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#### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

#### **New York, DC, and Philadelphia Gay Men's Chorus to Perform at LGBT 50th Anniversary Celebration**

*Philadelphia, Pennsylvania – December 1, 2014* – The organized LGBT civil rights movement was launched when activists from New York, DC, and Philadelphia staged demonstrations for equality each July 4th in front of Independence Hall. The first of five Annual Reminders was held on July 4, 1965. These Annual Reminders organized by Frank Kameny and Barbara Gittings, the father and mother of the movement laid the groundwork for Stonewall in 1969 and the first New York Pride Parade in 1970.

The 50th Anniversary Celebration of the LGBT civil rights movement will be held July 2 to 5, 2015 in Philadelphia. The 50th Anniversary Ceremony will occur on Saturday afternoon, July 4th on a large stage directly in front of Independence Hall .

“It will be moving to have choruses from the three cities which launched the LGBT civil rights movement perform *America the Beautiful* with Independence Hall as the backdrop,” stated Malcolm Lazin, Chair, 50th Anniversary Celebration. “In 1965, there were approximately 200 gay activists in the United States with about 50 activists located in New York to DC. When 40 people staged the first Annual Reminder on July 4, 1965, it was the largest demonstration for gay equality in the history of the world.”

“The Philadelphia Gay Men’s Chorus is honored to host this collaboration of singers from The New York City Gay Men’s Chorus, The Gay Men’s Chorus of Washington, DC, and The Philadelphia Gay Men’s Chorus, in honor and celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the LGBT Civil Rights Movement. I am particularly excited to lead this group of singers, as we continue to share our message of hope and respect through our music,” stated Joe Buches, Artistic Director, Philadelphia Gay Men’s Chorus.

“Members of the New York City Gay Men’s Chorus are absolutely delighted to be involved in this historic celebration. In 50 years we’ve come a long way, although there’s much more to do before we can declare full equality. I’m especially pleased that all three choruses will sing together – it’s something we love to do, and it’s going to sound incredible,” stated Charles Beale, Artistic Director, New York City Gay Men’s Chorus.

“We are tremendously honored to have been asked to collaborate with the Philadelphia Gay Men’s Chorus and New York City Gay Men’s Chorus to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the LGBT movement. We are excited to have the opportunity to join this festival chorus, and to make this tremendous statement for equality,” stated Thea Kano, Artistic Director, Gay Men’s Chorus of Washington DC.

The 50th Anniversary Celebration includes legal and political panels, Gay Pioneers screening with special guests, fireworks, LGBT history exhibits, parties, Gay Pioneers historic marker wreath laying, concerts, street festival, and 50th Anniversary Ceremony at Independence Hall. Most events will take place on or near Independence Mall, Independence National Historical Park.

For more information, visit [www.lgbt50th.org](http://www.lgbt50th.org) and [www.gaypioneers.com](http://www.gaypioneers.com).

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