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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Bonnet House Museum & Gardens Earns Prestigious Accreditation
*Historic Property Recognized by American Association of Museums
and Broward County Commission*

FORT LAUDERDALE – Bonnet House Museum & Gardens, a property of the Florida Trust for Historic Preservation has been awarded full accreditation status by the American Association of Museums (AAM). The designation recognizes its commitment to excellence, accountability, high professional standards and continued institutional improvement. Accredited status from AAM is the highest national recognition achievable by an American museum. Accreditation recognizes high standards in individual museums and ensures that museums continue to uphold their public trust.

Bonnet House is one of only 3 museums in Broward County to have earned this distinction, which requires undergoing a rigorous examination process, both internally and by its peers. The process includes a detailed site review by museum professionals.

“The Accreditation process has been good for us, validating our successes and our ability to overcome challenges,” said Karen Beard, Chief Executive Officer of Bonnet House Museum & Gardens. “This is an important milestone for us as a cultural organization. By earning Accreditation, we are demonstrating our focus on continuous improvement.”

Receiving Accreditation indicates that Bonnet House fulfills its obligation to the public as stated in its mission, and that it follows the best practices that guide museums.

Of the nation’s nearly 17,500 museums, 776 are currently accredited. To earn accreditation a museum first must conduct a year of self-study, and then undergo a site visit by a team of peer reviewers. The Accreditation Commission, an independent and autonomous body of museum professionals, considers the self-study and visiting committee report to determine whether a museum should receive accreditation. While the time to complete the process varies by museum, it generally takes as much as three years.

The Broward County Board of County Commissioners proclaimed Tuesday, April 29, 2008 as Bonnet House Museum and Gardens Appreciation Day in honor of its impressive achievement.

About Bonnet House Museum & Gardens

Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, Bonnet House Museum & Gardens is a 35-acre subtropical estate and historic house museum located in the heart of Fort Lauderdale on Fort Lauderdale Beach. Bonnet House, in addition to being open for guided public tours six days per week and open year round, offers a myriad of specially designed programs including school programs, adult programs and family programs. Bonnet House also has membership opportunities for local artists, emerging professionals and volunteers. Music students from nearby universities and opera companies gain experience through their performances on property in the Young Artist Music Series and orchid enthusiasts have an opportunity to see and buy an exclusive selection of orchids as well as learn how to grow and care for orchids in their own homes. The mission of Bonnet House Museum & Gardens is to preserve, interpret and share the unique and eclectic historical legacy – artistic, architectural and environmental - of the Bartlett and Birch families, inspiring in our diverse audiences an appreciation for creative expression, historic preservation and natural conservation, while enhancing the educational, cultural and economic growth of the community. For more information, visit bonnethouse.org.

About AAM

The American Association of Museums has been bringing museums together since 1906, helping to develop standards and best practices, gathering and sharing knowledge, and providing advocacy on issues of concern to the entire museum community. With more than 15,000 individual, 3,000 institutional and 300 corporate members, AAM is dedicated to ensuring that museums remain a vital part of the American landscape, connecting people with the greatest achievements of the human experience, past, present and future. For more information, visit www.aam-us.org.

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