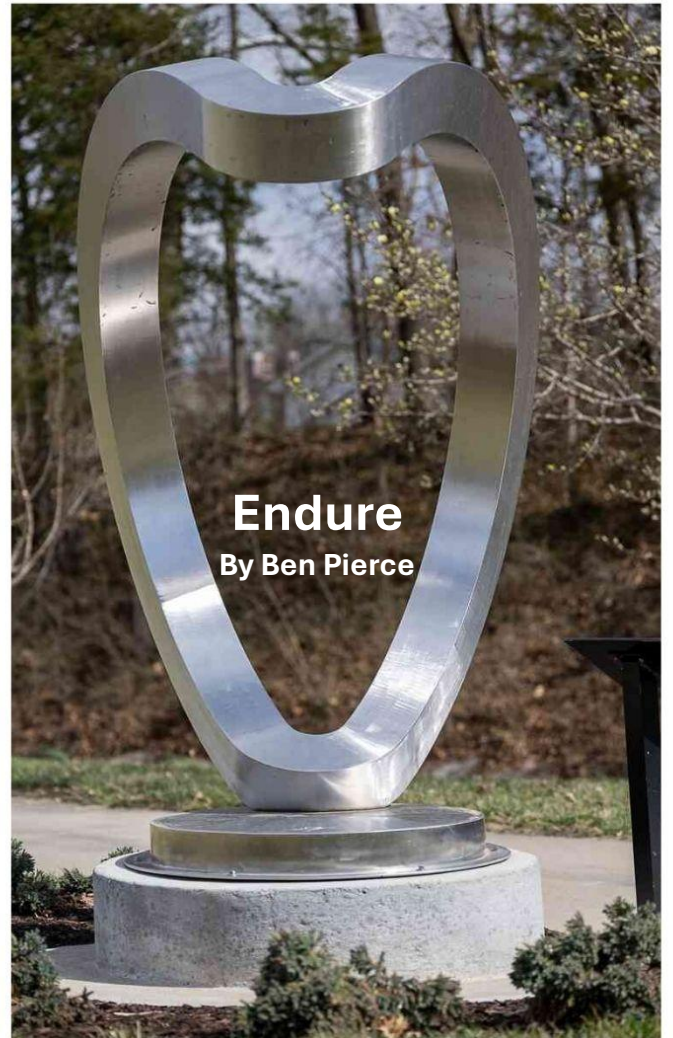




COMMUNITY PARK - 725 MARSHALL ST.





- F: Family**
- M: Military**
- E: Education**
- CE: Culture & Entertainment**
- SR: Sports & Recreation**
- B: Business**

F M

Cathay Williams was born on November 4, 1844, in Independence, MO. She worked as a house slave for William Johnson, a wealthy planter in Jefferson City, until his death. About that time, the American Civil War broke out and she was freed by Union soldiers. Thereafter, Williams worked for the Army as a paid servant.

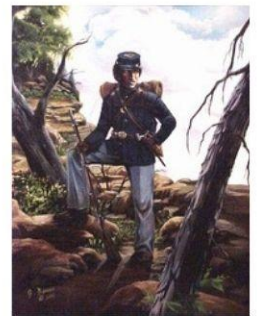
While serving the soldiers, she experienced military life first hand, serving a Colonel Benton in Little Rock, AR. She also served General Phillip Sheridan and his staff. The Army recruited her to go to Washington D.C. as a cook and laundress. While traveling with the Army, Williams witnessed the Shenandoah Valley raids in Virginia.

After leaving Virginia, she traveled to Iowa and St. Louis. When the war ended, Williams wanted to be independent. She became the first African American woman to enlist in the Army on November 15, 1866, as William Cathay in the Thirty-Eighth United States Infantry, Company A (Buffalo Soldiers). Women were not allowed to serve as soldiers, so Williams posed as a man. She was able to do so because a medical examination was not required at the time. Of the approximately 3,800 black infantrymen and cavalrymen who served in the frontier Army between 1866 and 1900, she was the only woman to serve as a Buffalo Soldier, as far as is known. Only her cousin and a friend were aware of her real identity. She marched, trained, and carried out tasks like any other infantry Buffalo Soldier, enduring the harsh conditions of military life.

Company A arrived at Fort Cummings, New Mexico, on October 1, 1867, where her company protected miners and traveling immigrants from Apache attacks. After frequent health issues, her secret was exposed, and her true identity was discovered by an Army surgeon in 1868. Williams was discharged honorably by her commanding officer, Captain Charles E. Clarke, on Oct. 14, 1868.

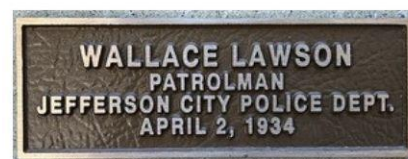
Public Safety & Commitment Inspiration

She lived independently after her military service and later worked as a cook, seamstress, and laundress in New Mexico and Colorado. In 1891 Cathay tried to secure a military pension but despite proof of service and ongoing health problems her request was denied by the U.S. government. She was a trailblazer for women and African Americans in the military and is honored today for her groundbreaking service and defiance of societal norms. Her story represents courage, determination, and the fight for equality in the face of adversity.



M CE B

Wallace Lawson was the city's first police officer killed in the line of duty, making him also the first African American officer to die on the job. This happened on his first day of duty. The national trend at the time was to assign black officers to black neighborhoods. Police officers in Jefferson City were appointed more for their political influence than their training and experience. Officer Lawson was assigned to the Lafayette Street neighborhood when he was killed in the line of duty on April 2, 1934, at the age of 56. He was responding to a disturbance call at the local cafe where the suspect attacked a waiter. His service during a period of significant racial and social challenges highlights his courage and dedication.



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F M B

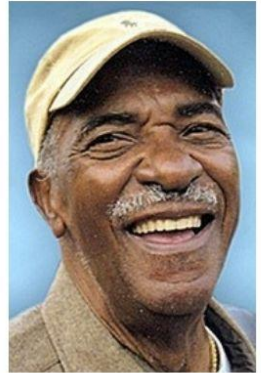
Tony Jenkins was the first black American from Cole County to be killed in World War I. He was drafted June 3rd, 1917. Census Data on Tony Jenkins in 1910 shows he lived in Ward 1 at 505 East Dunklin St. He was a 15-year-old mulatto male, laborer at odd jobs, and could read and write. A 1917 draft card Toney Jenkins shows his date of birth as October 10, 1894. He was living in Richland (township), Howard County, MO. It shows he was working for C&A Railroad and notes he was supporting his father. He was inducted into the US Army in Fayette, MO on October 29, 1917. He started with the "Buffalo Soldiers" of the 92nd Division he was transferred to the 93rd Division, a group of soldiers that acquired the name "Harlem Hellfighters." He died on September 28, 1918, from wounds received in action. His sister Beulah Ramey of Jefferson City, MO was notified. His death was published in the News Tribune on December 16, 1918. On February 1, 1934, at 901 East Dunklin St., the Tony Jenkins American Legion Post 231 and their auxiliary was formed within the community center by 15 veterans. The Tony Jenkins Lodge No. 432 of the Elks was also formed to honor the late veteran (with the "e" removed from his first name). The lodge was later torn down after discovering his origins.



Public Safety & Commitment Inspiration

F M

First black ranking officer accepted by the Jefferson City Fire Department was Earl Turner Logan. Earl worked briefly for Hawthorn Memorial Gardens and at the Jefferson Building before starting his 38 years career with the Jefferson City Fire Department. He retired as a Captain out of Station 1. Earl passed away in 2022 at the age of 81.



M B

The only black policeman that we had were always in the Foot, in the black neighborhoods and they used their own cars. They did not allow them to use the police patrol cars and they could only arrest blacks. There was Herb Bagby, Woodrow Rice, and a guy named JT Groves. -Perry Douglas