

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2001
RATIFIED BILL

RESOLUTION 2001-8
HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 1034

**A JOINT RESOLUTION HONORING THE MEMORY OF MEMBERS OF PAST
GENERAL ASSEMBLIES AND THE FIRST TRYON PALACE COMMISSION.**

Whereas, the first session of the General Assembly of the State of North Carolina was convened on April 7, 1777, in the Town of New Bern, in the government house generally known as the Palace, which was built by British Governor William Tryon as the first permanent capital of the Colony of North Carolina; and

Whereas, legislators attending this session began the monumental task of creating a free and independent State, unprecedented in the history of the world; and

Whereas, their actions created the legal framework within which our great State operates today; and

Whereas, the Palace was the site of the inauguration of the State's first four Governors and functioned as the government house until the City of Raleigh was designated as the official State Capital in 1794; and

Whereas, President George Washington visited the Town of New Bern and the Palace in April 1791, as part of his Southern Tour; and

Whereas, the original Palace was destroyed by fire in February 1798; and

Whereas, in 1939, the original plans for the Palace drawn by the English architect John Hawks were discovered in New York City by Gertrude Carraway of New Bern, the first director of the Tryon Palace Restoration Project; and

Whereas, the Latham and Kellenberger families of Greensboro pledged financial support for the restoration of Tryon Palace and challenged the State of North Carolina to join in this private/public partnership for the common good; and

Whereas, in 1945, the General Assembly appropriated funds for the purchase of the Palace site and created the Tryon Palace Commission, which was composed of 25 members representing every part of the State and chaired by Mrs. Maude Moore Latham; and

Whereas, under the leadership of the Tryon Palace Commission and with the full support of the General Assembly, the Palace was restored in 1959 and returned to the citizens of this State as a living legacy recalling our distinguished past; and

Whereas, today the site has grown to 22 acres, with 38 structures and dependencies, including 12 historically important buildings, 14 acres of gardens, and museum collections encompassing 4,800 historic objects and 1,700 rare books; and

Whereas, attendance has grown to more than 80,000 visitors annually, including 18,000 school children, as well as visitors from all 100 North Carolina counties, all 50 states of the United States, and more than 20 foreign countries; and

Whereas, these visitors learn about North Carolina and American history spanning two centuries and encompassing the lifestyles of all classes of society; and

Whereas, a major African-American History Project has been launched to incorporate the stories of people of color, free and enslaved, into the site and to honor their many contributions to our shared legacy; and

Whereas, nearly 1,000 citizens have joined in support of the Palace through membership in the Tryon Palace Council of Friends; and

Whereas, Tryon Palace has purchased a six-acre tract on the Trent River adjacent to the Palace grounds to be used for a History Education and Visitors Center; and

Whereas, the center will lead the nation in its innovative design and use of technology to enhance and expand our understanding of the past; and

Whereas, the center will encourage family participation and highlight the role of waterways in the early development of North Carolina and the nation and will teach ecological and environmental lessons for today's world; Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives, the Senate concurring:

SECTION 1. The General Assembly honors the memory of the great patriots of past eras: the members of the General Assembly who convened at Tryon Palace in 1777 and began the arduous task of creating a free and independent State; the members of the General Assembly of 1945 who had the foresight to begin restoration of the Palace in order to return to the State this place of historical significance; and the members of the first Tryon Palace Commission who through their leadership, devotion, and generosity brought to fruition the restoration of the Palace.

SECTION 2. The Secretary of State shall transmit a certified copy of this resolution to the Tryon Palace Commission.

SECTION 3. This resolution is effective upon ratification.

In the General Assembly read three times and ratified this the 11th day of April, 2001.

Beverly E. Perdue
President of the Senate

James B. Black
Speaker of the House of Representatives