

DALLAS COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION
**THE DALLAS COUNTY
 CHRONICLE**



Dallas County Historical Commission

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**Old Kit Cemetery Marker Ceremony Honors
 Early Settlers and Descendants**

The Texas Historical Commission Marker for Old Kit Cemetery in Irving was dedicated on Saturday, October 27, with numerous descendants of the site’s founder in attendance. Speakers included T. J. Erickson, great-great-grandson of founder David Chadwell Britain; Rebecca Horsman, great-great-granddaughter of community founder Ike Story; and J. Roland Jeter, great-grandson of early area settler Roland Cox.



Former DHC members Wheelice “Pete” Wilson and Charles Brown unveiled the Old Kit Cemetery Texas Historical Commission Marker during the dedication ceremony. The two were instrumental in overseeing the marker application and approval process.

Reverend Joshua Price, Dallas County Commissioner Dr. Elba Garcia, City of Irving Mayor Tommy Gonzales, and Irving City Councilman Michael Gallaway spoke on the heritage of the cemetery and its significance in the history of Dallas County.

Old Kit Cemetery began in 1896, when a family passing near the Elm and West forks of the Trinity River stopped to care for a sick child. When the child died, family members asked local landowner David Chadwell Britain if they could bury the child in a grove on his property. Britain donated the land for a community cemetery. *(story continues on page 2)*

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Commissioners Court Liaison
 Rick Loessberg
 Director of Planning and Development
 411 Elm Street, 3rd Floor
 Dallas, Texas 75202-3301
 214-653-7601

Old Kit Cemetery Marker Ceremony Honors Early Settlers and Descendants (continued from page 1)

Early in the cemetery's development, residents of Kit and other surrounding communities chose their own plots by stepping them off rather than marking precise measurements.

Many early settlers are buried at Old Kit Cemetery, including Aunt Kit King, said by some to be the source of the community's name. Many veterans with service dating back to the Civil War are buried there, as are early German, Belgian and French settlers. The rural community of Kit was later incorporated into the city of Irving.

Old Kit Cemetery Inc. was founded in 1947 and continues to care for the site. Burials are now restricted to direct descendants of early settlers.



Dallas County Commissioner Dr. Elba Garcia and DCHC member Regina Story attended the marker dedication. Dr. Garcia spoke during the ceremony to an audience that included numerous descendants of cemetery founder David Chadwell Britain.

Marker Ceremony Honors Lancaster School



The school site now houses the JD Hall Learning Center at Rocky Crest.

Lancaster citizens and members of the Lancaster High School Centre Street Alumni Association celebrated the dedication of the Rocky Crest School Texas Historical Commission Marker on Saturday, September 8. The marker was sponsored by the LHS Centre Street Alumni Association, whose president, Ellen Clark, introduced local officials and Rocky Crest alumni.

Lancaster mayor Marcus Knight spoke on the history of the school and its role in Dallas County education. The marker was presented by Lancaster Independent School District superintendent Michael McFarland and school board president Ty Jones.

Rocky Crest School, Lancaster's first school for

African American children, opened in 1868 in a former Confederate pistol factory. Soon thereafter, it was known as Lancaster Colored School. In the early 1900s, the school was allowed to offer adult education classes if it paid for electricity. Rocky Crest School had multiple locations and eventually included eight grades. It was the site of many Lancaster community activities.

Rocky Crest School remains one of the area's oldest sites associated with minority education.

Graveyard Marker Dedicated in Cedar Hill



The marker was dedicated on April 29, the anniversary of the tornado that destroyed the town.

The tornado, which killed nine Cedar Hill residents and injured many more, destroyed a church and most homes in the town. Robert Crawford, the town's first preacher and school teacher, donated the land where the tornado victims were buried, thereby establishing the first integrated cemetery in southwest Dallas County.

The small grave site was surrounded by wire fencing and cedar posts. It was protected by early settlers and later by Cedar Hill physician Franklin L. Crawford. The graveyard was designated a Historic Texas Cemetery in 2006.

A Texas Historical Commission Marker for Crawford's Tornado Graveyard was dedicated on Sunday, April 29, the 156th anniversary of a tornado that struck the town of Cedar Hill in 1856. Revered Chris Allen of first United Methodist Church started off the dedication ceremony, and former Cedar Hill councilman Wade Emmert and Karen Aruda, president of the Cedar Hill Historical Society/Museum, welcomed visitors. Local historian Wanda Pitt spoke on "Cedar Mountain Church and the Tornado of 1856." Cedar Hill mayor Rob Franke then unveiled the marker, and all the proceedings were accompanied by recordings from the Sweet Song String Band.



Local historian Wanda Pitt spoke on the history of the Cedar Mountain Methodist Church and the tornado of 1856.



DCHC vice chairman Don Baynham, chairman Ann Spillman, and members Mildred Derrough Pope and Mary Katherine Maddox attended the marker dedication.

The Dallas County Chronicle

The Dallas County Historical Commission is a County board appointed by the Dallas County Commissioners Court. *The Dallas County Chronicle* is a publication of the DCHC for historical groups in Dallas County and the general public. This issue was edited by Charles Stokes, Ann Spillman, and Rick Loessberg. Articles should be sent to Ann Spillman at acspillman@sbcglobal.net or by mail to the Dallas County Historical Commission, 411 Elm Street, 3rd Floor, Dallas, TX 75202-3301. Visit the DCHC on the web at www.dallascounty.org under the "History" option of the "About Us" feature at the top of the webpage.