

Josephine City: building a community after emancipation — the evidence

The sources behind the Our Clarke story [Josephine City: building a community after emancipation](https://ourclarke.com/stories/josephine/): Following Josephine Williams through the records described by Clermont and the history of Josephine City.

Story	https://ourclarke.com/stories/josephine/
Packet version	v1.0
Last researched on	September 26, 2026
Evidence compiled on	September 27, 2026
Story last updated on	September 26, 2026
Status	Accepted for public release.

These dates describe this packet; each document inside carries its own date. Compiling added no research.

What is in this packet

Seven items: two already-cleared 2013 photographs the story and the school entity already use, reproduced here at full resolution; and five cited sources — the Clermont Farm Foundation's account, two Virginia DHR register pages, the 2015 historic-district nomination, and the museum's own history page. All five stay citation-only: their rights are unclear, and no page image of any of them is reproduced here. The nomination's one recorded image ruling belongs to a different story and a different page, and is not extended to this packet.

What this story keeps apart

The founder. DHR calls Josephine Williams the “presumed namesake” (C08); Clermont tells a more definite founding account. The qualification is kept, not resolved into certainty.

The 1870 purchasers. DHR describes 24 formerly enslaved African Americans buying 31 acres in 1870 (C06, C07); this packet does not identify or resolve all 24.

The school building. Built 1882, moved about 100 feet south ca. 1930, used for home economics until 1971 (C12, C13, C96, C97) — a documented physical history the two illustrative photographs do not themselves establish.

The museum organization. Renovated into the Josephine School Community Museum in 2002, with an inaugural exhibit dated July 12, 2003 (C14, C98). The building and the museum organization are kept as two different records, exactly as the corpus itself keeps them.

Contents

Illustrative photographs · page 2

Cited sources · page 4

Bibliography · page 5



JC-01. Josephine City School, photographed in 2013 (Cecouchman, via Wikimedia Commons).

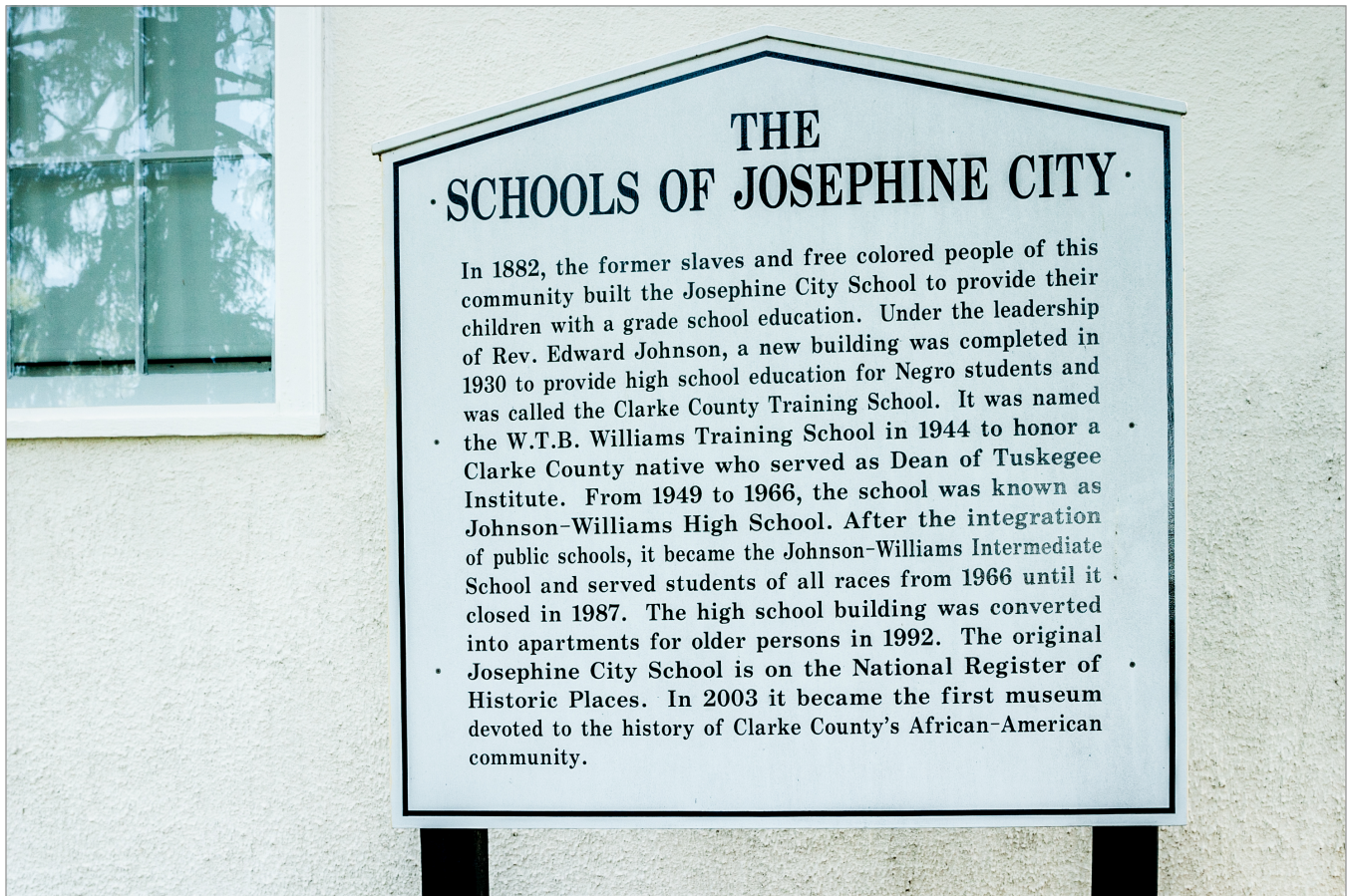
The building as photographed in 2013, already the story's own illustration. It shows the present-day school; it is not evidence of the 1870 land layout or the 1882 construction, which no source in this packet documents with an image.

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Josephine_City_School.jpg

Why it may be reproduced: Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 Unported (Wikimedia Commons file page, source own work).

Photograph by Cecouchman, April 26, 2013, via Wikimedia Commons. Licensed CC BY-SA 3.0.

In the story: [the story](#); [its sources](#)



JC-02. Sign outside the former Josephine City School, photographed in 2013 (Cecouchman, via Wikimedia Commons).

A sign outside the former school, photographed in 2013. It illustrates the building's later, present-day life as a museum (the subject of C96–C98); it is not evidence of the 1882 construction or the ca. 1930 move, and the corpus record already notes its text has not been checked against this story's sources.

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Josephine_City_School_sign.jpg

Why it may be reproduced: Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 Unported (Wikimedia Commons file page, source own work, author Cecouchman).

Photograph by Cecouchman, April 26, 2013, via Wikimedia Commons. Licensed CC BY-SA 3.0.

In the story: [the story](#); [its sources](#)

Cited sources

No image of these sources is included in this packet.

JC-03. Josephine Williams.

<https://www.clermontfarm.org/learn-about-the-people-of-clermont/josephine-williams>

What was read: page text read; the underlying 1867 receipt, 1870 plat and 1871 clerk record it describes were not independently inspected.

Why no image: Rights unclear, and no page image is held or was inspected for this institutional page. No image is reproduced. An institutional account and document descriptions, not the original documents. It identifies Josephine as the Lots 1 and 2 purchaser on the September 1870 plat and names the May 1871 clerk record of the sale with her husband, Phillip Williams; it does not establish her age or death date.

In the story: [the story](#); [its sources](#)

JC-04. Josephine City Historic District, 168-5029.

<https://www.dhr.virginia.gov/historic-registers/168-5029/>

What was read: page text read; the underlying land records were not inspected.

Why no image: Rights unclear. No image is reproduced. Dates the founding to 1870 on a 31-acre parcel bought by 24 formerly enslaved African Americans, and calls Josephine Williams the presumed namesake — a qualification this story keeps, not a settled certainty.

In the story: [the story](#); [its sources](#)

JC-05. Josephine City School, 168-5027.

<https://www.dhr.virginia.gov/historic-registers/168-5027/>

What was read: page text read.

Why no image: Rights unclear. No image is reproduced. Dates the school to 1882, crediting local contributions of labor and money, and describes its 1930 move and later home-economics use through 1971. Distinct from the later Training School building, which this record says must not be conflated with it.

In the story: [the story](#); [its sources](#)

JC-06. Josephine City Historic District, National Register of Historic Places nomination, DHR 168-5029.

https://www.dhr.virginia.gov/VLR_to_transfer/PDFNoms/168-5029_JosephineCityHD_2015_NRHP_FINAL.pdf

What was read: PDF pages inspected for a different, separately scoped visual companion (Milton Valley); read here only as the corpus's existing text citation for C96–C98.

Why no image: Rights unclear, and republication is not established for this document generally. One page of it (PDF p. 24, the Milton Valley Cemetery entry) has a recorded owner-direction release for the separate Milton Valley story; that ruling is scoped to that page and that story and is not generalized to the rest of the nomination or to this one. No image is reproduced here. Adds that the 1882 schoolhouse was moved about 100 feet south, ca. 1930, so the School Board could build a new school on the site, with a plan to convert the old building into a home-economics and agricultural shop; it left educational use in 1971 and was completely renovated in 2002 to become the Josephine School Community Museum. The building and the museum organization are kept as two different records.

In the story: [the story](#); [its sources](#)

JC-07. History.

<https://www.jschoolmuseum.org/history>

What was read: page text read.

Why no image: Rights unclear. No image is reproduced. Dates the museum's inaugural exhibit to July 12, 2003. An institutional history, not a substitute for school-board or building records, and not itself the source for the building's construction or move.

In the story: [the story](#); [its sources](#)

Bibliography

Reproduced in this packet (illustrative photographs)

Josephine City School, photographed in 2013 (Cecouchman, via Wikimedia Commons). https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Josephine_City_School.jpg

Sign outside the former Josephine City School, photographed in 2013 (Cecouchman, via Wikimedia Commons). https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Josephine_City_School_sign.jpg

Cited only; no image included

Josephine Williams. <https://www.clermontfarm.org/learn-about-the-people-of-clermont/josephine-williams>

Josephine City Historic District, 168-5029. <https://www.dhr.virginia.gov/historic-registers/168-5029/>

Josephine City School, 168-5027. <https://www.dhr.virginia.gov/historic-registers/168-5027/>

Josephine City Historic District, National Register of Historic Places nomination, DHR 168-5029. https://www.dhr.virginia.gov/VLR_to_transfer/PDFNoms/168-5029_JosephineCityHD_2015_NRHP_FINAL.pdf

History. <https://www.jschoolmuseum.org/history>