



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 18, 2008

Media Contact: Nancy Hawley

Phone: (252) 514-4937

Email: nhawley@tryonpalace.org

CENTURIES OF CELEBRATIONS at Tryon Palace Historic Sites & Gardens

[NEW BERN, NC] --- This year's festivities offer visitors an opportunity to experience the holiday traditions that make the Tryon Palace holiday celebrations so very special. The 2008 holiday season celebration begins the Friday after Thanksgiving, and runs through the end of December.

Centuries of Celebrations at the Palace recreates two major festive occasions from December 1770---the grand opening of the Palace, North Carolina's first permanent capitol and government house---and a birthday celebration for King George III.

Contemporary accounts of the day confirm this celebration was such a grand party that it deserved a place in history. Dancing, dining and various other entertainments popular with eighteenth century partygoers contributed to the December 1770 revelry. Twenty-first century visitors will enjoy experiencing an array of diversions guaranteed to put everyone in a festive spirit.

Of course, the spectacular nature-inspired decorations that are the hallmarks of the Tryon Palace holiday season will once again beautifully complement each historic building. In addition to the Palace and the site's three historic homes, the Museum Shop and the New Bern Academy Museum will also be decked out for the holidays.

Continued

Natural holiday arrangements will be accented using oyster shells, red and green apples, pine cones, juniper berries, lotus pods, tallow berries, peacock feathers, and lots of greenery. The holiday decorations will also feature beautiful dried flowers, including celosia, larkspur, and yarrow.

The Christmas Candlelight Tours have been recognized as one of the Top 20 Holiday Events in the southeastern United States by the Southeast Tourism Society since 2004.

Candlelight tours on Saturday, December 13 and December 20 will offer an even greater variety of entertainment both inside and outside the Palace. At 5 p.m. the Fife & Drum Corps leads visitors through the entrance where they will encounter strolling minstrels and costumed characters portraying colonial New Bernians who will gladly recount stories about their lives in the eighteenth century. Crowd pleasing Signora Bella, the Italian equilibrist, is back this year to everyone's delight. Otto the Sword Swallower has also returned to amaze young and not-so-young visitors with his impossible feats and daring.

Holiday tours are offered November 28 through December 31, 2008. Daily tours run from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Saturday and from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. on Sunday. Evening Candlelight tours focus on the Palace complex only and are scheduled for Saturday, December 13 and 20, from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. Admission is \$15 adults, \$6 students and tickets are valid for two days. Advance tickets are on sale now by calling 252.514.4935. For more information call 252-514-4900 or e-mail info@tryonpalace.org. Out of state visitors may call 1-800-767-1560. End
#

Tryon Palace Historic Sites & Gardens, located in New Bern, N.C., is part of the N.C. Department of Cultural Resources. Buildings currently open to the public include the reconstructed Tryon Palace, the John Wright Stanly House, Robert Hay House, and George W. Dixon House. Admission is charged. Tickets and tour information are available at the visitor center located at the corner of George and Pollock streets. The visitor center and the first floor of Tryon Palace are accessible to visitors with disabilities.