

FATHERS' DAY HISTORY

Sonora Dodd, of Washington, first had the idea of a "father's day." She thought of the idea for Father's Day while listening to a Mother's Day sermon in 1909.

Sonora wanted a special day to honor her father, William Smart. Smart, who was a Civil War veteran, was widowed when his wife died while giving birth to their sixth child. Mr. Smart was left to raise the newborn and his other five children by himself on a rural farm in eastern Washington state.

After Sonora became an adult she realized the selflessness her father had shown in raising his children as a single parent. It was her father that made all the parental sacrifices and was, in the eyes of his daughter, a courageous, selfless, and loving man. Sonora's father was born in June, so she chose to hold the first Father's Day celebration in Spokane, Washington on the 19th of June, 1910.

President Calvin Coolidge, in 1924, supported the idea of a national Father's Day. Then in 1966 President Lyndon Johnson signed a presidential proclamation declaring the 3rd Sunday of June as Father's Day. President Richard Nixon signed the law that finally made it permanent in 1972.