratulated for its commitment to saving this threatened property, and in so doing, setting an example which we hope will be emulated by other land conservation organizations.”

Contributing to the success of this effort were the property’s owners, the Open Space Institute; Janet Null, project architect, Argus Architecture & Preservation, P.C., Troy; Ryan-Biggs Associates, P.C., structural engineers, Troy; general contractor, Mercer Construction Co., LLC, Clifton Park; emergency work contractor West Branch, Inc. of Saratoga Springs and the New York State Museum. The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation was also instrumental in early stabilization work that may have prevented the Cottage from collapsing.

The MacNaughton House, a timber-frame saltbox double house, was constructed in 1834 to house the manager and the visiting owners of the Adirondack Iron and Steel Works. From 1876 until 1947 the property was leased to hunting clubs, primarily the Tahawus Club. In 1901, then-Vice

(more)

President Theodore Roosevelt was vacationing at the house when President McKinley was shot in Buffalo, and it was from Tahawus that Roosevelt began his historic ride to the Presidency.

By the autumn of 2005, when OSI called on Argus Architecture & Preservation to assess the building, it had been abandoned in a state of total neglect for more than 40 years. Emergency stabilization was undertaken to ensure that the building would remain standing until the next construction season. “To complicate matters,” said Janet Null of Argus Architecture, “except for road access, Tahawus is as isolated today as it was in the 1830s, and there is no power or water supply.”

“The stewardship of historic structures is often a challenging issue for land conservation organizations,” said Joe Martens, President of the Open Space Institute. “We are pleased to receive this recognition from the Preservation League for stabilizing the MacNaughton House, and look forward to the day when the interpretation and enjoyment of this historic site will be enhanced by the building’s complete restoration.”

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 **Thursday, May 15th** at the historic **Park Avenue Armory**, 643 Park Avenue.

The complete list of award winners is: Webb Lofts in Buffalo, Erie County; MacNaughton House Stabilization in Newcomb, Essex County; U.S. Post Office & Courthouse, Cadman Plaza, Brooklyn, Kings County; Downtown Revitalization Program, Canajoharie, Montgomery County; Eldridge Street Synagogue, Lower East Side, New York County; Proctor’s Theatre, Schenectady, Schenectady County; Hotel Kirkland, Kingston, Ulster County; Model Development Block, New Rochelle, Westchester County. The Hudson Valley Chapter of the American Society of Home Inspectors will be honored for organizational excellence, and Trude Brown Fitelson of Rochester will be honored for individual excellence. *Preserving New York: Winning the Right to Protect a City’s Landmarks* by Anthony C. Wood (Routledge, 2007) will also receive a special citation.

“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 MacNaughton House stabilization 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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