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North Carolina
Department of Cultural Resources

News Release

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Release:

STATE CAPITOL TO CELEBRATE ITS 170TH BIRTHDAY SATURDAY, JUNE 12

RALEIGH —Spend the afternoon at the State Capitol on Saturday, June 12 to listen to live music, eat some barbecue, and celebrate the Capitol's 170th birthday! This celebration will take place on the Capitol grounds from noon- 4 p.m. Visitors can watch traditional craft demonstrations and purchase art from artists who will have booths set up on the grounds. And since no birthday celebration is complete without cake, Capitol staff will pass out free birthday cake following a short ceremony at noon, while it lasts. Barbecue Lodge will sell plates and full lunches for \$5-8. This program is free and open to the public.

The birthday celebration is part of the 2nd *Saturdays* summer programming series sponsored by the N.C. Department of Cultural Resources. 2nd *Saturdays* will bring together artists, history and authentic North Carolina culture at over 100 events. The fun will take place at all 37 of the Department of Cultural Resources' museums and Historic Sites on June 12, July 10 and August 14, 2010.

The State Capitol of North Carolina opened to great fanfare on June 10, 1840. A three day celebration attracted visitors from all over the state to marvel at the extraordinary Greek Revival-style temple of government. Leading citizens in Raleigh hosted elegant dinners in their homes to celebrate the occasion. Meanwhile, extravagant galas were held in the Capitol with dancing in the Senate Chamber and refreshments in the Commons Hall. According to reports in the *Raleigh Register*, both chambers were "brilliantly lighted by the magnificent new Chandeliers, which hold near one hundred candles each." Revelers also enjoyed evening fireworks displays on Union Square.

The State Capitol's mission is to preserve and interpret the history, architecture and functions of the 1840 building and Union Square. The Capitol is bounded by Edenton, Salisbury, Morgan and Wilmington Streets. For more information, visit www.nchistoricsites.org/capitol/default.htm or call (919) 733-4994.

Administered by the Division of State Historic Sites, the State Capitol is part of the N.C. Department of Cultural Resources, the state agency with the mission to enrich lives and communities, and the vision to harness the

state's cultural resources to build North Carolina's social, cultural and economic future. Information is available 24/7 at www.ncculture.com.

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