I. Summary

A coalition of community groups in Germantown used the occasion of the 300th Anniversary of the Germantown Protest against Slavery to promote a fourfold agenda:

1) Protest Injustice - Then and Now,
2) Build Community,
3) Take Responsibility, and
4) Revitalize our Neighborhood.

The four themes of the Anniversary Commemoration proved to be a dynamic vehicle for community organizing in Germantown, uniting numerous organizations and individuals. The organizing process began in December 1986 and built upon previous commemorations of the 1688 Anti-Slavery Protest (held in 1983, 1978...)

A great diversity of projects was organized by the 300th Anniversary Committee. Partly because of these efforts, others were also inspired to organize special historical exhibitions, lectures series, and even an original theater production. The 300th Anniversary Committee served as the central clearinghouse for all of these events, including promotion and publicity for all the programs.

The 300th Anniversary Committee was directly responsible for organizing the following projects:

• A Youth Art and Essay Contest;
• A four day Youth Leadership Training program for 75 area teenagers;
• A parade and rally in Germantown;
• A Youth Choir Concert; and
• An Interfaith Service on the theme "Freedom from Addiction."

Through a variety of sources, the 300th Anniversary Committee was able to raise over $37,000. The cost of the entire project was about $30,000. The $7,000 surplus will be used in redevelopment work in Lower Germantown.
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II. Background

A. History of the 1688 Protest

Germantown was founded by Francis Daniel Pastorius from Frankfurt, Germany in 1683. He purchased the tract of land from William Penn and arranged for thirteen Quaker and Mennonite families from Krefeld to settle there. These families were the first German immigrants in North America.

Five years after their arrival, Germantown, like Philadelphia, was a growing prosperous community. Also growing was the institution of slavery in the colony of Pennsylvania. Four of the settlers drafted a strong letter of protest against slavery on April 28, 1688 (the 18th of the 2nd Month, 1688 under the Jullian Calendar.) The letter was directed at the English Quaker slaveholders of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting.

The 1688 Germantown Protest failed to effect any change in Pennsylvania. It would not be until 1776 that Quakers in Pennsylvania forbade slavery among their members. In 1780 Pennsylvania became the first state to pass a law leading to the gradual abolition of slavery. Almost two hundred years after the Germantown Anti-Slavery Protest with the Emancipation Proclamation and the Thirteen, Fourteen and Fifteen Amendments to the Constitution, the institution of slavery was abolished in the United States and equal rights under the law codified regardless of race, creed or color.

Artist depiction of the original 1688 Protest
In recent years, efforts to commemorate the 1688 Germantown Protest have referred to this historical document as the "First Public Protest Against Slavery in North America." In 1983 a Pennsylvania State Historical Marker was erected at the site of the Protest in Lower Germantown entitled "First Protest Against Slavery." This was seen as a historically inaccurate assertion with racist overtones by many African Americans in the community. Common sense and historical inquiry revealed that the African slaves were themselves the first to protest their captivity through formal protest as well as in untold acts of resistance. The 300th Anniversary Committee has stressed this reality throughout its organizing efforts, and avoided references to "first" when promoting the observance of the 1688 anniversary. The presence of the historical marker at the site, previous observances of this event and a sense of community pride have resulted, however, in continued use of the title "First Public Protest Against Slavery" in the press and in the community.
B. Germantown Today

Germantown, a community of over 100,000 people, is one of the few truly integrated neighborhoods in Philadelphia. 1980 census data place 72 percent of the population as African-American, 25 percent as Caucasian and 3 percent other. The diversity also covers a wide range of economic classes.

Germantown has many assets for an urban neighborhood. Fifty-two percent of the homes are owner-occupied, with a great diversity in housing stock. There are numerous schools, medical institutions, parks, and historic sites in and surrounding the community. In recent years, housing sales and values in Germantown have increased on a percentage basis more than any other neighborhood in Philadelphia except Center City.

Parts of Germantown are also confronted with severe poverty. Per capita income is $5,895. 22 percent of the population lives below the poverty level. Poverty is primarily concentrated in the Southeast and Southwest quadrants of the community (divided by Germantown Avenue and Chelten Avenue.) The dependent population, under 17 or over 65 years of age, is 39.9 percent. Germantown also has the highest concentration of boarding-home institutions for the disabled and elderly in Philadelphia. 37.2 percent of the population over 24 years of age have not finished elementary or high school.

The 300th Anniversary project was a conscious effort to build community spirit and pride and to promote redevelopment in Lower Germantown, the poorest section of the community, which is also the site of the 1688 Protest.
III. Organization

A. Monthly Meetings

In April 1987, the 300th Anniversary Committee for the Germantown Protest was convened by William Grassie. Grassie lives in Germantown and works in Quaker peace and justice concerns with Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends. Charles Blockson, curator of the Afro-American Collection at Temple University, spoke at the opening meeting, which was attended by some 40 people. An informal group of ten people began meeting on a monthly basis, through the spring and summer of 1987. This group set the basic direction and dates for the 300th Anniversary observances, including the four themes and the first drafts of a new Germantown Protest statement, which would serve as our unifying mission statement.

William Grassie continued to act as convenor and secretary for the adhoc committee. In the fall of 1987, the 300th Anniversary Committee became a formal entity as a "non-sectarian project of Germantown Friends Meeting." A formal steering committee was formed to oversee the projects, and the draft statement for the 1988 Germantown Protest was rewritten and finalized. Bonnie Bing, Director of the Germantown Boys and Girls Club, was elected chairperson of the 300th Anniversary Committee. William Grassie took a part-time leave of absence from his position with the Friends Peace Committee to be the paid staff coordinator for the six months between December and May.

Monthly meetings widely advertised and opened to the public continued throughout the fall of 1987 and winter of 1988. Initially, the business meetings were preceded by an hour-long program of interest to the public and relevant to the commemoration. While this may have attracted new participation, the pre-meeting program was dropped by the steering committee. This may have been a mistake, as participation in these evening meetings dropped through the spring. We were unsuccessful involving more than a core group of twenty committed community volunteers. The organizing and decision making responsibilities shifted to the weekly Thursday morning steering committee meetings.

The monthly meetings rotated among different locations in Germantown, as a vehicle for community building (Trinity Lutheran Church, Warring House, the Historical Society, Friends Meeting, Boys and Girls Club, First United Methodist, etc...) This proved to be a very effective way of increasing community and institutional interaction.
B. Steering Committee

The Steering Committee for the 300th Anniversary was formalized in December 1987. Members all had to be able to attend daytime meetings and have some organizational constituency. This was very much a working committee. All meetings were conducted on the basis of consensus, which worked very well. The racial composition of the fourteen-person Steering Committee was eight blacks, five whites, and two of other background. The gender breakdown was nine women and five men. Through its diversity and harmonious cooperation, the Steering Committee was very successful in modeling the values expressed in the four themes of the 300th Anniversary commemoration.

One member commented, "We worked very hard in our meetings for months in a mutually affirming spirit. There was none of the backbiting that happens so often in community groups. That spirit of working together is rare and special." Another member wrote, "There were few instances of the kind of negativity and competition that too often infect political groups. It was a very positive, cooperative, and mutually supportive group." Another member said, "The greatest thing we did was allow our goals and sense of purpose to be very clear." Another member, active in the community for over twenty years, commented that she could not remember a time when so many different groups and churches in Germantown had worked together intensively on anything. "It was great to have all this networking within our community."
List of Steering Committee Members

Chairperson

Bonnie Bing
Germantown Boys and Girls Club

Steering Committee

Rev. David Wesley Brown
Advocate St. Stephen's Church

Joyce Brown
Swords into Plowshares
Concerts

Carolyn Ewell-Collins
Crisis Intervention Network

Anna Fisher
Germantown Friends School

Emanuel Freeman
Germantown Settlement

Vera Gunn Harden
Philadelphia Urban Coalition

Patricia Negron
Greene Street Friends School

June Peggs
Germantown Historical Society

Rev. Jacqueline Sanders
First United Methodist Church of Germantown

Rev. Donald Scott
Central Germantown Council

Rev. Arthur Sparrow (Ret.)
Advocate St. Stephen's Church

Debra White
Wister Neighborhood Council

Coordinator

William Grassie
Friends Peace Committee
C. Funding

The first budget for the 300th Anniversary commemoration, written in October 1987, was for $24,000. As the program grew, the total budget grew to $37,000. Final expenses came in well under this, primarily due to funds saved by lower enrollment in the Youth Leadership Training and lower printing and postage expenditures.

$37,672.45 was raised for the 300th Anniversary project. The largest contribution was a $10,000 grant from the Samuel Fels Fund to support the Youth Leadership Training. A total of $11,500 in grants came from a variety of Quaker sources. $6,200 was given by 70 organizational endorsers, $5,077 brought in from some 300 individual contributors, and another $4,895 raised through a special appeal to descendants of the original thirteen Germantown families to support redevelopment efforts in the community. Uncalculated in these figures are major in-kind contributions from the Germantown Boys and Girls Club and the Friends Peace Committee, including staff time, space, printing, and postage.

Two-thirds of the funds came through in late March and April 1988, thus causing a great deal of anxiety and stress for the steering committee and coordinator. It would have been better to start six months earlier on fund raising.

We had only modest success in raising funds beyond our budget for the continued work of rehabilitating houses. There is $7,639 remaining in the 300th Anniversary fund, which will be disbursed to support the redevelopment work. More work could have been done earlier to promote the descendants fund, to establish a vehicle for benevolent lending, to solicit contributions from Germany, and to expand grants and individual donor efforts. The original budget also called for many thousands of small contributions through the circulation of the 1988 Germantown Protest statement as a petition through the community. This effort faltered due to time pressures. The 300th Anniversary commemoration did not meet its expectations as a fundraising vehicle for neighborhood revitalization projects.

D. Sponsorship

1) Organizational Endorsers: The 1988 Germantown Protest statement was a basis on which to solicit organizational endorsements. Endorsing organizations had to affirm the text of the statement, make a financial contribution to the effort, and pledge to participate and publicize the programs. A goal of 100 organizational endorsers was set, and in January 1988 the first mailings were sent out. In all some 500 letters were sent out to religious congregations, businesses, and civic groups in Philadelphia, primarily focused on the Northwest section of the City. The Steering Committee divided up this list for follow-up phone calls and meetings, but not everyone was diligent in completing this
assignment. Nevertheless, we were able to collect some 75 organizational endorsers, who contributed between $25 and $100. Several went on to make major contributions ranging from several hundred to a thousand dollars. Many of the groups continued to be active by participating in the parade or publicizing the programs. With time and energy more could have been done to expand the pool of organizational endorsers and better follow-up on their expressed interest in the program. One lasting benefit to the community is the existence of a database of some 600 organizations, which can be used to publicize future events or solicitations.

List of Endorsing Organizations

• Action Reconciliation/Service for Peace
• American Friends Service Committee
• Ashmead & Rubicam Block Association
• Boys and Girls Clubs of Metropolitan Philadelphia
• Calvary Episcopal Church of Germantown
• Camden Friends Meeting
• Captain Robert B. Tresville Award of Merit Fund
• Cardinal's Commission on Human Relations and Urban Ministry
• Center in the Park Inc
• Central Germantown Council
• Chestnut Hill Community Association
• Chestnut Hill Friends Meeting
• Child's Play Childcare in Germantown
• Christ Church & St Michael's
• Coalition for African-Am. Cultural Organizations
• Covenant House Health Services
• Crisis Intervention Network
• D.A.R (Delaware Valley Chapter)
• Eastern Pennsylvania Conference of United Methodist Metro Ministries
• Fellowship Farms
• First United Methodist Church of Germantown
• Friends Free Library of Germantown
• Friends Peace Committee
• Germantown Boys and Girls Club
• Germantown Business Association
• Germantown Friends Meeting
• Germantown Friends School
• Germantown Historical Society
• Germantown Mennonite Church Corporation
• Germantown Savings Bank
• Germantown Unitarian Church
• Greater Gtwn. Housing Development Corp
• Green Street Friends Meeting
• Hijop Meat Market
• Historic Germantown Preserved
• Immaculate Conception
• Jobs with Peace
• Lansdowne Friends Meeting
• London Grove Friends Meeting
• Martin Luther King Jr Assoc for Non-Violence
• Mt Airy Learning Tree
• Neighbors Community Project
• Northwest Interfaith Movement
• Penn-Knox Neighbors
• Philadelphia Masjid
• Philadelphia Mennonite Council
• Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends
• Provident National Bank
• Sister Clara Muhammad School
• Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament (President and Council)
• Sisters of the Good Shepherd
• Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais
• St Francis of Assisi Church
• St Martin-in-the-Fields
• St Paul's Church
• St Vincent's Peace Center
• The Other Side Magazine
• Trinity Lutheran Church of Germantown
• Unitarian Society of Germantown
• Unitarian-Universalist Church of the Restoration
• Washington & Associates
• Westside Neighborhood Council
• Willistown Friends Meeting
• Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (Germantown Branch)
• YWCA of Germantown

**Individual Endorsers:**

In March 1988, a direct mail appeal was sent out to some 10,000 people. The mailing took three weeks to complete with volunteer help. Included in the mailing was a comprehensive listing of public events related to the 300th Anniversary, and the mailing thus also served as a publicity tool. Lists were obtained from Swords into Plowshares, Germantown Friends School, and several church congregations and civic groups. The cost of the mailing was $3,379. There were some 250 responses (2.5 percent response) bringing in a total of $3,277. The mailing was an important vehicle for involving volunteers in the 300th
Anniversary observances, but it took a lot effort. As with so many other things, an earlier start would have been helpful; and allowed time for a possible follow-up appeal.

A second mailing addressed to descendants of the original thirteen families who settled Germantown was put together by a group of fourteen area descendants. The mailing went out to some 300 descendants on a card file developed by Nancy Rhoads during the 1983 celebrations. A total of $4,895 was raised from 40 descendants for a fund designated for the revitalization work in Lower Germantown. This solicitation would have benefited with more lead time and more concrete revitalization plans and financial packets. A lot more follow-up with this pool of contributors is planned.

The total number of contributors was greatly encouraging for the organizers. More people actually contributed money than participated in some of the major events. As the quote from Robert Kennedy read on the direct mail response card: "Tiny ripples of hope...from a million different centers of daring and energy [will change the world.]"

**E. 1988 Statement**

The 1988 Germantown Protest statement was an important part of the 300th Anniversary organizing effort. Internally, the drafting and redrafting of this statement gave the organizers a joint sense of ownership and clarified our purpose as a coalition to ourselves and to others who might join with us. The statement spoke forcefully to the relevance of slavery and abolition as contemporary issues 300 years later: "While human slavery has been abolished in law, the callous disregard of life persists today in the abundant denial of basic human rights and needs."

Even though the drafting of this statement involved a dozen authors and a dozen rewrites, it retained a concise, simple, and eloquent message, which clearly stated the relevance of 1688 to 1988 and the political import of this 300th Anniversary commemoration. The statement was a very successful tool for coalition building and publicity.

One community activist wrote, "My greatest concern at the outset and my greatest satisfaction at the end was the linking of the history 300 years ago to today, even though in some ways the problems today are worse, because with drugs and poverty you can't see the chains. Somehow we need to create a continuous protest against oppression."

**F. Publicity**

The 300th Anniversary Committee was very successful in generating extensive press coverage before and after the April events in the *Germantown Courier*, the
Germantown Paper, the Mt. Airy Express and the Chestnut Hill Local - all weekly or monthly publications in Northwest Philadelphia. Coverage in several of these papers was several pages long. Unfortunately, efforts to attract a wider audience in Philadelphia and around the nation were mixed. There was only one article in the Philadelphia Inquirer and only two articles in the Philadelphia Tribune. Radio and TV coverage was sparse. Associated Press ran two stories over the wires, which were picked up in a few communities. The contrast to the extensive national coverage given to the 300th family reunion of the William Rittenhouse family in July of the same year adds to the disappointment.

A February press advisory was mailed out to some 200 targeted Philadelphia and national journalists and an April press release was mailed out to some 700 targeted Philadelphia and national journalists. There were also two separate releases sent out over PR-Mediawire in supplement to the mailings. Follow-up phone calls were made to area media before the major events. Unfortunately, all of this work fell on the shoulders of the already overburden staff coordinator. In the best of worlds, the promotion of this event in the media would have been assigned to another member of the Steering Committee or a paid consultant.

Beyond the media, there were a number of other publicity efforts undertaken in Philadelphia. In January 1988 some 5,000 "palm cards" were handed out at Martin Luther King Birthday events and services. In February, a logo was designed. 15,000 calendars of events were printed and circulated through mailings and drop-offs in February and March. A banner was hung across the major traffic intersection in Germantown. The Northwest Regional Library ran a display window for two weeks on the 1688 Protest. Organizational newsletters and bulletins ran notices. And the week before the major events, 300 attractive posters were printed and distributed in the area.

G. Coordination

William Grassie served as staff coordinator for the 300th Anniversary project. As a Quaker active in Germantown Friends Meeting and as an employee of the Peace Committee of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, he was well placed to facilitate and organize this program. There was general praise for his work on the 300th Anniversary, but also concern expressed for the volume of work that fell upon him. In some cases, such as aspects of the Youth Leadership Training and fund raising work, Grassie had to take on extra duties that were dropped by Steering Committee members. In other cases, Grassie would have better sought to be less in control, particularly with the actual running of the Youth Leadership Training. One Steering Committee member noted that "Billy needed to delegate more and we needed to volunteer more." Overall, however, there was really excellent team cooperation and division of labor between the staff coordinator and the Steering Committee.
Grassie had negotiated a part-time leave of absence from the Friends Peace Committee in July 1987, in order to devote more time to the 300th Anniversary project. This was a generous arrangement that provided continued support and some future security at the outset of this huge organizing project. It was not until January 1988 that the 300th Anniversary project had sufficient funds and organizational infrastructure to pay Grassie a monthly salary of $750 through May. While this made up the difference in his salary, it must be noted that the 300th Anniversary effort grew to be more than fulltime duty for Grassie and that the Friends Peace Committee in essence underwrote the other half of his salary.

Full time coordination is essential to a project of this scope. Other members of the Steering Committee were able to make major time contributions to this endeavor as essentially seconded staff, because this project fell under the purview of their regular work. In particular, Debra White from the Wister Neighborhood Council, Bonnie Bing from the Germantown Boys and Girls Club, June Peggs from the Germantown Historical Society, Patricia Negron from Greene Street Friends School, Rev. David Brown from Advocate St. Stephen's Church, Anna Fisher from Germantown Friends School, and Carolyn Collins from Crisis Intervention Network provided exceptional and significant services to this effort.
III. Programs

A. Lectures and Special Exhibits

A number of groups sponsored lectures and special exhibits on the occasion of the 300th Anniversary, beginning with the first planning committee meeting in April 1987 with a talk by Charles Blockson. The 300th Anniversary Committee promoted these events in its mailings and publicity. Of particular note was the lecture series organized by the German Society of Pennsylvania, which ran from February through June. Attendance at all of the lectures was sparse with some of the programs attracting fewer than a dozen people. The largest audience was some forty people at the panel discussion sponsored by the Association for Afro-American Life and History. The cumulative effect of these programs was very positive and added a great deal of weight to the observances. Below is a listing of historical programs offered in the spring of 1988.

Actors from the theatrical production at historic marker.
March 20, Sunday, 3:00 pm
Mennonite Meeting House
6117 Germantown Ave.,
German Society

Lecture series, "Mid-Nineteenth Century Slavery and the German Americans." Presented by Villanova University professor, James Berquist

April 2, Saturday, 1:00 pm
Wyck House,
6026 Germantown Ave.


April 9, Saturday, 10:00 am
Mennonite Meeting House
6117 Germantown Ave.

Lecture series, "Quakers and Anti-Slavery in the Eighteenth Century," by Patricia Reifsnyder

April 10, Sunday, 3:00 pm
Mayor's Conference Room,
City Hall

Lecture series, "Courting International Support for Racial Equality," Prof. Robert Harris from Cornell University

April 17, Sunday, 7:00 pm,
Germantown Friends Meeting
47 West. Coulter Street,

Panel discussion, "Afro-American Perspectives on the 1688 Protest," Dr. Shirley Parham, Afro-American Museum; Dr. Charles Blockson, Temple University; and Dr. Leroy Hopkins, Millersville University.

April 23, Saturday, 10:00 am
Haverford College Library

**April 23, Saturday, 10:00 am**
Johnson House and Mennonite Church, 6117 Germantown Ave.,

Exhibit opening of "The Johnsons and the Underground Railroad in Germantown." Until September 1988

**April 23, Saturday, noon**
Germantown Historical Society
5214 Germantown Avenue


**May 15, Sunday, 3:00 pm**
Afro-American Museum
7th and Arch St.,

Lecture series, "Germans and Blacks in Lancaster County" by Dr. Leroy Hopkins from Millersville University

**June 5, Sunday, 3:00 pm**
Philadelphia Museum of Art

Lecture Series, "Blacks, Immigrants and Abolition," by Prof. Richard Blackett from Indiana University
B. Youth Art and Essay Contest

The 300th Anniversary Committee organized a student art and essay contest in conjunction with the Germantown Historical Society and the School District of Philadelphia open to students from public and private schools in Northwest Philadelphia. $100, $50 and $25 cash prizes were offered to four different age groups for both the art and essay categories. In the end, there were almost no submissions in the high school age group. 18 elementary and junior high school students received prizes and certificates at a delightful reception held at the Clividen Mansion in Germantown. Parents and family attended the reception luncheon and awards presentation. David Fattah from the House of Umoja gave an exciting talk at the presentations, linking the legacy of slavery to drug addiction today. A number of newspapers in Northwest Philadelphia published photos of the proud winners and ran essays, poems, and art work in their publications.

The total cost of the Youth Art and Essay Contest was about $2,000, which was a good investment at this level of participation. It is, however, very difficult to excite interest of the classroom teachers in this kind of project. We were pleased with the results given the resistance. The division of labor on this project, with June Peggs from the Germantown Historical Society taking on the primary responsibility and Billy Grassie providing assistance, worked very well.

C. Youth Leadership Training
The Youth Leadership Training was one of the most ambitious and expensive components of the 300th Anniversary commemoration. The project was developed in November and December of 1987, when the concern to involve teenagers was linked up to the need for peacekeepers and logistical support for the parade and rally. What evolved was a four-day training, from 8:30 am to 5:30 pm for 100 teenagers from Northwest Philadelphia. The training sessions covered five areas: Goal Setting, Community Building, Unlearning Racism, Nonviolence and Conflict Resolution, and Marshalling and Logistics for the Parade and Rally. There was a post-event evaluation session and party for the teenagers, as well.

In January of 1988, Carolyn Ewell-Collins, from the Crisis Intervention Network, and William Grassie convened a group of 15 trainers in the Delaware Valley. With the parameters of the project laid out, the group began to fill in the design and content of the training program during half a dozen meetings in February and March. A team of 14 volunteer trainers was recruited and oriented, 97 teenagers were recruited (20 others dropped out the week before the training and only 2 dropped out during the training), a 40-page training manual was developed, and major funding was secured in a $10,000 grant from the Samuel Fels Fund. This was a major organizing project, which required the effort of a lot of people. In all 75 teenagers completed the training. The total cost of this project was about $12,000. The adult staff donated their time and talents and the Germantown Boys and Girls Club donated the use of their facilities.

Carolyn Ewell-Collins from the Crisis Intervention Network took on the role of coordinator for the Youth Leadership Training as a work-related assignment. Major problems arose in the development stages, when she was given new duties at CIN and taken off the Youth Leadership Training. As best as she was able, she continued to work on the Youth Leadership Training, but the thoroughness of the work suffered. Billy Grassie ended up doing a lot of last-minute problem solving.

The biggest problem in the planning process was that the students did not get enough information prior to the training. Acceptance letters and phone calls did not get to the students until a day or two before the beginning of the workshops, if at all. The application and recruitment process was about a month behind schedule. The students resented not having clear information. Similarly, the trainers didn't spend enough time actually learning the workshop material and building their own group identity before the Youth Leadership Training actually began. The trainers' manual was only provided the week before the training began. It would have been better to hand out the manual at the outset.

The kids were clearly initially attracted to the program because of the opportunity to earn money. The pay-for-training-and-service concept is an essential component of this youth training format. Most of the teenagers would not have been at this event otherwise, or would have been inconsistent in their
participation. Because there was a contract arrangement, complete the entire four days or no pay, the kids were there on Saturday morning at 8:30 am. As the program proceeded, kids began to test the rules by coming late, leaving early, asking for exceptions. It would be important in the future to have a time clock or homeroom-type system for taking attendance. This would take the pressure off any one adult, which in this case was a major problem experienced by Billy Grassie vis-a-vis the teenagers at the end of the training program.

The connection between the 300th Anniversary observation provided a useful context for this training program, but is not essential for future efforts. In some ways the parade and rally were anti-climatic events for the teenagers, due to the bad weather and low attendance; but it did provide a concrete focus and mission of some responsibility for the training sessions. In the future, the challenge will be to provide these kind of training opportunities for teenagers without a major event as a focus or perhaps some substitute service project. By not having this program running simultaneous to a major event, the organizers will also have more time to focus their energies on the youth.

Below are selected comments from the teenagers and trainers adapted from their written evaluations:

• "I gained confidence and felt a lot better about myself and the people around me. I realized what taking risks meant and how they fit into my life."

• "I think the whole event was very well done & very important in the community. I learned a lot about myself as well as learning more about other people in the community."

• "Made me realize that I really should start preparing for the my future.... I thought it was great that everyone could talk about racism without a lot of arguing."

• "Gave me a chance to believe that there are ways to change my environment and helped me come to terms with racism and change. I felt responsible and in more control with other people and how to deal with problems.... It was great!"

• "I got to actually try and find ways to peacefully end rough situations.... I will hold a lot of fond memories and new friends as a result... Thank you for a great experience."

• "It was good to talk about racism because it is going on right now and I need to stop.... We became closer with one another and had fun at the Rally."

• "I'm glad we were well fed. The trainers' dedication was obvious. I was a needed part of a team and this is confidence building."
• "For the first time I was able to talk about racism in a comfortable way.... Being a marshal was exciting because it made me feel important."

• "I really liked being involved with kids from all different schools and getting more involved with Germantown.... Being a minority [one of a few white kids] was very different for me - I think it opened me up a lot to the GFS's community."

• "Everyone should understand about nonviolence around the world because fighting will never solve anything.... My eyes are open now to real life situations and dealing with people."

Comments from Trainers:

• "Gathering a group of youth leaders is encouraging and the young people seemed to feel proud and empowered by the experience. It helped to renew consciousness and focus on nonviolence and community building. The community building workshop was the first session that generated great excitement. The self and mutual affirmation exercises were very nourishing. The youth had a lot of ambivalence in their image of nonviolence - a realistic and searching ambivalence. In the marshalling workshop, the group learned a great deal - you could almost see it happening. The highlight was the realization of the need to rely on each other. When that happened, the youth initiated strong community-building.... The parade looked and felt good! There was some confusion about communications and the ending was raggedy. The rally was one of the best! Each element was a good length and to the point. It was great to have so much music... As so often, we needed to do better with local publicity and needed more lead time for better trainer preparation."

• "It was great getting to meet lots of smart young and old people! We learned that leading is not that hard... The young people were really open, most people in the group participate lots in discussions. The kids did a good job at the parade in keeping it moving, though it was poorly advertised in the community. My kids had nothing to do most of the morning, though, and this was hard. Overall, I loved working with the kids and other trainers - lots of fun and open communication, but poor organization. Way too much time was allotted for the events and the adults were too authoritarian with the kids. I would like the planning to be a cooperative effort and shared responsibility and decision making."

• "I found the openness of the kids and their ability to handle the issues presented to be much more mature and centered than I'd expected. The positive energy in the group was high and catching. The weather was the only thing that had a slightly negative effect as far as I could tell... The two groups of kids at the concession stand area should have been assigned to either the parade site or the rally site with specific duties in the morning. The Youth Leadership Training opened the possibilities of community building on a positive experimental level..."
that I’d like to see continue and be a part of. One of the kids said 'We don’t learn this in school, these are skills that we can use.'"

• "Bringing all these young people and trainers together was a fantastic idea, as were the workshops. Well-conceived and executed up until the parade and rally. I felt that the young people put a lot of time, energy, and effort into the workshops and the learning experience, but that, at least in the case of my group (concessions), they had very little to do at the parade and rally and it was a bit of a let down…. I have established some new relationships and learned tremendously from both trainers and young participants, a very worthwhile experience."

D. Parade and Rally

One of the central events of the 300th Anniversary commemoration was a parade and rally on Saturday, April 23. Cold and wet weather severely limited the participation on that day. Three high school marching bands among others cancelled on the morning of the parade. In all, only two hundred people participated in the one-mile parade, though many more watched. The rally at the site of the 1688 Protest at Germantown Avenue and Wister Street was similarly affected by weather. The two-hour program featured a tight mixture of music, drama, and speeches. Attempts on the part of the 300th Anniversary Committee to attract celebrity participation failed, with even Mayor Goode canceling at the last minute. At the height of the rally only four hundred people were participating, far less than the Committee had expected.

In spite of the cold weather, the parade and rally were exciting events. There
was an excellent mixture of ages and races at the event. At the end of the rally, the teenagers and the participants were all hugging while singing "Man in the Mirror", "Amazing Grace," "We Are the World," and "We Shall Overcome." It was a good feeling, in spite of the disappointing attendance.

The direct costs for the parade and rally - PA system, tents, portable toilets, and entertainer fees- were $4,500. Money could have been saved by cutting out portable toilets and stage lighting. The lack of a celebrity participant to draw a crowd was unfortunate, but not due to the lack of Committee efforts.
E. Youth Concert

On Sunday afternoon, April 24, there was a Youth Choir concert at Germantown Friends Meeting organized by the 300th Anniversary Committee. Kim and Reggie Harris, nationally renowned folk singers from Philadelphia, were joined by the choirs of Germantown HS, Germantown Friends School, and St. Barnabas Academy in a two hour musical performance on the occasion of the 300th Anniversary. The spirituals, civil rights songs, and contemporary music performed before an audience of five hundred were a special treat. The concert ended with all three choirs singing "The Greatest Love of All," a powerful contemporary piece dealing with self-discovery and human dignity in the face of adversity. The enthusiastic applause from the audience was a testament to the inspiration felt. The concert was followed by light refreshments provided by Germantown Friends Meeting. Several hundred people lingered for over an hour after the concert, socializing with neighbors. The total cost of the concert was about $700.

F. Interfaith Service

On Thursday evening, April 28, the actual date of the 1688 Protest, the 300th Anniversary Committee organized an Interfaith Service on the theme "Freedom from Addiction." About one hundred people, mostly from the hosting congregation, participated in the service, which was followed by a short candlelight vigil at the site of the 1688 Protest - opposite a liquor store, two bars and one of the heavier drug trafficking sections of Germantown. Many of the
participants spoke of the "deeply spiritual" feeling of the service, but with this
event, too, the low level of participation was disturbing. Because of the full
agenda of activities before the 300th Anniversary Committee, this particular
event did not get as much attention as it needed.

G. Mayor's Reception

In conjunction with the German Society of Pennsylvania, the City
Representatives Office organized a reception and luncheon on Thursday, April
28 in honor of the 1688 Protest. Although the 300th Anniversary Committee was
consulted in the planning process and provided names for invitees, there was no
acknowledgement of Germantown events and programs. A number of people
spoke of their disappointment at this oversight. The problem arose primarily to
the lack of coordination with the German Society of Pennsylvania, which felt
uncomfortable with the political nature of the local Germantown observance
effort. Nevertheless, the reception was a treat for the 300th Anniversary
Committee and guests, who could enjoy the official acknowledgement of this
historical landmark and pause to assess the tremendous organizing tasks
accomplished.

H. Play "Prologue to Freedom"

The Germantown Theatre Guild commissioned Rufus Caleb, a local playwright,
to write an original play about the 1688 Protest. This fictional account of the
events of 1688 performed by professional actors was a great success as theater,
but again failed to attract large audiences. The manuscript and the production
were truly outstanding and lent a great deal to the overall observance.
Organizers were unsuccessful in having the performance videotaped for showing
on television. This was a real loss.
IV. Follow-Up

A. Revitalization

The most concrete and lasting contribution of the 300th Anniversary commemoration will be in helping to stimulate efforts for a comprehensive community revitalization in Lower Germantown. The Greater Germantown Housing Development Corporation along with other community groups is targeting a six-block section of Germantown Avenue for housing rehabilitation and the creation of new commercial enterprises. This is a slow and difficult process.

The April Rally was conceived of as an opportunity for a kind of symbolic groundbreaking on this redevelopment program, but delays in funding made this impossible. After eight months of delay, a City contract for $150,000 to do pre-development studies was granted in June. Some other efforts have yielded success. There is a Police Athletic League gym under construction in the target area, as well as a Police Mini-Station scheduled to open for the foot patrol officer in the area. The Germantown Boys and Girls Club is building a new swimming pool. Germantown Avenue is scheduled for resurfacing in 1989. Covenant House Medical Service has expressed a real interest in moving into the new shopping mall/office complex to be built at the old factory site. A German peace and service organization, Action Reconciliation, has moved its US center from Washington D.C. into the neighborhood with the intentions of acquiring property for an office and conference center. The Blushing Zebra Coffee House has also moved into the neighborhood from Mt. Airy, adding to the cultural resources of the community. And a few houses have been acquired for renovation.

Property control remains a major concern, as there have been reports of real estate speculators buying up properties. The 12-month option agreement on the D.F. Walter Factory Site, the largest parcel of land in the target area, runs out in October. There is still no plan, no drawings, not enough site control, no partnership with a developer, and too little funds. The total estimate cost of the Lower Germantown Project, involving the rehabilitation of some 50 houses and the building of a shopping mall/office complex, is $15 to $20 million. Lower Germantown remains an area of great opportunity for targeted urban redevelopment.

B. Youth Leadership

All of the participants in the Youth Leadership Training expressed the desire to see this program continue in some format. The idea of training-and-service-for-pay is a winner. The key will be to develop secure funding and coordination for such programs. Perhaps the program can be linked into an on-going summer employment program, e.g. the Mayor’s summer jobs. Without the specific focus of a major event, the workshop on Marshalling and Logistics could be dropped. It
would be great to add workshops on Sexuality, which would explore gender roles and stereotypes, and a workshop on Addiction, which would look at different forms of substance abuse and compulsive behavior. Like the Unlearning Racism Workshop, these topics would likely excite enthusiastic participation from the teenagers.

In the future, it would be important to budget some financial remunerations for the adult trainers, and to communicate clear information and expectations to the teenagers well in advance of the program. Fifty would be a better size for such groups. Adopting a similar format of $100 per student plus food, supplies and trainer compensation, the total cost of doing this kind of four or five day training would be between $10,000 and $15,000 per session. One idea was to take the Youth Leadership Training on the road into each section of Philadelphia.

The Youth Leadership Training was one of the most important programs developed by the 300th Anniversary Committee. The challenge now is to find some ongoing vehicle to offer this kind of workshop/life experience for teenagers.

C. Historical Observance

The Anti-Slavery Protest of 1688 was an excellent occasion for doing community organizing in a neighborhood at risk. In the past, the historical preservation efforts in Germantown have been out of synch with community concerns. In this 300th Anniversary commemoration, a new alliance was formed, new networks made. There remains opportunities to continue in this direction. The Germantown Historical Society, for instance, is hosting the Smithsonian exhibitition "From Field to Factory", dealing with the migration of African Americans in the early part of this century. This exhibition is of great interest to the predominantly African American population of Germantown today. Other historical events, like the annual reenactment of the Battle of Germantown or the Rittenhouse Family Reunion, provide additional examples. The linking of Germantown's rich history to efforts to move beyond today's poverty could hold great promise for the future revitalization of the community. As part of this effort, the organizers of the 300th Anniversary commemoration are also committed to some kind of continuing annual commemoration of the 1688 Protest.
I. Summary

A coalition of community groups in Germantown used the occasion of the 300th Anniversary of the Germantown Protest against Slavery to promote a fourfold agenda:

1) Protest Injustice - Then and Now,
2) Build Community,
3) Take Responsibility, and
4) Revitalize our Neighborhood.

The four themes of the Anniversary Commemoration proved to be a dynamic vehicle for community organizing in Germantown, uniting numerous organizations and individuals. The organizing process began in December 1986 and built upon previous commemorations of the 1688 Anti-Slavery Protest (held in 1983, 1978...)

A great diversity of projects was organized by the 300th Anniversary Committee. Partly because of these efforts, others were also inspired to organize special historical exhibitions, lectures series, and even an original theater production. The 300th Anniversary Committee served as the central clearinghouse for all of these events, including promotion and publicity for all the programs.

The 300th Anniversary Committee was directly responsible for organizing the following projects:

• A Youth Art and Essay Contest;
• A four day Youth Leadership Training program for 75 area teenagers;
• A parade and rally in Germantown;
• A Youth Choir Concert; and
• An Interfaith Service on the theme "Freedom from Addiction."

Through a variety of sources, the 300th Anniversary Committee was able to raise over $37,000. The cost of the entire project was about $30,000. The $7,000 surplus will be used in redevelopment work in Lower Germantown.
Outline:

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   B. Germantown Today

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IV. Follow-Up

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II. Background

A. History of the 1688 Protest

Germantown was founded by Francis Daniel Pastorius from Frankfurt, Germany in 1683. He purchased the tract of land from William Penn and arranged for thirteen Quaker and Mennonite families from Krefeld to settle there. These families were the first German immigrants in North America.

Five years after their arrival, Germantown, like Philadelphia, was a growing prosperous community. Also growing was the institution of slavery in the colony of Pennsylvania. Four of the settlers drafted a strong letter of protest against slavery on April 28, 1688 (the 18th of the 2nd Month, 1688 under the Julian Calendar.) The letter was directed at the English Quaker slaveholders of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting.

The 1688 Germantown Protest failed to effect any change in Pennsylvania. It would not be until 1776 that Quakers in Pennsylvania forbade slavery among their members. In 1780 Pennsylvania became the first state to pass a law leading to the gradual abolition of slavery. Almost two hundred years after the Germantown Anti-Slavery Protest with the Emancipation Proclamation and the Thirteen, Fourteen and Fifteen Amendments to the Constitution, the institution of slavery was abolished in the United States and equal rights under the law codified regardless of race, creed or color.

In recent years, efforts to commemorate the 1688 Germantown Protest have referred to this historical document as the "First Public Protest Against Slavery in North America." In 1983 a Pennsylvania State Historical Marker was erected at the site of the Protest in Lower Germantown entitled "First Protest Against Slavery." This was seen as a historically inaccurate assertion with racist overtones by many African Americans in the community. Common sense and historical inquiry revealed that the African slaves were themselves the first to protest their captivity through formal protest as well as in untold acts of resistance. The 300th Anniversary Committee has stressed this reality throughout its organizing efforts, and avoided references to "first" when promoting the observance of the 1688 anniversary. The presence of the historical marker at the site, previous observances of this event and a sense of community pride have resulted, however, in continued use of the title "First Public Protest Against Slavery" in the press and in the community.
B. Germantown Today

Germantown, a community of over 100,000 people, is one of the few truly integrated neighborhoods in Philadelphia. 1980 census data place 72 percent of the population as African-American, 25 percent as Caucasian and 3 percent other. The diversity also covers a wide range of economic classes.

Germantown has many assets for an urban neighborhood. Fifty-two percent of the homes are owner-occupied, with a great diversity in housing stock. There are numerous schools, medical institutions, parks, and historic sites in and surrounding the community. In recent years, housing sales and values in Germantown have increased on a percentage basis more than any other neighborhood in Philadelphia except Center City.

Parts of Germantown are also confronted with severe poverty. Per capita income is $5,895. 22 percent of the population lives below the poverty level. Poverty is primarily concentrated in the Southeast and Southwest quadrants of the community (divided by Germantown Avenue and Chelten Avenue.) The dependent population, under 17 or over 65 years of age, is 39.9 percent. Germantown also has the highest concentration of boarding-home institutions for the disabled and elderly in Philadelphia. 37.2 percent of the population over 24 years of age have not finished elementary or high school.

The 300th Anniversary project was a conscious effort to build community spirit and pride and to promote redevelopment in Lower Germantown, the poorest section of the community, which is also the site of the 1688 Protest.
III. Organization

A. Monthly Meetings

In April 1987, the 300th Anniversary Committee for the Germantown Protest was convened by William Grassie. Grassie lives in Germantown and works in Quaker peace and justice concerns with Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends. Charles Blockson, curator of the Afro-American Collection at Temple University, spoke at the opening meeting, which was attended by some 40 people. An informal group of ten people began meeting on a monthly basis, through the spring and summer of 1987. This group set the basic direction and dates for the 300th Anniversary observances, including the four themes and the first drafts of a new Germantown Protest statement, which would serve as our unifying mission statement.

William Grassie continued to act as convenor and secretary for the adhoc committee. In the fall of 1987, the 300th Anniversary Committee became a formal entity as a "non-sectarian project of Germantown Friends Meeting." A formal steering committee was formed to oversee the projects, and the draft statement for the 1988 Germantown Protest was rewritten and finalized. Bonnie Bing, Director of the Germantown Boys and Girls Club, was elected chairperson of the 300th Anniversary Committee. William Grassie took a part-time leave of absence from his position with the Friends Peace Committee to be the paid staff coordinator for the six months between December and May.

Monthly meetings widely advertised and opened to the public continued throughout the fall of 1987 and winter of 1988. Initially, the business meetings were preceded by an hour-long program of interest to the public and relevant to the commemoration. While this may have attracted new participation, the pre-meeting program was dropped by the steering committee. This may have been a mistake, as participation in these evening meetings dropped through the spring. We were unsuccessful involving more than a core group of twenty committed community volunteers. The organizing and decision making responsibilities shifted to the weekly Thursday morning steering committee meetings.

The monthly meetings rotated among different locations in Germantown, as a vehicle for community building (Trinity Lutheran Church, Warring House, the Historical Society, Friends Meeting, Boys and Girls Club, First United Methodist, etc...) This proved to be a very effective way of increasing community and institutional interaction.
B. Steering Committee

The Steering Committee for the 300th Anniversary was formalized in December 1987. Members all had to be able to attend daytime meetings and have some organizational constituency. This was very much a working committee. All meetings were conducted on the basis of consensus, which worked very well. The racial composition of the fourteen-person Steering Committee was eight blacks, five whites, and two of other background. The gender breakdown was nine women and five men. Through its diversity and harmonious cooperation, the Steering Committee was very successful in modeling the values expressed in the four themes of the 300th Anniversary commemoration.

One member commented, "We worked very hard in our meetings for months in a mutually affirming spirit. There was none of the backbiting that happens so often in community groups. That spirit of working together is rare and special." Another member wrote, "There were few instances of the kind of negativity and competition that too often infect political groups. It was a very positive, cooperative, and mutually supportive group." Another member said, "The greatest thing we did was allow our goals and sense of purpose to be very clear." Another member, active in the community for over twenty years, commented that she could not remember a time when so many different groups and churches in Germantown had worked together intensively on anything. "It was great to have all this networking within our community."
## List of Steering Committee Members

### Chairperson

**Bonnie Bing**  
Germantown Boys and Girls Club

### Steering Committee

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Organization / Affiliation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rev. David Wesley Brown</td>
<td>Advocate St. Stephen's Church</td>
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<tr>
<td>Joyce Brown</td>
<td>Swords into Plowshares Concerts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Carolyn Ewell-Collins</td>
<td>Crisis Intervention Network</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anna Fisher</td>
<td>Germantown Friends School</td>
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<td>Emanuel Freeman</td>
<td>Germantown Settlement</td>
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<td>Vera Gunn Harden</td>
<td>Philadelphia Urban Coalition</td>
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<tr>
<td>Patricia Negron</td>
<td>Greene Street Friends School</td>
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<tr>
<td>June Peggs</td>
<td>Germantown Historical Society</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rev. Jacqueline Sanders</td>
<td>First United Methodist Church of Germantown</td>
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<td>Rev. Donald Scott</td>
<td>Central Germantown Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rev. Arthur Sparrow (Ret.)</td>
<td>Advocate St. Stephen's Church</td>
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<tr>
<td>Debra White</td>
<td>Wister Neighborhood Council</td>
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### Coordinator

**William Grassie**  
Friends Peace Committee
C. Funding

The first budget for the 300th Anniversary commemoration, written in October 1987, was for $24,000. As the program grew, the total budget grew to $37,000. Final expenses came in well under this, primarily due to funds saved by lower enrollment in the Youth Leadership Training and lower printing and postage expenditures.

$37,672.45 was raised for the 300th Anniversary project. The largest contribution was a $10,000 grant from the Samuel Fels Fund to support the Youth Leadership Training. A total of $11,500 in grants came from a variety of Quaker sources. $6,200 was given by 70 organizational endorsers, $5,077 brought in from some 300 individual contributors, and another $4,895 raised through a special appeal to descendants of the original thirteen Germantown families to support redevelopment efforts in the community. Uncalculated in these figures are major in-kind contributions from the Germantown Boys and Girls Club and the Friends Peace Committee, including staff time, space, printing, and postage.

Two-thirds of the funds came through in late March and April 1988, thus causing a great deal of anxiety and stress for the steering committee and coordinator. It would have been better to start six months earlier on fund raising.

We had only modest success in raising funds beyond our budget for the continued work of rehabilitating houses. There is $7,639 remaining in the 300th Anniversary fund, which will be disbursed to support the redevelopment work. More work could have been done earlier to promote the descendants fund, to establish a vehicle for benevolent lending, to solicit contributions from Germany, and to expand grants and individual donor efforts. The original budget also called for many thousands of small contributions through the circulation of the 1988 Germantown Protest statement as a petition through the community. This effort faltered due to time pressures. The 300th Anniversary commemoration did not meet its expectations as a fundraising vehicle for neighborhood revitalization projects.

D. Sponsorship

1) Organizational Endorsers:The 1988 Germantown Protest statement was a basis on which to solicit organizational endorsements. Endorsing organizations had to affirm the text of the statement, make a financial contribution to the effort, and pledge to participate and publicize the programs. A goal of 100 organizational endorsers was set, and in January 1988 the first mailings were sent out. In all some 500 letters were sent out to religious congregations, businesses, and civic groups in Philadelphia, primarily focused on the Northwest section of the City. The Steering Committee divided up this list for follow-up phone calls and meetings, but not everyone was diligent in completing this
assignment. Nevertheless, we were able to collect some 75 organizational endorsers, who contributed between $25 and $100. Several went on to make major contributions ranging from several hundred to a thousand dollars. Many of the groups continued to be active by participating in the parade or publicizing the programs. With time and energy more could have been done to expand the pool of organizational endorsers and better follow-up on their expressed interest in the program. One lasting benefit to the community is the existence of a database of some 600 organizations, which can be used to publicize future events or solicitations.

List of Endorsing Organizations

- Action Reconciliation/Service for Peace
- American Friends Service Committee
- Ashmead & Rubicam Block Association
- Boys and Girls Clubs of Metropolitan Philadelphia
- Calvary Episcopal Church of Germantown
- Camden Friends Meeting
- Captain Robert B. Tresville Award of Merit Fund
- Cardinal’s Commission on Human Relations and Urban Ministry
- Center in the Park Inc
- Central Germantown Council
- Chestnut Hill Community Association
- Chestnut Hill Friends Meeting
- Child’s Play Childcare in Germantown
- Christ Church & St Michael’s
- Coalition for African-Am. Cultural Organizations
- Covenant House Health Services
- Crisis Intervention Network
- D.A.R (Delaware Valley Chapter)
- Eastern Pennsylvania Conference of United Methodist Metro Ministries
- Fellowship Farms
- First United Methodist Church of Germantown
- Friends Free Library of Germantown
- Friends Peace Committee
- Germantown Boys and Girls Club
- Germantown Business Association
- Germantown Friends Meeting
- Germantown Friends School
- Germantown Historical Society
- Germantown Mennonite Church Corporation
- Germantown Savings Bank
- Germantown Unitarian Church
- Greater Gtwn. Housing Development Corp
- Green Street Friends Meeting
Individual Endorsers:

In March 1988, a direct mail appeal was sent out to some 10,000 people. The mailing took three weeks to complete with volunteer help. Included in the mailing was a comprehensive listing of public events related to the 300th Anniversary, and the mailing thus also served as a publicity tool. Lists were obtained from Swords into Plowshares, Germantown Friends School, and several church congregations and civic groups. The cost of the mailing was $3,379. There were some 250 responses (2.5 percent response) bringing in a total of $3,277. The mailing was an important vehicle for involving volunteers in the 300th
Anniversary observances, but it took a lot effort. As with so many other things, an earlier start would have been helpful; and allowed time for a possible follow-up appeal.

A second mailing addressed to descendants of the original thirteen families who settled Germantown was put together by a group of fourteen area descendants. The mailing went out to some 300 descendants on a card file developed by Nancy Rhoads during the 1983 celebrations. A total of $4,895 was raised from 40 descendants for a fund designated for the revitalization work in Lower Germantown. This solicitation would have benefited with more lead time and more concrete revitalization plans and financial packets. A lot more follow-up with this pool of contributors is planned.

The total number of contributors was greatly encouraging for the organizers. More people actually contributed money than participated in some of the major events. As the quote from Robert Kennedy read on the direct mail response card: "Tiny ripples of hope...from a million different centers of daring and energy [will change the world.]"

E. 1988 Statement

The 1988 Germantown Protest statement was an important part of the 300th Anniversary organizing effort. Internally, the drafting and redrafting of this statement gave the organizers a joint sense of ownership and clarified our purpose as a coalition to ourselves and to others who might join with us. The statement spoke forcefully to the relevance of slavery and abolition as contemporary issues 300 years later: "While human slavery has been abolished in law, the callous disregard of life persists today in the abundant denial of basic human rights and needs."

Even though the drafting of this statement involved a dozen authors and a dozen rewrites, it retained a concise, simple, and eloquent message, which clearly stated the relevance of 1688 to 1988 and the political import of this 300th Anniversary commemoration. The statement was a very successful tool for coalition building and publicity.

One community activist wrote, "My greatest concern at the outset and my greatest satisfaction at the end was the linking of the history 300 years ago to today, even though in some ways the problems today are worse, because with drugs and poverty you can't see the chains. Somehow we need to create a continuous protest against oppression."

F. Publicity

The 300th Anniversary Committee was very successful in generating extensive press coverage before and after the April events in the Germantown Courier, the
Germantown Paper, the Mt. Airy Express and the Chestnut Hill Local - all weekly or monthly publications in Northwest Philadelphia. Coverage in several of these papers was several pages long. Unfortunately, efforts to attract a wider audience in Philadelphia and around the nation were mixed. There was only one article in the Philadelphia Inquirer and only two articles in the Philadelphia Tribune. Radio and TV coverage was sparse. Associated Press ran two stories over the wires, which were picked up in a few communities. The contrast to the extensive national coverage given to the 300th family reunion of the William Rittenhouse family in July of the same year adds to the disappointment.

A February press advisory was mailed out to some 200 targeted Philadelphia and national journalists and an April press release was mailed out to some 700 targeted Philadelphia and national journalists. There were also two separate releases sent out over PR-Mediawire in supplement to the mailings. Follow-up phone calls were made to area media before the major events. Unfortunately, all of this work fell on the shoulders of the already overburden staff coordinator. In the best of worlds, the promotion of this event in the media would have been assigned to another member of the Steering Committee or a paid consultant.

Beyond the media, there were a number of other publicity efforts undertaken in Philadelphia. In January 1988 some 5,000 "palm cards" were handed out at Martin Luther King Birthday events and services. In February, a logo was designed. 15,000 calendars of events were printed and circulated through mailings and drop-offs in February and March. A banner was hung across the major traffic intersection in Germantown. The Northwest Regional Library ran a display window for two weeks on the 1688 Protest. Organizational newsletters and bulletins ran notices. And the week before the major events, 300 attractive posters were printed and distributed in the area.

G. Coordination

William Grassie served as staff coordinator for the 300th Anniversary project. As a Quaker active in Germantown Friends Meeting and as an employee of the Peace Committee of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, he was well placed to facilitate and organize this program. There was general praise for his work on the 300th Anniversary, but also concern expressed for the volume of work that fell upon him. In some cases, such as aspects of the Youth Leadership Training and fund raising work, Grassie had to take on extra duties that were dropped by Steering Committee members. In other cases, Grassie would have better sought to be less in control, particularly with the actual running of the Youth Leadership Training. One Steering Committee member noted that "Billy needed to delegate more and we needed to volunteer more." Overall, however, there was really excellent team cooperation and division of labor between the staff coordinator and the Steering Committee.
Grassie had negotiated a part-time leave of absence from the Friends Peace Committee in July 1987, in order to devote more time to the 300th Anniversary project. This was a generous arrangement that provided continued support and some future security at the outset of this huge organizing project. It was not until January 1988 that the 300th Anniversary project had sufficient funds and organizational infrastructure to pay Grassie a monthly salary of $750 through May. While this made up the difference in his salary, it must be noted that the 300th Anniversary effort grew to be more than fulltime duty for Grassie and that the Friends Peace Committee in essence underwrote the other half of his salary.

Full time coordination is essential to a project of this scope. Other members of the Steering Committee were able to make major time contributions to this endeavor as essentially seconded staff, because this project fell under the purview of their regular work. In particular, Debra White from the Wister Neighborhood Council, Bonnie Bing from the Germantown Boys and Girls Club, June Peggs from the Germantown Historical Society, Patricia Negron from Greene Street Friends School, Rev. David Brown from Advocate St. Stephen's Church, Anna Fisher from Germantown Friends School, and Carolyn Collins from Crisis Intervention Network provided exceptional and significant services to this effort.
III. Programs

A. Lectures and Special Exhibits

A number of groups sponsored lectures and special exhibits on the occasion of the 300th Anniversary, beginning with the first planning committee meeting in April 1987 with a talk by Charles Blockson. The 300th Anniversary Committee promoted these events in its mailings and publicity. Of particular note was the lecture series organized by the German Society of Pennsylvania, which ran from February through June. Attendance at all of the lectures was sparse with some of the programs attracting fewer than a dozen people. The largest audience was some forty people at the panel discussion sponsored by the Association for Afro-American Life and History. The cumulative effect of these programs was very positive and added a great deal of weight to the observances. Below is a listing of historical programs offered in the spring of 1988.

March 20, Sunday, 3:00 pm
Mennonite Meeting House
6117 Germantown Ave.,
German Society

Lecture series, "Mid-Nineteenth Century Slavery and the German Americans." Presented by Villanova University professor, James Berquist

April 2, Saturday, 1:00 pm
Wyck House,
6026 Germantown Ave.


April 9, Saturday, 10:00 am
Mennonite Meeting House
6117 Germantown Ave.

Lecture series, "Quakers and Anti-Slavery in the Eighteenth Century," by Patricia Reifsnyder

April 10, Sunday, 3:00 pm
Mayor's Conference Room,
City Hall

Lecture series, "Courting International Support for Racial Equality," Prof. Robert Harris from Cornell University
April 17, Sunday, 7:00 pm,
Germantown Friends Meeting
47 West. Coulter Street,

Panel discussion, "Afro-American Perspectives on the 1688 Protest," Dr. Shirley Parham, Afro-American Museum; Dr. Charles Blockson, Temple University; and Dr. Leroy Hopkins, Millersville University.

April 23, Saturday, 10:00 am
Haverford College Library


April 23, Saturday, 10:00 am
Johnson House and Mennonite Church, 6117 Germantown Ave.,

Exhibit opening of "The Johnsons and the Underground Railroad in Germantown." Until September 1988

April 23, Saturday, noon
Germantown Historical Society
5214 Germantown Avenue


May 15, Sunday, 3:00 pm
Afro-American Museum
7th and Arch St.,

Lecture series, "Germans and Blacks in Lancaster County" by Dr. Leroy Hopkins from Millersville University

June 5, Sunday, 3:00 pm
Philadelphia Museum of Art

Lecture Series, "Blacks, Immigrants and Abolition," by Prof. Richard Blackett from Indiana University
B. Youth Art and Essay Contest

The 300th Anniversary Committee organized a student art and essay contest in conjunction with the Germantown Historical Society and the School District of Philadelphia open to students from public and private schools in Northwest Philadelphia. $100, $50 and $25 cash prizes were offered to four different age groups for both the art and essay categories. In the end, there were almost no submissions in the high school age group. 18 elementary and junior high school students received prizes and certificates at a delightful reception held at the Cliveden Mansion in Germantown. Parents and family attended the reception luncheon and awards presentation. David Fattah from the House of Umoja gave an exciting talk at the presentations, linking the legacy of slavery to drug addiction today. A number of newspapers in Northwest Philadelphia published photos of the proud winners and ran essays, poems, and art work in their publications.

The total cost of the Youth Art and Essay Contest was about $2,000, which was a good investment at this level of participation. It is, however, very difficult to excite interest of the classroom teachers in this kind of project. We were pleased with the results given the resistance. The division of labor on this project, with June Peggs from the Germantown Historical Society taking on the primary responsibility and Billy Grassie providing assistance, worked very well.

C. Youth Leadership Training

The Youth Leadership Training was one of the most ambitious and expensive components of the 300th Anniversary commemoration. The project was developed in November and December of 1987, when the concern to involve teenagers was linked up to the need for peacekeepers and logistical support for the parade and rally. What evolved was a four-day training, from 8:30 am to 5:30 pm for 100 teenagers from Northwest Philadelphia. The training sessions covered five areas: Goal Setting, Community Building, Unlearning Racism, Nonviolence and Conflict Resolution, and Marshalling and Logistics for the Parade and Rally. There was a post-event evaluation session and party for the teenagers, as well.

In January of 1988, Carolyn Ewell-Collins, from the Crisis Intervention Network, and William Grassie convened a group of 15 trainers in the Delaware Valley. With the parameters of the project laid out, the group began to fill in the design and content of the training program during half a dozen meetings in February and March. A team of 14 volunteer trainers was recruited and oriented, 97 teenagers were recruited (20 others dropped out the week before the training and only 2 dropped out during the training), a 40-page training manual was developed, and major funding was secured in a $10,000 grant from the Samuel Fels Fund. This was a major organizing project, which required the effort of a lot of people. In all
75 teenagers completed the training. The total cost of this project was about $12,000. The adult staff donated their time and talents and the Germantown Boys and Girls Club donated the use of their facilities.

Carolyn Ewell-Collins from the Crisis Intervention Network took on the role of coordinator for the Youth Leadership Training as a work-related assignment. Major problems arose in the development stages, when she was given new duties at CIN and taken off the Youth Leadership Training. As best as she was able, she continued to work on the Youth Leadership Training, but the thoroughness of the work suffered. Billy Grassie ended up doing a lot of last-minute problem solving.

The biggest problem in the planning process was that the students did not get enough information prior to the training. Acceptance letters and phone calls did not get to the students until a day or two before the beginning of the workshops, if at all. The application and recruitment process was about a month behind schedule. The students resented not having clear information. Similarly, the trainers didn't spend enough time actually learning the workshop material and building their own group identity before the Youth Leadership Training actually began. The trainers' manual was only provided the week before the training began. It would have been better to hand out the manual at the outset.

The kids were clearly initially attracted to the program because of the opportunity to earn money. The pay-for-training-and-service concept is an essential component of this youth training format. Most of the teenagers would not have been at this event otherwise, or would have been inconsistent in their participation. Because there was a contract arrangement, complete the entire four days or no pay, the kids were there on Saturday morning at 8:30 am. As the program proceeded, kids began to test the rules by coming late, leaving early, asking for exceptions. It would be important in the future to have a time clock or homeroom-type system for taking attendance. This would take the pressure off any one adult, which in this case was a major problem experienced by Billy Grassie vis-a-vis the teenagers at the end of the training program.

The connection between the 300th Anniversary observation provided a useful context for this training program, but is not essential for future efforts. In some ways the parade and rally were anti-climatic events for the teenagers, due to the bad weather and low attendance; but it did provide a concrete focus and mission of some responsibility for the training sessions. In the future, the challenge will be to provide these kind of training opportunities for teenagers without a major event as a focus or perhaps some substitute service project. By not having this program running simultaneous to a major event, the organizers will also have more time to focus their energies on the youth.

Below are selected comments from the teenagers and trainers adapted from their written evaluations:
• "I gained confidence and felt a lot better about myself and the people around me. I realized what taking risks meant and how they fit into my life."

• "I think the whole event was very well done & very important in the community. I learned a lot about myself as well as learning more about other people in the community."

• "Made me realize that I really should start preparing for my future.... I thought it was great that everyone could talk about racism without a lot of arguing."

• "Gave me a chance to believe that there are ways to change my environment and helped me come to terms with racism and change. I felt responsible and in more control with other people and how to deal with problems.... It was great!"

• "I got to actually try and find ways to peacefully end rough situations.... I will hold a lot of fond memories and new friends as a result... Thank you for a great experience."

• "It was good to talk about racism because it is going on right now and I need to stop.... We became closer with one another and had fun at the Rally."

• "I'm glad we were well fed. The trainers' dedication was obvious. I was a needed part of a team and this is confidence building."

• "For the first time I was able to talk about racism in a comfortable way.... Being a marshal was exciting because it made me feel important."

• "I really liked being involved with kids from all different schools and getting more involved with Germantown.... Being a minority [one of a few white kids] was very different for me - I think it opened me up a lot to the GFS's community."

• "Everyone should understand about nonviolence around the world because fighting will never solve anything.... My eyes are open now to real life situations and dealing with people."

Comments from Trainers:

• "Gathering a group of youth leaders is encouraging and the young people seemed to feel proud and empowered by the experience. It helped to renew consciousness and focus on nonviolence and community building. The community building workshop was the first session that generated great excitement. The self and mutual affirmation exercises were very nourishing. The youth had a lot of ambivalence in their image of nonviolence - a realistic and searching ambivalence. In the marshalling workshop, the group learned a great
deal - you could almost see it happening. The highlight was the realization of the need to rely on each other. When that happened, the youth initiated strong community-building.... The parade looked and felt good! There was some confusion about communications and the ending was raggedy. The rally was one of the best! Each element was a good length and to the point. It was great to have so much music... As so often, we needed to do better with local publicity and needed more lead time for better trainer preparation."

• "It was great getting to meet lots of smart young and old people! We learned that leading is not that hard... The young people were really open, most people in the group participate lots in discussions. The kids did a good job at the parade in keeping it moving, though it was poorly advertised in the community. My kids had nothing to do most of the morning, though, and this was hard. Overall, I loved working with the kids and other trainers - lots of fun and open communication, but poor organization. Way too much time was allotted for the events and the adults were too authoritarian with the kids. I would like the planning to be a cooperative effort and shared responsibility and decision making."

• "I found the openness of the kids and their ability to handle the issues presented to be much more mature and centered than I'd expected. The positive energy in the group was high and catching. The weather was the only thing that had a slightly negative effect as far as I could tell... The two groups of kids at the concession stand area should have been assigned to either the parade site or the rally site with specific duties in the morning. The Youth Leadership Training opened the possibilities of community building on a positive experimental level that I'd like to see continue and be a part of. One of the kids said 'We don't learn this in school, these are skills that we can use.'"

• "Bringing all these young people and trainers together was a fantastic idea, as were the workshops. Well-conceived and executed up until the parade and rally. I felt that the young people put a lot of time, energy, and effort into the workshops and the learning experience, but that, at least in the case of my group (concessions), they had very little to do at the parade and rally and it was a bit of a let down.... I have established some new relationships and learned tremendously from both trainers and young participants, a very worthwhile experience."

D. Parade and Rally

One of the central events of the 300th Anniversary commemoration was a parade and rally on Saturday, April 23. Cold and wet weather severely limited the participation on that day. Three high school marching bands among others cancelled on the morning of the parade. In all, only two hundred people participated in the one-mile parade, though many more watched. The rally at the site of the 1688 Protest at Germantown Avenue and Wister Street was similarly
affected by weather. The two-hour program featured a tight mixture of music, drama, and speeches. Attempts on the part of the 300th Anniversary Committee to attract celebrity participation failed, with even Mayor Goode canceling at the last minute. At the height of the rally only four hundred people were participating, far less than the Committee had expected.

In spite of the cold weather, the parade and rally were exciting events. There was an excellent mixture of ages and races at the event. At the end of the rally, the teenagers and the participants were all hugging while singing "Man in the Mirror", "Amazing Grace," "We Are the World," and "We Shall Overcome." It was a good feeling, in spite of the disappointing attendance.

The direct costs for the parade and rally - PA system, tents, portable toilets, and entertainer fees - were $4,500. Money could have been saved by cutting out portable toilets and stage lighting. The lack of a celebrity participant to draw a crowd was unfortunate, but not due to the lack of Committee efforts.

E. Youth Concert

On Sunday afternoon, April 24, there was a Youth Choir concert at Germantown Friends Meeting organized by the 300th Anniversary Committee. Kim and Reggie Harris, nationally renowned folk singers from Philadelphia, were joined by the choirs of Germantown HS, Germantown Friends School, and St. Barnabas Academy in a two hour musical performance on the occasion of the 300th Anniversary. The spirituals, civil rights songs, and contemporary music performed before an audience of five hundred were a special treat. The concert ended with all three choirs singing "The Greatest Love of All," a powerful contemporary piece dealing with self-discovery and human dignity in the face of adversity. The enthusiastic applause from the audience was a testament to the inspiration felt. The concert was followed by light refreshments provided by Germantown Friends Meeting. Several hundred people lingered for over an hour after the concert, socializing with neighbors. The total cost of the concert was about $700.

F. Interfaith Service

On Thursday evening, April 28, the actual date of the 1688 Protest, the 300th Anniversary Committee organized an Interfaith Service on the theme "Freedom from Addiction." About one hundred people, mostly from the hosting congregation, participated in the service, which was followed by a short candlelight vigil at the site of the 1688 Protest - opposite a liquor store, two bars and one of the heavier drug trafficking sections of Germantown. Many of the participants spoke of the "deeply spiritual" feeling of the service, but with this event, too, the low level of participation was disturbing. Because of the full agenda of activities before the 300th Anniversary Committee, this particular event did not get as much attention as it needed.
G. Mayor's Reception

In conjunction with the German Society of Pennsylvania, the City Representatives Office organized a reception and luncheon on Thursday, April 28 in honor of the 1688 Protest. Although the 300th Anniversary Committee was consulted in the planning process and provided names for invitees, there was no acknowledgement of Germantown events and programs. A number of people spoke of their disappointment at this oversight. The problem arose primarily to the lack of coordination with the German Society of Pennsylvania, which felt uncomfortable with the political nature of the local Germantown observance effort. Nevertheless, the reception was a treat for the 300th Anniversary Committee and guests, who could enjoy the official acknowledgement of this historical landmark and pause to assess the tremendous organizing tasks accomplished.

H. Play "Prologue to Freedom"

The Germantown Theatre Guild commissioned Rufus Caleb, a local playwright, to write an original play about the 1688 Protest. This fictional account of the events of 1688 performed by professional actors was a great success as theater, but again failed to attract large audiences. The manuscript and the production were truly outstanding and lent a great deal to the overall observance. Organizers were unsuccessful in having the performance videotaped for showing on television. This was a real loss.
IV. Follow-Up

A. Revitalization

The most concrete and lasting contribution of the 300th Anniversary commemoration will be in helping to stimulate efforts for a comprehensive community revitalization in Lower Germantown. The Greater Germantown Housing Development Corporation along with other community groups is targeting a six-block section of Germantown Avenue for housing rehabilitation and the creation of new commercial enterprises. This is a slow and difficult process.

The April Rally was conceived of as an opportunity for a kind of symbolic groundbreaking on this redevelopment program, but delays in funding made this impossible. After eight months of delay, a City contract for $150,000 to do pre-development studies was granted in June. Some other efforts have yielded success. There is a Police Athletic League gym under construction in the target area, as well as a Police Mini-Station scheduled to open for the foot patrol officer in the area. The Germantown Boys and Girls Club is building a new swimming pool. Germantown Avenue is scheduled for resurfacing in 1989. Covenant House Medical Service has expressed a real interest in moving into the new shopping mall/office complex to be built at the old factory site. A German peace and service organization, Action Reconciliation, has moved its US center from Washington D.C. into the neighborhood with the intentions of acquiring property for an office and conference center. The Blushing Zebra Coffee House has also moved into the neighborhood from Mt. Airy, adding to the cultural resources of the community. And a few houses have been acquired for renovation.

Property control remains a major concern, as there have been reports of real estate speculators buying up properties. The 12-month option agreement on the D.F. Walter Factory Site, the largest parcel of land in the target area, runs out in October. There is still no plan, no drawings, not enough site control, no partnership with a developer, and too little funds. The total estimate cost of the Lower Germantown Project, involving the rehabilitation of some 50 houses and the building of a shopping mall/office complex, is $15 to $20 million. Lower Germantown remains an area of great opportunity for targeted urban redevelopment.

B. Youth Leadership

All of the participants in the Youth Leadership Training expressed the desire to see this program continue in some format. The idea of training-and-service-for-pay is a winner. The key will be to develop secure funding and coordination for such programs. Perhaps the program can be linked into an on-going summer employment program, e.g. the Mayor’s summer jobs. Without the specific focus of a major event, the workshop on Marshalling and Logistics could be dropped. It
would be great to add workshops on Sexuality, which would explore gender roles and stereotypes, and a workshop on Addiction, which would look at different forms of substance abuse and compulsive behavior. Like the Unlearning Racism Workshop, these topics would likely excite enthusiastic participation from the teenagers.

In the future, it would be important to budget some financial remunerations for the adult trainers, and to communicate clear information and expectations to the teenagers well in advance of the program. Fifty would be a better size for such groups. Adopting a similar format of $100 per student plus food, supplies and trainer compensation, the total cost of doing this kind of four or five day training would be between $10,000 and $15,000 per session. One idea was to take the Youth Leadership Training on the road into each section of Philadelphia.

The Youth Leadership Training was one of the most important programs developed by the 300th Anniversary Committee. The challenge now is to find some ongoing vehicle to offer this kind of workshop/life experience for teenagers.

C. Historical Observance

The Anti-Slavery Protest of 1688 was an excellent occasion for doing community organizing in a neighborhood at risk. In the past, the historical preservation efforts in Germantown have been out of sync with community concerns. In this 300th Anniversary commemoration, a new alliance was formed, new networks made. There remains opportunities to continue in this direction. The Germantown Historical Society, for instance, is hosting the Smithsonian exhibition "From Field to Factory", dealing with the migration of African Americans in the early part of this century. This exhibition is of great interest to the predominantly African American population of Germantown today. Other historical events, like the annual reenactment of the Battle of Germantown or the Rittenhouse Family Reunion, provide additional examples. The linking of Germantown's rich history to efforts to move beyond today's poverty could hold great promise for the future revitalization of the community. As part of this effort, the organizers of the 300th Anniversary commemoration are also committed to some kind of continuing annual commemoration of the 1688 Protest.