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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

“FREE DAY”
TRYON PALACE HISTORIC SITES & GARDENS
Saturday, February 2
Bate Foundation Community Appreciation

NEW BERN - Tryon Palace Historic Sites & Gardens welcomes visitors to come tour the Palace, three historic houses and the New Bern Academy free of charge on Saturday, February 2. This annual community appreciation event is made possible by the **Harold H. Bate Foundation**.

In keeping with the theme, “Making history fun!” visitors will find a lot of outdoor activities for children. There will be games, crafts, and other activities that highlight North Carolina’s colonial and natural history. Box and Cox, a one act English parody, will be performed at 11 a.m. in the Visitor Center auditorium.

The first floor of the Palace will be open to visitors throughout the day, as will the three historic houses on the site. The John Wright Stanly house, c.1780, was home to a

wealthy ship owner; the Robert Hay house, c.1820, will provide visitors with a hands-on living history experience; and the George W. Dixon house, c.1830, was home to a once prosperous merchant and tailor.

Visitors will also be able to visit all four galleries in the New Bern Academy, which was North Carolina's first chartered school. The Academy features artifacts from the Civil War, early New Bern architecture and reveals the experience of schoolchildren in past generations.

A visit to Tryon Palace Historic Sites & Gardens allows new and returning visitors the opportunity to experience North Carolina's history from colonial days through the Civil War – and, in so doing, understand more about the rich and colorful history of the Old North State.

“We have fascinating stories to tell, and we want to share them. The Palace was North Carolina's first capitol. What happened here in the 18th century affects us today and will help to shape the future,” says Kay P. Williams, administrator of the New Bern living history attraction. “We want to give all North Carolinians an opportunity to learn more about our state.

“The Bate Foundation’s underwriting of Free Day is a wonderful gift to everyone who lives in eastern North Carolina.”

Tryon Palace Historic Sites & Gardens is at the corner of George and Pollock Streets in New Bern’s historic downtown. It will be open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Free Day. Before entering the grounds, visitors should go to the Visitor Center to pick up their free passes. Tours of its historic sites begin on the hour and half-hour. The last tours of the day begin at 4 p.m.

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Tryon Palace Historic Sites & Gardens (www.tryonpalace.org) is part of the North Carolina 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

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.