AFRICAN AMERICANS

History

African Americans are usually descendants of enslaved black people and are the third largest racial and ethnic group in the United States. Typically African Americans are of West/Central African and European descent, although some also have American Indigenous ancestry. African-American history starts in the 16th century with peoples from West Africa forcibly taken as slaves to Spanish America, and in the 17th century with West African slaves taken to English colonies in North America. Gradually liberated in the North, the last 4 million black slaves were liberated after the Civil War in 1865. This

has led to the belief that the Civil War was all about slavery; *"history being lies perpetrated on the dead."* Read Abraham Lincoln's inaugural address (below) and consider the 4 slave states (MO, KY, MD, DE) that fought with the Union.

"I have no purpose, directly or indirectly, to interfere with the institution of slavery in the States where it exists. I believe I have no lawful right to do so, and I have no inclination to do so."

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Courtesy Henderson House Museum

eorge W. Bush (c. 1790?-1863) was a key leader of the first group of American citizens to settle north of the Columbia River in what is now Washington. Bush was a successful farmer in Missouri, but as a free African American in a slave state, he faced increasing discrimination and decided to move west. In 1844, Bush and his good friend Michael T. Simmons (1814-1867), a white Irish American, led their families and three others over the Oregon Trail. When they found that racial exclusion laws had preceded them and barred Bush from settling south of the Columbia River, they settled on Puget Sound, becoming the first Americans to do so. Bush established a successful farm near present day Olympia on land that became known as Bush Prairie. He and his family were noted for their generosity to new arrivals and for their friendship with the Nisqually Indians who lived nearby. Bush continued modernizing and improving his farm until his death in 1863. Named George Washington Bush in honor of the nation's first president, he has no known connection to the family of the two later presidents who share with him the name George Bush.

Early Life

George Washington Bush was born in Pennsylvania in the late 1700s. Information about his birth and early years is sparse and conflicting. His birth date was probably around 1790, although some accounts place it more than 10 years earlier, which would have made Bush more than 60 when he and his family followed the Oregon Trail west.

In 1845 Bush settled on a farm near the Hudson's Bay Company's post at the mouth of the Nisqually River (just north of Olympia). The area today is called Bush Prairie. He died before he could see his son serve a 2 year term in the first state legislature in 1889. But he did meet and befriend Nathaniel Crosby from Maine who would one day see his grandson, born in Tacoma in 1901, become world loved - Bing Crosby.

Ethnobotanical Gardens

Native plant "starts" from Bonhoeffer Gardens (to your SW, by the I-5) illustrate 99 foods and materials available to the American peoples who lived here 10,000 years without the need to develop agriculture. Planter boxes contain:

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Legends & Lessons

Answer from the previous (Hawaiian) pedestal: Oregon lawmakers repealed all legislation banning interracial marriage in 1951, sixteen years before the U.S. Supreme Court declared all the Nation's miscegenation laws unconstitutional in 1967.

Among the state's African-descended people, 71%, make their homes in western Washington. Before World War II, the Census counts were small, 1,500 in 1890, less than 50 in Snohomish County. African American's tradition of participation in the US Military explains their residential distributions. The U.S. Army is the best example in the world that integration works in a merit based, fair system of governance.

Washington's northern 3 counties had a fascination with the Ku Klux Klan that experienced a national rebirth in the 1920s and targeted minorities: Jews, Catholics and immigrants. About 40,000 Washington residents joined the Klan by the mid-1920s - 3% of the state's population. A 1924 Klan rally in Issaquah drew 13,000 people; a Stanwood KKK rally attracted 10,000. African Americans were not the focus.

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air and an American Hag suspended from a parachute, fultered down from one of the hombs, Ahuge electricallylighted, white cross loomed in the center of the erstwhite arena, where 10,000 Kik Kikasmen from about the Northwest, had come to stage one of their first outdoor lititation ceremonials. Presently the music stopped. An awesome hush fell mer were the scope as searchights fonded the sky and played

Klu Klux Klan comes on strong

In semi-circles over while rokes and housed ingures, A solitary roked and mounted horseman, bearing a crimson electrically-lighted eross, began to move slowly around the semi-circle leading a block-long line of KKK candidates before the cross,

The Klan challer

Speakers proclaimed the Klan's respect for the law of the nation, with challenge: "The time has come for a Americans to stand shoulder to shoulder for the constitution of the United States, the stainless flag which has neve known defeat, and seldom known retreat." Styrockets and fireworks marked the close of t litation, and set the darkened sky ablaze, Klansm united on the ground at the entrance taking membershi add to the already-enrolled five million America 3000 of which were said to be ministers. More ceremonials were scheduled during the summ it recardless of the future of the order. Starwood y

THE TOWN heard again from the Klansmen durin Christmas week, when five members came to the Metho igit Church, marched up the aisle and handed the pagto an envelope containing a monetary gift from the Order They also presented an American fing to the church Similar visits had been made to four other churchs during the Christmas season.

"Wheezy Ford" picnic In striking contrast to the July ceremonia

picnic "To Glorify Wheezey Fords" staged a month 1 at Warm Beach by Nicklason Auto Company. The old