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New Self-Guided Walking Tour Sets Leisurely Pace for Stroll Through Elizabeth City History

(Elizabeth City, N.C., March 24, 2010) – History lovers now have more to explore in Northeastern North Carolina with the arrival of the new “Elizabeth City Historic Walking Tour” guide. Published by the Elizabeth City Historic Neighborhood Association (ECHNA), the first of a series of booklets focuses on sites along the historic Main Street commercial district, listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

“The Main Street district has so many lovely, historic buildings—and is fun for people to walk,” said ECHNA President Jean Baker. “We invite visitors to make a day of it, beginning their tour anywhere they choose and stopping along the way to sightsee, shop, dine and enjoy our ‘Harbor of Hospitality®.’”

The guide, with corresponding map, photos and site descriptions, features 66 parks, monuments, buildings and homes, covering approximately 20 blocks. En route, they will discover such sites as:

- **The Reverend Forbes Monument**, where the rector of Christ Episcopal Church saved Elizabeth City’s buildings from damage by “surrendering” the city to the Union Navy in 1862.
- **The Lowry-Chesson Building**, built in 1897 and home to the Bee Hive Department store and later Chesson’s Department Store and “Academy of Music,” the city’s first opera house. Today it is home to The Center, headquarters of Arts of the Albemarle.

- **Arlington Hotel Site**, which provided accommodations to Wilbur and Orville Wright in 1900 on their first trip to North Carolina.
- **The Charles O. Robinson House**, constructed in 1914 as a wedding present for Ivy Blades, from her father, when she married Charles O. Robinson. Still a private home, it is one of the state's finest examples of Southern Colonial, or Neoclassical style architecture.

ECHNA plans to issue six guides total, showcasing sites and architecture in each of the city's six historic districts. The Elizabeth City Walking Tour guide is free and available at the Elizabeth City Area Convention & Visitors Bureau, Elizabeth City Chamber of Commerce, The Center at Arts of the Albemarle, Museum of the Albemarle, the public library and the information kiosk at Mariners' Wharf Park. Additional information is at www.echna.org

Visitors may wish to couple their walking tour experience with a visit to the Museum of the Albemarle, also downtown. The northeastern regional branch of the North Carolina Museum of History, the museum interprets the history of 13 counties along the Albemarle Sound area. A permanent exhibition, "Our Story" showcases more than 750 artifacts and displays that tell the story of the region's watermen, farming, the Wright brothers, the lifesaving operations of the Coast Guard and the Civil War, as well as the region's African-American and Native American history.

Elizabeth City is located in Northeastern North Carolina on the Intracoastal Waterway, halfway between Virginia Beach and the Outer Banks. Known as the "Harbor of Hospitality®," the city has six National Register Historic Districts and is home to the Museum of the Albemarle, The Center at Arts of the Albemarle, Elizabeth City State University Planetarium, Port Discover Hands-on Science Center and the nation's largest U.S. Coast Guard base. Nature-based travelers are drawn to the area's proximity to the Dismal Swamp and the abundance of outdoor recreational offerings. For additional information, call Elizabeth City Area Convention & Visitors Bureau at 1-866-ECity-4U (1-866-324-8948) or (252) 335-5330 or visit www.DiscoverElizabethCity.com