

Kendleton, Texas

Organized in 1865; Incorporated in 1973

Brief History: Before the end of the Civil War, many slaves from southern plantations were sent to Texas for “safe keeping.” Fort Bend County was one of five plantation counties selected to harbor slaves. When the war ended there were more freed slaves than whites in the county. From 1809-1880 black people constituted a majority in Fort Bend County and controlled the politics for 22 years.

In 1874, nine years after the war ended, W.E. Kendel assisted emancipated slaves by purchasing the western section of Fort Bend County and resold the land to freed slaves to form a Negro County. The land divided into 100 acre plots and sold for .50 to \$1.50 per acre. Some of the freed slaves bought 200 acres and a few paid cash for the land. This area was a boomtown. To express their gratitude, the land purchasers named the town Kendleton, in honor of the man who gave them the opportunity.

Important Sites:

1. Grave site of the first black Republican Representative in the early 1800’s.
2. Cemetery where slaves are buried.
3. Powel Point Cemetery.
4. Paradise Cemetery.
5. Bay Ridge Christian College (oldest college in Fort Bend County).
6. Powell Point Elementary School.

Schools/Colleges:

1. Powell Point Elementary School (Kendleton Independent School District)
Established 1890
2. Bay Ridge Christian College (Established 1953 in Union, Mississippi)
Relocated to Kendleton 1960

Annual Events:

Trail Ride: The Trail Ride held each February has included individuals from this area for over 60 years. The covered wagons and horse back riders camp overnight at the Rodeo campground and continue on to Houston where the Live Stock Show is held. The fundraising promotes college scholarships for students in and around the metropolitan area.

Juneteenth:

Juneteenth commemorates the rich history of this area by celebrating this activity annually. The festival is free to all of the community. Special activities and opportunities to learn about the history of Kendleton are provided for attendees. Activities include a parade, the Mayor’s luncheon, and singing, music by bands, barbeque cook-outs, carnival rides, a petting zoo and the awarding of scholarships.