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NEW BERN ACADEMY MUSEUM LAUNCHES ARCHITECTURAL WALKING TOUR

New Bern, NC (June 16, 2008) - - - Emerging from the stately portico of the New Bern Academy Museum, and strolling right or left, a visitor or local resident might not realize that this one square block, alone, offers as comprehensive and diverse a collection of architecture as any block in all of the Historic Downtown New Bern area.

The irony of this was not lost on Fran Campbell, Volunteer Coordinator for Tryon Palace Historic Sites & Gardens (TPHS&G) and a small group of New Bern Academy Museum volunteers who recently launched an Architectural Walking Tour now offered on the third Saturday of each month, through October. “This has been a real labor of love, by many,” says Campbell, about the volunteers who, with Palace support, have researched, documented and photographed the homes and buildings, and will offer their services as guides for the Architectural Walking Tours.

Those initiating the venture feel the tour adds an interesting dimension and valuable supplement to the existing tours and exhibits now offered by TPHS&G. “Strolling around this one-square-block -- down New, Metcalf, Johnson and Hancock Streets -- will be a journey spanning two hundred years of New Bern’s rich and storied past,” says Campbell.

The tours will begin at the New Bern Academy Museum, North Carolina’s First Public School, located on the corner of New and Hancock Streets. “We feel that there are many residents of New Bern who have not yet visited this wonderful Federal-style building, so we’re hoping that this tour will be as fun and instructive for them as it certainly will be for first-time visitors,” says Gretchen Carroll, one of the volunteers responsible for putting the tour together. The Academy Museum, completed in 1809, served not only as a school, until 1971, but also as a military hospital for the Union troops during the time that they occupied New Bern during the Civil War.

The all-outdoor tours will highlight more than eighteen residences and public buildings including the Hawks house and the Palmer-Tisdale house, two of the oldest and best-preserved homes in New Bern. A 12-page illustrated booklet, with photographs and documented information on these homes and the other 16 buildings, will be offered to each guest.

Weather permitting, the Architectural Walking tours will begin at 1:30 and last approximately an hour and a half. Those interested in participating can sign up at the Tryon Palace Visitor Center or at the Academy Museum, open 1-5pm Monday through Saturday. Tickets for the Architectural Walking Tour are \$2-Adults, \$1-Students. No charge for Council of Friends members or holders of a current TPHS&G Governor’s Pass.

For more information, call 252-514-4900; or visit the Tryon Palace Historic Sites & Gardens website at www.tryonpalace.org.

The next Architectural Walking Tour will take place on Saturday, July 19. ### End

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Tryon Palace Historic Sites & Gardens is recognized by the American Association of Museums (AAM). Of an estimated 17,500 museums in the United States, Tryon Palace Historic Sites & Gardens is one of only 23 AAM accredited museums in North Carolina and only 776 accredited museums nationwide.

Tryon Palace Historic Sites & Gardens, located in New Bern, N.C., is part of the N.C. Department of Cultural Resources. The Department of Cultural Resources is a state agency dedicated to the promotion and protection of North Carolina's arts, history, and culture. For more information, visit www.ncculture.com. For directions and further information about special events, programs or group tours, phone (800) 767-1560 or (252) 514-4900 or www.tryonpalace.org.