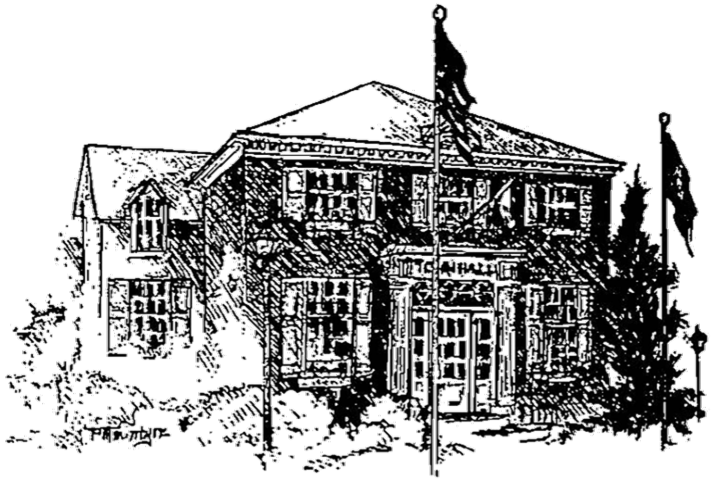


TOWN OF HERNDON, VIRGINIA
PROCLAMATION
JUNETEENTH DAY
JUNE 19, 2025

On June 19, 1865, two and a half years after President Abraham Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation, Union Army General Gordon Granger landed in Galveston, Texas and read aloud General Order No. 3, declaring that all enslaved people were free. The announcement marked a powerful turning point - the final enforcement of emancipation in the last Confederate state. Upon hearing the news, formerly enslaved people celebrated with prayer, music, feasting, and dance. One year later, the first official celebration of **Juneteenth Day**, then called "Jubilee Day," took place.

Recognized today as the oldest national commemoration of the end of slavery in the United States, **Juneteenth Day** is now a Federal Holiday, and is a day of deep reflection, celebration, and education. It honors the history, achievements, and ongoing contributions of Black Americans while also calling us to reckon with our past, confront systemic inequities, and work for a future grounded in justice and inclusion.

In Herndon, we proudly honor and celebrate the historically Black communities of Cooktown and Oak Grove, whose residents helped shape the fabric of our town. From blacksmith Henry Simms, Herndon's first Black business owner, to generations of families who built homes, ran businesses, educated children, and fostered a strong sense of community - their stories are essential to Herndon's story. We recognize their legacy and contributions, even as we continue the work of equity and belonging today.

Therefore, the Mayor of the Town of Herndon, together with the Herndon Town Council, hereby proclaim June 19, 2025, as **Juneteenth Day** in the Town of Herndon. We encourage all residents to take part in learning, listening, celebrating Black culture and history, and actively building a more inclusive and connected community for all. Let us reflect, honor, and move forward, together.