

Book club
presents
Juneteenth

Knowledge is power series

June·teenth

- ◇ a holiday celebrated on 19 June to commemorate the emancipation of enslaved people in the US. The holiday was first celebrated in Texas, where on that date in 1865, in the aftermath of the Civil War, slaves were declared free under the terms of the 1862 Emancipation Proclamation.
- ◇ Juneteenth became a state holiday in Texas in 1980, and a number of other states subsequently followed suit. The day is also celebrated outside the United States, with organizations in a number of countries using the day to recognize the end of slavery and to celebrate the culture and achievements of African Americans.

Why all Americans should honor Juneteenth

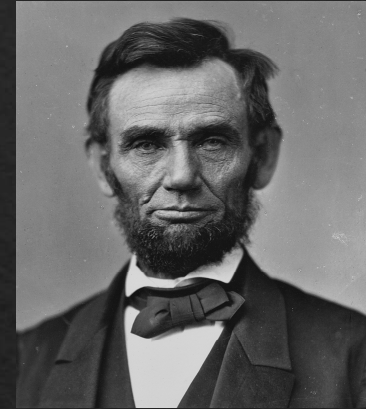


History

- ◇ Juneteenth (short for “June Nineteenth”) marks the day when federal troops arrived in Galveston, Texas in 1865 to take control of the state and ensure that all enslaved people be freed. The troops’ arrival came a full two and a half years after the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation. Juneteenth honors the end to slavery in the United States and is considered the longest-running African American holiday.

Emancipation Proclamation

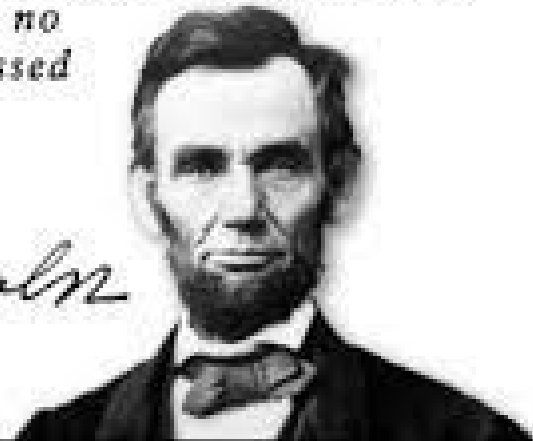
- ◆ On September 22, 1862, President [Abraham Lincoln](#) issued the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation, which declared that as of January 1, 1863, all enslaved people in the states currently engaged in rebellion against the Union “shall be then, thenceforward, and forever free.”
- ◆ Abraham Lincoln was an American lawyer and statesman who served as the 16th president of the United States from 1861 until his assassination in 1865. Lincoln led the nation through the American Civil War, the country's greatest moral, cultural, constitutional, and political crisis



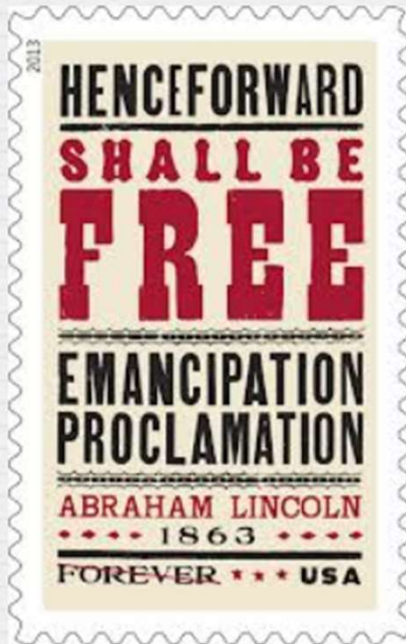
"If I could save the Union without freeing any slave I would do it; and if I could save it by freeing all the slaves I would do it; and if I could save it by freeing some and leaving others alone I would also do that.... I have here stated my purpose according to my view of official duty; and I intend no modification of my oft-expressed personal wish that all men everywhere could be free."

Abraham Lincoln

August 22, 1862



THE 13TH AMENDMENT



The 13th Amendment to the United States Constitution is the law which Abraham Lincoln passed under his presidency. The amendment states “Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime where of the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction.”(ourdocuments.gov). So basically, the amendment states there are no slaves allowed in the United States and all men are free. In 1864, the amendment passed the U.S. Senate, which is the first step of having the U.S. Constitution amended. The second step, is to have the House of Representatives have to pass it by two thirds or more vote. In this case the House didn’t approve the abolishment of slavery because of the influence of the Democrats. The Democrats supported the institution of slavery. However, the second time the abolishing of slavery was brought to the House of Representatives, it passed because of the recent election. The results of the recent election brought more Republicans to the House and more of the Democrats changed their views due to the fact that the Union army at that point was winning the war. The amendment was passed on January 31, 1865, but Lincoln declared the Emancipation Proclamation nearly two years before. During

the Civil War the Union started freeing slaves as they won victories. So, when the Emancipation Proclamation was declared, some places that weren’t captured yet by the Union, were oblivious on what to do. On July 22, 1862, after hearing Lincoln’s first draft of the Emancipation Proclamation, many of Lincoln’s cabinet members thought he should hold back on the idea because of the of their position in the war, but Lincoln's main goal was to free the slaves forever and restore the Union.



Crowds of people, recently freed from enslavement, carry copies of the [Emancipation Proclamation](#) in this 1864 illustration.

Hulton Archive/Getty Images

◇ Juneteenth and Slavery in Texas

- ◇ In Texas, slavery had continued as the state experienced no large-scale fighting or significant presence of Union troops. Many enslavers from outside the Lone Star State had moved there, as they viewed it as **a safe haven** for slavery.
- ◇ After the war came to a close in the spring of 1865, General Granger's arrival in Galveston that June signaled freedom for Texas's 250,000 enslaved people. Although emancipation didn't happen overnight for everyone—in some cases, enslavers withheld the information until after harvest season—celebrations broke out among newly freed Black people, and Juneteenth was born. That December, slavery in America was formally abolished with the adoption of the **13th Amendment**.



A photograph of a group of formerly enslaved people at a county almshouse, circa 1900.

FREEDOM TO SLAVES!

Whereas, the President of the United States did, on the first day of the present month, issue his *Proclamation* declaring "that *all persons held as Slaves in certain designated States, and parts of States, are, and henceforward shall be free,*" and that the Executive Government of the United States, including the Military and Naval authorities thereof, would recognize and maintain the freedom of said persons. *And Whereas, the county of Frederick is included in the territory designated by the Proclamation of the President, in which the Slaves should become free,* I therefore hereby notify the citizens of the city of Winchester, and of said County, of said Proclamation, and of my intention to maintain and enforce the same.

I expect all citizens to yield a ready compliance with the Proclamation of the Chief Executive, and I admonish all persons disposed to resist its peaceful enforcement, that upon manifesting such disposition by acts, they will be regarded as rebels in arms against the lawful authority of the Federal Government and dealt with accordingly.

All persons liberated by said Proclamation are admonished to abstain from all violence, and immediately betake themselves to useful occupations.

The officers of this command are admonished and ordered to act in accordance with said proclamation and to yield their ready co-operation in its enforcement.

R. H. Milroy,
Brig. Gen'l Commanding.

Winchester Va.

Jan. 5th, 1863.



Students and teachers stand outside the Freedmen's Bureau school in Beaufort, South Carolina, circa 1865.

Following the end of the Civil War, several schools opened up for Black families—and literacy rates climbed steadily. Read [more](#).

Corbis/Getty Images

Let's watch !!



- ◇ The year following 1865, freedmen in Texas organized the first of what became the annual celebration of "Jubilee Day" on June 19. In the ensuing decades, Juneteenth commemorations featured music, barbecues, prayer services and other activities, and as Black people migrated from Texas to other parts of the country the Juneteenth tradition spread.
- ◇ In 1979, [Texas became the first state](#) to make Juneteenth an official holiday. Today, nearly all 50 states, either officially or unofficially, [recognize](#) Juneteenth as a holiday. Efforts to make it a national holiday have so far stalled in Congress.

State holiday!



Official state holiday !

- ◆ **Some cities and counties have recognized Juneteenth through proclamation. In 2020, Juneteenth was formally recognized by New York City (as an annual official city holiday and public school holiday, starting in 2021), although in 2022 it will be observed as a school holiday on June 20th.**

Read aloud time!



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