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Dear First Name,

Three hundred years ago—1717, when Blackbeard the Pirate was a threat—an intrepid group of German-speaking families (many of whom first met in London) arrived tired and weary at Fort Germana in Virginia, which was the western frontier of the fledgling American colonies. There they joined other German colonists who had arrived a few years earlier and now made their homes at the Fort and worked as rangers to identify likely iron mines.

This second group of colonists had been packed off as indentured servants by the captain of their ship and forced to work in Virginia, instead of their original destination of Pennsylvania. This was not what they had planned and you can imagine the conversation around the camp fires and hearths.

**After seven long years, they were given their long-sought freedom.**

They could finally begin experiencing the opportunities that the promise of America held for those who worked hard, made sacrifices for a better future, and cherished freedoms and liberties that no other country allowed. They came to America to honor God as their conscience would direct them by planting their families and their new community on the frontier of America.

**The story doesn't end there.** The descendants of the Fort Germana colonists grew more numerous and spread throughout the country as it also grew. Every State in our Union has someone like you who is connected with Germana and has made an impact there on their family, community, State and Nation. Even through ups and downs, those basic core Germana values have remained.

But now 300 years later, a general amnesia seems to have descended on Americans. They have forgotten their shared core values because these are either not taught in school or aren't being passed down from previous generations. Looking at the news headlines of today shows the result of this: a false narrative of our common history that is being distorted, with increasing tendency towards violence, hatred and division.

**America needs more than ever before in her history to remember and return to the core values that the Germana colonists believed in as new Americans.** And here is how you can help keep their story and legacy alive—and impact today's world.

The Germana Foundation that you help support doesn't just preserve buildings. We as a community pass on our precious heritage and core values to America that our 300 year perspective provides. Recalling another important anniversary this year when 500 years ago Martin Luther stated, "**here I stand, I can do no other,**" we, too, **believe in the importance of these core values also state to the world: Here we stand; we can do no other.**

To promote these basic core American values means the focus of the Germana Foundation is educating and engaging the public about the deeper, hopeful story of Fort Germana, its colonists and their descendants throughout the country:

- We **completed our second full season of archaeological investigations** by Dr. Eric Larsen and other professional archaeologists and student interns to find Fort Germana. Renowned archaeologist William Kelso, who was knighted by Queen Elizabeth for discovering Fort Jamestown, is our advisor and visited the Fort Germana site in July to see its progress. Our goal is to have the Fort Germana/Enchanted Castle site be named a National Historic Landmark which will guarantee the Germana story—**which is your story**—will be remembered for posterity among **all Americans.**

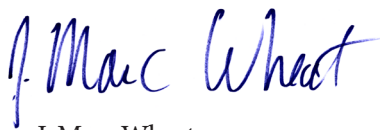
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- This year we unveiled a new **orientation video** on our website and at the Visitor Center that explains the story of Germanna to visitors. Be sure to watch it on Germanna.org!
- Our Foundation **investigates and researches Germanna's history and her "family of families."** While we learn of our people's greed, folly and sin, we also learn how they rose above it all through generosity, stewardship and redemption. This year we completed the 21st *Germanna Record* publication of a Germanna family and more are planned.
- We are a **depository and the safe keepers of your genealogical research into your Germanna families to ensure your hard work and legacy is not lost.** Our Germanna descendant database now has over 113,000 individuals. Have you sent in your research to the Germanna Foundation yet?
- Our **Germanna DNA project continues** under the leadership of Germanna descendant Glenn Cress (who worked on NASA's Apollo program in Mission Control), which helps people like you find their way back to their Germanna roots through innovative 21st century technology.
- We have a **vibrant and active community of people like you who share a love of history and genealogy.** We see this every year at our annual conference and reunion held for the past 60 years since 1957 where "cousins" meet and lasting bonds of friendships are formed. This year we hosted the largest reunion ever.
- We take seriously our stewardship of a historic and architecturally important 18th century manor house called Salubria. Because of your support, we were able to make post-earthquake repairs and now **Salubria is becoming the center of community life again as it hosts public and private events.** Its dramatic and original architecture has also made it a popular wedding photography session site. **Wonderful memories are being made there again—all because of you.**

Enclosed with this letter is a beautiful new publication of ours that gives you a deeper overview of all that the Germanna Foundation does and the important part you play in furthering our mission as well as how to make our shared goals a success by a variety of gift-giving options. Please read it carefully and **you may be surprised to find that the Foundation's stewardship responsibility is much bigger than you realized!** On the enclosed Response Form, we've listed all of the projects and activities that your support will help fund. Please fill out the back of that form and send it to us with your most generous donation.

**We are at a true crossroads in America.** Will you take your stand AGAINST the rising tides of amnesia and false history in this country and FOR the basic American core values that your Germanna ancestors believed in? Your generous support of the mission of the Germanna Foundation helps us keep these values alive and well. Please consider giving \$100, \$1000 or even more. Every gift counts and will have lasting impact.

Thank you for your support,



J. Marc Wheat  
President  
The Germanna Foundation

P.S. Many people think that their Germanna Foundation membership dues helps pay for all of our projects and stewardship responsibilities. In fact, that only covers things like the website and newsletters. 90% of the Foundation's funding is provided by donations from individuals like you. **Every size of gift and donation is needed and so important.** Please carefully read through the enclosed book and list of projects and this year, more than ever, make your most generous donation. Page 26 and 27 of the book lists many different ways you can give to Germanna to ensure the legacy of you and your family are not forgotten. **America needs the Germanna Foundation more than ever, and I am asking you to give generously.** Thank you!