Please join us for the 2006 ANNUAL MEETING on Tuesday, April 25th at 7:30 p.m. at the 170 Washington Street

N ot e  m eeting  l oca t ion  c hange

The year was also filled with planning for the Holiday House Tour 2005, which took place over Christmas Weekend. A major event like this involves so many people, and so much time and energy. It is a real achievement of a grand trinity, a great tribute to all those who took part. Our organization and illustrates clearly how much people do care about our town and our history. The Holiday House Tour was organized and run by Board member Diane Barbour, who did an outstanding job. I would publicly like to thank the home owners who generously allowed their homes to be opened. The floral designers who helped enhance these already beautiful homes, the hosts and hostesses who gave of their time and talents, the childcare providers who answered our questions for two days- all were fantastic. It reminds us that our treasures are not only in objects, but in people who work diligently to keep everything on an even keel.

Daily we struggle with a limited budget, a very small but dedicated Board, a day set back that we work at, and take long hours, we can feel encouraged that progress is being made, and that our work has a purpose for a history that is worth preserving. I thank all of you that is involved, and encourage anyone who thinks they are interested to join us with their time, money or both. It is one way more to enjoy and appreciate living in this wonderful town.

Sincerely,

Chapin I. P. Russell
President
MMHS Board of Directors
There were a number of positive financial developments in 2005. Additions to the Endowment were $95,000 higher than the previous year. Grants received improved by more than $83,000, and revenues from the First Holiday House Tour in five years exceeded related expenses by more than $29,000. Invested Endowment funds appreciated by approximately $44,000, and the amount of Endowments Funds required to sustain operations decreased by approximately $28,000. Put in perspective, however, substantially all of the relief from the use of those funds came from net receipts of the Holiday House Tour, and the fact remains that M M H S continued to operate in a deficit during 2005.

Dues received decreased by approximately $4,800, and receipts from the Annual Appeal fell approximately $23,000 below the recent record level of 2004. Part of the drop in Annual Appeal receipts was due to timing, with some significant contributions received in the early weeks of 2006. The support of the Holiday House Tour may have reduced funds available for the Annual Appeal, and contributions made by potential donors to other organizations to provide much needed relief from the natural disasters that occurred last year may have contributed to the shortfall.

When taken together the financial health of M M H S improved to some degree during the past two years. The single most significant improvement came from the $100,000 donation to the Lee Mansion Preservation Fund received during 2005. The increased level of Grant awards during the past two years was also a very important contributor, since most of the grants support major Lee Mansion conservation projects necessary to continue the Mansion’s vitality.

Increased revenues from the 2004 and to a lesser extent the 2005 Annual Appeal played an important role in the financial improvement. The successful Holiday House Tour was key to reducing the Endowment funds required to sustain M M H S operations during 2005, and finally improved returns on invested Endowment funds helped conserve and improve financial resources.

The Budget for 2006 presents a continued commitment to further narrowing the shortfall between expenditures and revenues. The budget improvements, if achieved during the current year, will play a role in assuring the long term health of M M H S. This alone, however, will not be sufficient to assure the financial well being of M M H S.

An increased level of contribution to The Annual Appeal Fund, continued improvement in the level of Grants received, and contributions to the Endowment itself are necessary to assure the continued financial health of M M H S. Without them, undertakings of the M M H S will need to be significantly curtailed, in the not too distant future.