

The Bandera PROPHEET

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Today in Texas History

By Bandera Spirits of Texas
The Bandera Prophet

On this day in 1865, Union general Gordon Granger read the Emancipation Proclamation (originally issued by Abraham Lincoln in 1863) in Galveston, thus belatedly bringing about the freeing of 250,000 slaves in Texas.

The event, now celebrated as "Juneteenth," eventually gave rise to an annual day of thanksgiving ceremonies, public entertainment, picnics, and family reunions. Some communities have set aside land, known as Emancipation Parks, for celebrations on Juneteenth.

In 1979 Governor William P. Clements signed an act making the day a state holiday. The first state-sponsored Juneteenth celebration took place the next year.