

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Tryon Palace Historic Sites & Gardens Receives
Highest National Recognition Awarded Re-Accreditation from the
American Association of Museums**

NEW BERN, NC (April 16, 2008) – Tryon Palace Historic Sites & Gardens has again achieved accreditation by the American Association of Museums (AAM), the highest national recognition for a museum. Accreditation signifies excellence to the museum community, to governments, funders, outside agencies, and to the museum-going public. Tryon Palace was initially accredited in 1989. All museums must undergo a re-accreditation review at least every ten years to maintain accredited status.

AAM Accreditation brings national recognition to a museum for its commitment to excellence, accountability, high professional standards, and continued institutional improvement. Developed and sustained by museum professionals for 35 years, AAM's museum accreditation program is the field's primary vehicle for quality assurance, self-regulation, and public accountability. It strengthens the museum profession by promoting practices that enable leaders to make informed decisions, allocate resources wisely, and remain financially and ethically accountable in order to provide the best possible service to the public.

Kay Phillips Williams, director of Tryon Palace, said, "Of an estimated 17,500 museums in America, Tryon Palace Historic Sites & Gardens is one of only 23 accredited museums in North Carolina and only 776 accredited museums nationwide. The staff worked diligently over a long period of time to insure our re-accreditation."

Accreditation is a very rigorous but highly rewarding process that examines all aspects of a museum's operations. To earn accreditation a museum first must conduct a year of self-study, and then undergo a site visit by a team of peer reviewers. AAM's Accreditation Commission, an independent and autonomous body of museum professionals, consider the self-study and visiting committee report to determine whether a museum should receive accreditation. While the time to complete the process varies by museum, it generally takes as much as three years.

Ford Bell, president of AAM had this to say, "Tryon Palace Historic Sites & Gardens has for years been bringing to life the colonial history of North Carolina. The museum's re-accreditation is indicative of its commitment to public service and excellence in all that they do. The citizens of the state can take pride that their museum is one of the finest anywhere." ### End.

Tryon Palace Historic Sites & Gardens, located in New Bern, N.C., is under 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.

Buildings currently open to the public include the reconstructed Tryon Palace, the 1770 John Wright Stanly House, the ca. 1830 George W. Dixon House, and the 1809 Robert Hay House and the 1770 New Bern Academy as well as 13 period gardens. Hours are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Saturday, 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday. 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. For directions and further information about special events, programs or group tours, phone (800) 767-1560 or (252) 514-4900 or check our web site: **www.tryonpalace.org**.

The American Association of Museums has been bringing museums together since 1906, helping to develop standards and best practices, gathering and sharing knowledge, and providing advocacy on issues of concern to the entire museum community. With more than 15,000 individual, 3,000 institutional, and 300 corporate members, AAM is dedicated to ensuring that museums remain a vital part of the American landscape, connecting people with the greatest achievements of the human experience, past, present and future. For more information, visit www.aam-us.org.