

A BRIEF HISTORY OF JUNETEENTH

JUNETEENTH EMANCIPATION DAY CELEBRATION,
JUNE 19, 1900, TEXAS BY MRS. CHARLES STEPHENSON
VIA WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

JUNETEENTH

by Liz Palmer

The Emancipation Proclamation, enforced by the Thirteenth Amendment took effect on January 1, 1863, freeing all enslaved African Americans in Confederate States. However, all enslaved African Americans were not freed, and it wouldn't be until two-and-a-half years later that all enslaved African Americans would be free.

The National Museum of African American History and Culture (NMAAHC) writes, "even though the Emancipation Proclamation was made effective in 1863, it could not be implemented in places still under Confederate control. As a result, in the westernmost Confederate state of Texas, enslaved people would not be free until much later. Freedom finally came on June 19, 1865, when some 2,000 Union troops arrived in Galveston Bay, Texas. The army announced that the more than 250,000 enslaved black people in the state were free by executive decree. This day came to be known as "Juneteenth," by the newly freed people in Texas."

Juneteenth is remembered as the second independence day in America, recognizing that June 19, 1865 was the day that all Americans were made free by law. Let the observation of Juneteenth serve as a sobering reminder that liberation and freedom was not always granted equally to all Americans.

RESOURCES

<https://juneteenth.com/>
<https://nmaahc.si.edu/blog-post/historical-legacy-juneteenth>
<https://www.pbs.org/wnet/african-americans-many-rivers-to-cross/history/what-is-juneteenth/>

Additional Resources:

1619 Podcast -

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/23/podcasts/1619-podcast.html>

Lonnie Burch, III, founding director of NMAAHC leads a tour through the Slavery and Freedom Exhibition <https://nmaahc.si.edu/blog-post/celebrating-juneteenth>

