

Tuesday, September 28, 2010

Good show

MECHANICS HALL CLOSES YEAR WITH SURPLUS



Kathryn Crockett president of the Worcester County Mechanics Association talks about abolitionist and suffragist Lucy Stone of West Brookfield as her portrait is put in the spotlight yesterday at the association's annual meeting in Mechanics Hall. (T&G Staff /CHRISTINE PETERSON)

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Right, Dr. Michael F. Collins, chancellor of the University of Massachusetts Medical School, was the keynote speaker. (T&G Staff/CHRISTINE PETERSON)

WORCESTER — Mechanics Hall closed its 2009-10 fiscal year June 30 with an operating surplus of \$115,000 — a turnaround of more than \$280,000 from the previous fiscal year.

At the 167th annual meeting yesterday of the Worcester County Mechanics Association at Mechanics Hall, 321 Main St., members were also told that hall rental income reached more than \$1 million, a 13 percent increase. The association owns and operates Mechanics Hall, which was built in 1857.

Strong ongoing community support for the association was cited as it received \$318,000 from individuals, corporations and foundations. Meanwhile, the value of the investment portfolio stabilized from dramatic lows last year, and at the end of the fiscal year was valued at \$2.4 million.

Operating as a rental facility, which funds its preservation, Mechanics Hall was host to more than 250 events and more than 200,000 guests. Nonprofit organizations continue to be the major users, and events ranged from concerts and weddings to recordings, business meetings and fund-raising galas.

Dr. Michael F. Collins, chancellor of the University of Massachusetts Medical School, was the guest speaker at yesterday's meeting. The UMass Medical School and Preservation Worcester each received Master Mechanic awards from the association. The Master Mechanic award honors those who are "creating a culture of excellence and growth in Massachusetts."