

News Release

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MEDIA ADVISORY

SECOND STAGE OF AYCOCK BIRTHPLACE FARM HOUSE RESTORATION KICKS OFF

Photo Op! Photo Op! Photo Op!

FREMONT (Nov. 24, 2008)—Work on the second phase of restoring the 1840s farm house at Charles B. Aycock Birthplace State Historic Site in Fremont has recently kicked off. A construction crew from Progressive Contracting Company of Sanford has begun examining the structure and taking notes on the original wood used in the house. In upcoming weeks, the area of the farmhouse most severely damaged in a Jan. 24 fire will be demolished.

Though the fire in the historic site's main house caused serious damage, Aycock Birthplace has since reopened to the public. The main house is closed until further notice but the period one-room schoolhouse and the historic area, including the kitchen, corn crib and smokehouses, are all open. Visitors may also tour exhibits in the state historic site's visitor center and watch a video on the late Gov. Aycock and his family.

Despite the challenges of the fire, Aycock Birthplace has continued to present public programs throughout the year and will hold its annual Christmas Candlelight Tours Tuesday, Dec. 2 and Thursday, Dec. 4 from 6:30-9 p.m. This event is free though donations are welcome.

The stars of the Tuesday evening celebration will be the Primitive Baptist Singers who will perform traditional hymns and Christmas carols. Thursday evening's program will feature a craft room where kids can make yarn dolls, whizzers (an old-fashioned button on a string toy) and other items that remind us of Christmas past. On both evenings visitors can participate in a shadow play, learn about a traditional eastern North Carolina Christmas feast and see a demonstration of open hearth cooking.

Two men suspected in deliberately setting fire to the historic building were indicted for the crime by a grand jury in September and are currently awaiting trial. Anyone wanting to assist in the home's restoration may do so by contributing to the newly established Gov. Charles B. Aycock Birthplace Recovery and Restoration Fund. Contributions may be sent to Gov. Charles B. Aycock Birthplace, P.O. Box 207, Fremont, N.C. 27830.

Aycock Birthplace's mission is to preserve and interpret the birthplace and history of Charles B. Aycock, emphasizing his contributions to public education in North Carolina.

To reach the site, take U.S. 117 north nine miles from Goldsboro or U.S. 117 south 14 miles from Wilson. Turn right (from Goldsboro) or left (from Wilson) on Gov. Aycock Road. The site is 1-1/2 miles on the right. From I-95 take the U.S. 301 exit at Kenly. Take N.C. 222 east for 10 miles to Fremont and turn right on U.S. 117. Go two miles and turn left on Gov. Aycock Road.

Administered by the Division of State Historic Sites, Aycock Birthplace State Historic Site is part of the N.C. Department of Cultural Resources, a state agency dedicated to the promotion and protection of North Carolina's arts, history, and culture. Join the Cultural Resources 2008 theme observance of "Telling Our Stories". For more information, visit www.ncculture.com.

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