

JUNETEENTH

Freedom Day

JUNETEENTH IS THE OLDEST KNOWN CELEBRATION COMMEMORATING THE ENDING OF SLAVERY IN THE UNITED STATES. DATING BACK TO 1865, IT WAS ON JUNE 19TH THAT UNION SOLDIERS LANDED IN GALVESTON, TEXAS WITH THE NEWS THAT THE WAR HAD ENDED AND THAT THE ENSLAVED WERE NOW FREE-HAPPENING TWO AND HALF YEARS AFTER ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION.

THOUGH THE FIRST JUNETEENTH WAS JUNE 19TH, 1865, BLACK PEOPLE WEREN'T NECESSARILY ABLE TO ENJOY THEIR FREEDOM WIDELY. THERE WERE STILL FORMER CONFEDERATE SOLDIERS GOING THROUGH THE SOUTH, THREATENING AND LYNCHING PEOPLE, TRYING TO RE-ENSLAVE THEM.

THE FIRST JUNETEENTH CELEBRATION TOOK PLACE IN 1866 WHERE FORMER SLAVES SANG, DANCED AND READ THE EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION OUT LOUD.

SINCE THEN, CELEBRATIONS HAVE EVOLVED AND BECOME A REAL WAY TO PAY HOMAGE TO THOSE WHO CAME BEFORE US IN VARIOUS WAYS. TODAY, WE CELEBRATE JUNETEENTH AS A DAY OF REMEMBRANCE, EDUCATION AND FELLOWSHIP. WE HONOR OUR ANCESTORS, REFLECT ON THE PAST, ACKNOWLEDGE OUR ACHIEVEMENTS AND LOOK TO THE FUTURE AS A STRONG, LIBERATED PEOPLE.



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