

MIDDLETON PLACE FOUNDATION

JUNETEENTH

CELEBRATION

June 19, 2020

BACKGROUND

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 the Union soldiers, led by Major General Gordon Granger, landed at Galveston, Texas with news that the war had ended and that the enslaved were now free. Note that this was two and a half years after President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation - which had become official January 1, 1863.



Historic Gullah Interpreter Sharon Cooper-Murray performing in front of Eliza's House.

The reactions to this profound news ranged from pure shock to immediate jubilation. The celebration of June 19th was coined "Juneteenth" and grew with more participation from descendants. The Juneteenth celebration was a time for reassuring each other, for praying and for gathering remaining family members. Juneteenth continued to be highly revered in Texas decades later, with many former slaves and descendants making an annual pilgrimage back to Galveston on this date.

A range of activities were provided to entertain the masses, many of which continue in tradition today. Rodeos, fishing, barbecuing and baseball are just a few of the typical Juneteenth activities you may witness today. Juneteenth almost always focused on education and self-improvement. Thus, often guest speakers are brought in and the elders are called upon to recount the events of the past. Prayer services were also a major part of these celebrations.

Juneteenth today, celebrates African American freedom and achievement, while encouraging continuous self-development and respect for all cultures. As it takes on a more national, symbolic and even global perspective, the events of 1865 in Texas are not forgotten, for all of the roots tie back to this fertile soil from which a national day of pride is growing.

Middleton Place Foundation is a 501 (c) 3 Educational Trust. The mission of the Foundation is to connect people to the past, inspiring a deeper understanding of ourselves and each other through American History.

Juneteenth Celebration at Middleton Place National Historic Landmark

June 19th 9:30am-3:30pm

50% off Regular Adult Admission. Students and Children 6-18 \$5, Children under 6 Free.

REVERENCE

9:30 AM -11:00 AM PRESENTATION OF NAMES OF ENSLAVED PEOPLE

This year the Juneteenth Celebration at Middleton Place will open with a presentation of the names of over 2800 Africans and African-Americans who were enslaved here, many of whom were not alive by the time emancipation came. Members of the community will come together to speak their names and honor their memories in this solemn morning reading.

CELEBRATION

11:00-3:00pm PICNIC “Pig Pickin” on the Greensward

\$10/person (meat plus 2 sides and a drink)

Certain foods became popular and subsequently synonymous with Juneteenth celebrations such as strawberry soda-pop. More traditional and just as popular was the barbecuing, through which Juneteenth participants could share in the spirit and aromas that their ancestors, the newly emancipated African Americans, would have experienced during their ceremonies. Hence, the barbecue pit is often established as the center of attention at Juneteenth celebrations.

EDUCATIONAL / INTERPRETIVE

11:00-3:30pm Ongoing throughout the Day

PRESENTATIONS

- Day of Emancipation at Middleton Place (Jamal Hall)
- Taking Care of the Roots to Heal the Tree (Ty Collins)
- “Mama Hattie Remembers: Storytelling & Music: Rose Atterberry
- Screening of “Beyond the Fields” Documentary

ACTIVITIES

- Artisans in the Stableyards
- Children’s Books available for families to read together



Rose Atterberry, “Mama Hattie.” performing “Mama Hattie Remembers.” in front of the Middleton Oak.

Visitors will be required to follow safety guidelines including social distancing. Wearing face coverings is recommended, but not required.