This form constitutes a public request for the Texas Historical Commission (THC) to consider approval of an Official Texas Historical Marker for the topic noted in this application. The THC will review the request and make its determination based on rules and procedures of the program. Filing of the application for sponsorship is for the purpose of providing basic information to be used in the evaluation process. The final determination of eligibility and therefore approval for a state marker will be made by the THC. This form is to be used for cemetery marker requests only. Please see separate forms for either Recorded Texas Historic Landmark (building) markers or subject markers.

NOTE: The Historic Texas Cemetery (HTC) designation is a prerequisite for HTC markers. If the cemetery is not yet designated, that process must be completed, and not just in process, before applying for a marker. Information regarding the HTC designation can be found on the THC web site: (http://www.thc.state.tx.us/cemeteries/cemhtc.html).

Marker title (must be exactly as listed in the HTC designation): Old Kit Cemetery

County: Dallas

Town (nearest county town on state highway map): Irving

Street address of marker site or directions from town noted above: 1415

NOTE: Historic Texas Cemetery markers must be placed at the cemetery being marked. They cannot be placed on right-of-way maintained by the Texas Department of Transportation.

Historic Texas Cemetery markers

Definition:
Historic Texas Cemetery markers are only for burial grounds previously approved for HTC designation. These markers recognize the historical significance of a cemetery and, with the use of interpretive plaques, provide background on associated communities, families, events and customs. HTC markers must be placed at the cemetery, but since cemeteries are protected under other existing laws, they convey no restrictions on the property.

Criteria:
1. **HTC designation**: All steps of the HTC designation process must be completed by the time of application for the HTC marker.
2. **Historical/cultural significance**: Completion of the HTC designation does not ensure approval for an HTC marker; it is only a prerequisite. The application for an HTC marker with an interpretive plaque must include the same type of detailed history required for other markers. In addition to the Context, Overview, Significance and Documentation sections, it must also include a Description section that provides a detailed overview of the physical site.
and includes mention of the cemetery setting and descriptions of significant landscape features or noteworthy burial markers and funereal practices.

**Special Considerations for HTC markers:**
- HTC medallions can be ordered separately, but only for placement with a previously awarded THC marker that provides interpretation for the cemetery.
- Cemeteries are not eligible for subject markers or Recorded Texas Historic Landmark markers.
- The narrative history component is not required if the sponsorship application is for an HTC medallion or for an HTC medallion with name and date plaque. It is required, however, for all other HTC markers. In all cases, though, a complete, current sponsorship application form is required.
- HTC medallions and interpretive plaques (including name and date plaques) must be displayed together. That is, they must appear as designed, with the medallion immediately above the plaque.

**APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS**
Any individual, group or county historical commission (CHC) may apply to the THC to request an Official Texas Historical Marker for what it deems a worthy topic. Only complete marker applications that contain all the required elements can be accepted or processed by the THC. For HTC markers with interpretive plaques, the required elements are: sponsorship application form; narrative history; and documentation.
- Completed applications must be duly reviewed, verified and approved by the county historical commission (CHC) in the county in which the marker will be placed.
- The sponsorship application form, narrative history and documentation must be submitted as Microsoft Word or Word-compatible documents and sent via email attachments to the THC by no later than November 15, 2010. **THC email accepts mail no larger than 10 MB.**
- Required font style and type size are a Times variant and 12-point.
- Narrative histories must be typed in a double-spaced (or 1.5-spaced) format and include separate sections on context, overview, significance and documentation.
- The narrative history must include documentation in the form of reference notes, which can be either footnotes or endnotes. Documentation associated with applications should be broad-based and demonstrate a survey of all available resources, both primary and secondary.
- Upon notification of the successful preliminary review of required elements by the THC, a non-refundable application fee of $100 is required. The fee shall be submitted to the THC within ten working days of application receipt notification.

**APPROVAL BY COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION**
The duly appointed marker representative (chair or marker chair) noted below for the county historical commission will be the sole contact to the THC for this marker application. To ensure accuracy, consistency and efficiency, all information from and to the THC relative to the application—and throughout the review and production processes—will be via direct communication with the CHC representative. All other inquiries (calls, emails, letters) to the THC will be referred to the CHC representative for response. By filling out the information below and filing the application with the THC, the CHC representative is providing the THC with notice that the application and documentation have been reviewed and verified by the CHC and that the material meets all current requirements of the Official Texas Historical Marker program.
As chair or duly appointed marker chair, I certify the following:
☐ Representatives of the CHC have met or talked with the potential marker sponsor and discussed the marker program policies as outlined on the THC web site. CHC members have reviewed the history and documentation for accuracy and made corrections or notes as necessary. It is the determination of the CHC that the topic, history and documentation meet criteria for eligibility.

Name of CHC contact (chair or marker chair):
Mailing address: City, Zip:
Daytime phone (with area code): Email address (required):

CHC comments or concerns about this application, if any:

PERMISSION OF CEMETARY ADMINISTRATOR FOR MARKER PLACEMENT
Cemetery association representative or property manager (required): Emily K. Wilkin
Address: 701 S. Delaware St. City, State, Zip: Irving, Tx 75060 Phone: 214-460-4026

NOTE: The cemetery association or surrounding property owners will not receive copies of general correspondence from the THC. All procedural correspondence (notice of receipt, requests for additional information, inscriptions, shipping notices, etc.) — with the exception of payment notices, if applicable — will be sent via email to the CHC representative, who is encouraged to share the information with all interested parties as necessary.

SPONSORSHIP PAYMENT INFORMATION
Prospective sponsors please note the following:
- Payment must be received in full within 45 days of the official approval notice and must be accompanied by the THC payment form. The THC is unable to process partial payments or to delay payment due to processing procedures of the sponsor. Applications not paid in the time frame required may, at the sole discretion of the THC, be cancelled or postponed.
- Payment relates to sponsorship of the marker in partnership with the THC, which provides the match for program costs.
- Payment does not constitute ownership of a marker; Historic Texas Cemetery markers and other Official Texas Historical Markers are the property of the State of Texas.
- If, at any time during the marker process, sponsorship is withdrawn, a refund can be processed, but the THC will retain the application fee of $100.
- The Official Texas Historical Marker Program provides no means of recognizing sponsors through marker texts, incising or supplemental plaques.

Marker sponsor (may be individual or organization): Emily K. Wilkin

Contact person (if applicable):
Mailing address: 701 S. Delaware St. City, Zip: Irving 75060
Email address (required): emilywilkin@ebby.com Phone: 214-460-4026
SHIPPING INSTRUCTIONS
In order to facilitate delivery of the marker, residence addresses, post office box numbers and rural route numbers are not permitted. To avoid additional shipping charges or delays, use a business street address (open 8 a.m.—5 p.m., Monday through Friday).

Name: Emily K. Wilkin

Street address: 1415 Irving Blvd. City, Zip: Irving, 75060

Daytime phone (required): 214-460-4026 Email (required): emilywilkin@ebby.com

TYPE AND SIZE OF HISTORIC TEXAS CEMETERY MARKERS
As part of its review process, the THC will determine the appropriate size marker and provide options, if any, for the approved topic based on its own review criteria, including, but not exclusive of, historical significance, replication of information in other THC markers, relevance to the Statewide Preservation Plan and the amount of available documented information provided in the application narrative. In making its determination, however, the THC will also take into account the preference of the CHC, as noted below.

The sponsor/CHC prefers the following size marker:
- 27” x 42” HTC marker with post ($1,500)
- 27” X 42” HTC marker without post* ($1,500)
- 18” x 28” HTC marker with post ($1,000)
- 18” x 28” HTC marker without post* ($1,000)
- HTC medallion (only for cemeteries with existing Official Texas Historical Marker) ($300)
- HTC medallion and name and date plaque, with post ($650)
- HTC medallion and name and date plaque, without post ($650)

*For an HTC marker without post, indicate to what surface material it will be mounted:
- wood
- masonry
- metal
- other (specify)

SUBMITTING THE APPLICATION (via email required)
When the CHC has determined the application is complete, the history has been verified and the topic meets the requirements of the Official Texas Historical Marker Program, the materials should be forwarded to the THC via email at the following address:
markerapplication@thc.state.tx.us.
- The CHC or marker chair should send an email containing the following attachments (see attachment function under file menu or toolbox on your computer):
  - This application form
  - The subject history and documentation if the application is for an interpretive marker (no history required for either medallion only or medallion and name and date plaque orders)

RECORDS RETENTION BY CHC: The CHC must retain hard copies of the application as well as an online version, at least for the duration of the marker process. The THC is not responsible for lost applications, for incomplete applications or for applications not properly filed
according to the program requirements. For additional information about any aspect of the Official Texas Historical Marker Program, visit the Markers page on the THC web site (http://www.thc.state.tx.us/markerdesigns/madmark.html).
OLD KIT CEMETERY

Sometime in the year 1896, a family traveling west through the area known as Kit, stopped to care for a sick child. Sadly, the child died and the bereaved family asked David Chadwell Britain if the child could be buried in the grove of trees where they had camped while caring for the child. With that, D.C. Britain donated a one and one half acre tract of land for use as a cemetery in the community of Kit. The location of the child’s grave is unknown, and the family name faded from memories long ago.

At the early start of 1896, D. C. Britain also deeded a one acre tract of land to the trustees of the New Providence Baptist Church, stipulating that the land was to be continuously used for church purposes, or revert back to Britain heirs upon cessation of use for church purposes. Subsequent to the New Providence Baptist Church, the building was used by the Glad Tidings Tabernacle, Assembly of God Church, then sold to the East Side Church of Christ and currently is occupied by the Assemblea Apostolica de La Fe.

In a letter to Mary Erickson, great great granddaughter of D.C. Britain, Earl Lee Britain, great grandson of David Chadwell Britain, said his grandfather moved from Lee County, Virginia in the late 1840s to Wilson County, Tennessee, near Lebanon. He married Miss Martha Leeman. Miss Leeman was related to the Warren family, for whom Warren County Tennessee was named. Miss Leeman was also related to General Nathanael Greene of Revolutionary War Fame.

Mr. Britain allowed other families living in the community of Kit to choose their own plots in the cemetery. These plots were stepped off, not measured. Therefore the lots were not exact feet and inches. Many early settlers of the area are interred in Kit cemetery, including the lady for whom Kit was named, depending on which source is used. One source attributes the name to Aunt Kit King, otherwise known as Catherine King, wife of Smith King.

Other settler families included the English, Dorety, Garrett, Kitts, Beauford, Tennison, Cox, Williams, Smith, Bernis, and, as written by Iva Cunningham Lindsay, daughter of H.U. and Emily Leeman Cunningham, and valedictorian of the Irving High School class of 1928 “four Cunningham brothers, one sister and their spouses are buried in Old Kit Cemetery. Three of the brothers were farmers, the other a carpenter. The sister, Dovie Cunningham was married to S.S. Story, son of “Uncle Ike” Story, Postmaster of Kit.
The Cunninghams were born in Wilson County, Tennessee. H. U. and wife Emily Leeman Cunningham came to Kit in 1896. The others followed at various times. They helped in their way and time building our area what it is today.” It is believed that Emily Leeman Cunningham may be distantly related to Martha Leeman Britain.

The patriarch of one of the King families interred at Old Kit, William Monroe King was born in Fordtown, Tennessee January 18, 1875 and moved to Texas, date and reason uncertain and completed his education at the new state institution for teachers in Denton, then called North Texas Normal College. It is thought he met his wife, Bertha Lee Moody, while they were both attending North Texas. Bertha was also from Tennessee (born in Granger County, May 19, 1876). William and Bertha married in October, 1906 and were among the first school teachers to be employed in the young City of Irving. Quoting from IRVING – A TEXAS ODYSSEY, it says” The head teacher among five hired by the school board was W.M. King, who was understood to be superintendent ”.

William and Bertha King had four sons and one daughter. The eldest son, John Allen was drowned while herding cattle from the river bottom when the Trinity was at flood stage, at the age of 21. He was the first to be buried in the twenty by twenty plot which William Monroe King purchased from D. L. Britain. The King’s second son, William Marion (Tobe) was born in 1911, graduated from high school in 1929 and due to the depression, was unable to attend college. He did however, do farm work, and secured employment at the Ford Motor Assembly plant in East Dallas in the mid-30’s. After the outbreak of World War II, he joined the large number of migratory workers constructing military bases around Oklahoma and Texas. After the war, he came home to work for the Schultz family as a yard superintendent at Irving Lumber Company, ad in his last years, owned and operated a small, self-service gas station on Britain Road. Tobe’s son, William “Bill” King took office as President of the Old Kit Cemetery Association, Inc., in 1996.

Veterans from wars beginning with the Civil War are interred in Kit. Those include James Nelson English, Confederate, Lewis Keeling, Confederate and J.H. White, Federal, among others; Henry “Mac” Thompson, a veteran of the Spanish American war, as well as veterans from World War I, World War II, Korea, and Vietnam. French, German, and Belgium settlers, Japanese laborers, employed by the railroad, and their families are buried beneath the trees in Old Kit. Fraternal organizations represented included Woodmen of the World, Masonic, Odd Fellows, Eastern Star and Rebecca. There are approximately 680 marked graves and 106 known unmarked graves in the cemetery. Burials now are restricted to direct descendents of early settlers, the most recent burial being in 2008.
An association was formed in 1947 to care for the cemetery and was incorporated under the laws of the State of Texas January 4, 1949 as Old Kit Cemetery, Inc. The founding members of this organization worked diligently to raise funds for the care of the cemetery and in hopes of raising sufficient funds to make the cemetery a perpetual care cemetery. Their initial efforts included the raffle of a 1947 Chevrolet, crocheted bedspread, lovingly crocheted by Mrs. Emily Cunningham, and box suppers held at the Irving Community Building. The evenings when the box suppers were held and the fancy boxes filled with fried chicken, sandwiches and favorite cakes or pies were auctioned to the highest bidder were special. Elisha Patton, father of Tom Patton, was notorious for his bidding efforts, much to the embarrassment of the lovely lady/ladies who had spent long hours in the preparation of the food inside and the elaborate decorations on their boxes.

The efforts of many are recognized, including Frankie and Chester Kitts, Mae and Palmer Pace, Mr. and Mrs. R. S. Cox, Sam and Edith King, Lee and Iva Cunningham Lindsay, Lee Oscar Lindsay, Jr., Tom and Mamie White, Gloria Mignone, the Densmore family, the Potts family, the Thompson family, too many to mention here, but none the less, extremely important.

Among those working the hardest in the Old Kit Cemetery Association and, in the effort to obtain the recognition of Old Kit Cemetery as a Historic Texas Cemetery was the granddaughter of Isaac “Uncle Ike” H. Story, Lillie Bonita Story Brindley. The organization is a U.S. tax-exempt organization and contributions are deductible, to the extent allowable by law.

The Irving Heritage Society issued a historical marker for Old Kit Cemetery in 1998, and the Irving Centennial Celebration Task Force Historical marker was issued to Old Kit Cemetery in 2004. The Texas Historical Commission recognized Old Kit Cemetery as a Historic Texas Cemetery in May, 2010 and Old Kit Cemetery entered the State R-I-P program in 2010.

Old Kit Cemetery contains the graves of not the rich and famous, but the graves of men and women of honesty and integrity, hard working individuals with abiding faith. The cemetery contains a number of remarkable headstones with porcelains, headstones of limestone, granite, marble, with inscriptions engraved or hand scraped…Old Kit Cemetery holds memories of those we loved and taught us best.
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Deed Records, (Volume 202, page 64) Dallas County, Texas recorded January 18, 1898
Cunningham, William, grandson of H. U. and Emily Leeman Cunningham

Erickson, T.J., great, great, grandson of David Chadwell Britain, January 30, 2010
Cunningham, Emily K. (deceased), grandmother of this writer

Old Kit Cemetery archived records, Irving Public Library

Rice, Joseph, IRVING: A TEXAS ODYSSEY, Windsor Publications, Inc. Chatsworth, California

Lindsay, Iva Jane Cunningham (deceased) mother of this writer

Wilkin, Emily K., personal knowledge and involvement in the association
Favorably located between Dallas and Fort Worth in North Central Texas, the City of Irving is the gateway to D/FW International Airport, the site of such brilliantly achieved urban centers as Las Colinas and Valley Ranch, and the home of the Dallas Cowboys. Founded on a plat of twelve commercial and residential blocks in 1903 and incorporated in 1914, its life was quietly rural until the Korean War, after which it became the fastest growing city in Texas, annexing adjacent communities and moving from a population of 2,615 in 1950 to more than 155,000 in 1988. Considered in many respects a model of modern commercial and residential development, Irving traces its roots to farming communities established in the mid-1800s.

In 1855, G. D. Peter claimed a headright and built a cabin on the oak-covered hill north of the Eagle Ford crossing and west of the Elm River. Today, the Elm Fork constitutes the complete eastern boundary of modern Irving.

Peter had neighbors named (Heze) Kiah Lucas and S. P. Montgomery. In the fall of year 1855, Peter sold 320 acres and his cabin for a pony worth $40. The buyer was Jonathan Story from Illinois. In the years that followed, others gathered in a community called Forks of the Creek that was located at what became Irving Heights and Williams Road in modern Irving.

The settlers included other Storys, the Casters, the Irbys, Reedys, Kitts, and Stocktons, ultimately some 40 families. In 1856, they built a school where Kiah Lucas taught 20 students, and before long there was a church that remains non-denominational to this day. They also set aside a cemetery that is still tended, the main subject of this narrative.

Around the turn of the century, the most famous building in the village was a general store, owned by Isaac Henry (Ike) Story, which later added a small post office that served the 38 families that lived within a mile’s radius.
Ike Story was born December 30, 1839, in Pulaski Country, Illinois. He came to Texas with his father, Marmaduke, and 12 brothers and sisters in 1855. He loved the state so much that in his later years he wrote a song called “Beautiful Texas in 1855”, (not to be confused with W. Lee O’Daniel’s “Beautiful Texas”). By his own account in a remembrance, he married Mary Duncan at “Cedar Springs, where Dallas now stands”, in 1859. Story family records indicate that Ike Story returned to Ohio and Illinois, where one son was born by his wife Mary Duncan. At her death he married Mary Elizabeth Tate in 1866. They had two children in Illinois and nine in Texas. He came back to Kit in 1873. His last marriage was to Nancy King.

In one of the first issues of “The Irving Index, in 1904, Ike Story wrote that he worked at “rail making, teaming, and woods chopping”. He claimed that cutting cordwood was his “long suit”. He was known “far and wide” for “having cut and corded five cords a day often”. People in the region used oak for fences and firewood. There later were box factories in Dallas that required pulp.

The settlers farmed, cut wood, and hunted to provide for their families. Deer and fowl were plentiful. In earlier days, bears roamed the area. Ike killed a bear in the same river bottom area as the Twin Wells Golf Course, and carried it back on a sled with runners that could be used in dirt. One of the streams draining Irving west to southeast is called Bear Creek. The area three to four miles west of Gorbet/Kit, around the community of Sowers, was known for buffalo, deer, and wild turkey. When Ike Story first opened a grocery store, wagons on the route west sometimes came through Kit. In the isolated settlement, visitors always were welcomed by the Story family. According to Rosa Bell Walker:

He was the type of person that believed in giving people food from his store when he knew that he would never get anything back for it, but he wouldn’t allow anyone to go hungry. When their meals were cooked, (the Storys) seldom sat down to eat when outsiders were not invited to eat......When these people would come through, they would buy supplies and some of them had money and would pay for it, and others would just give him an I owe you. Very, very often, it
was mailed back to him when they would reach their destination.....Some he never got back, but he just put that down as charity and never let it bother him at all.

The area Ike Story came to as a teenager was a wilderness, possessing dangers both obvious (Ike’s future son-in-law was attacked by a panther one night in 1878), and subtle (various kinds of fevers). But Ike Story was busy and happy most of his life. He patch-farmed tobacco and feed. He ran a syrup mill. He had the store and the post office. He hunted and fished in the river bottoms. And he was a master, even legendary, woodsman.

“Papa was gone a lot during logging time,” recalled Mrs. Tom Bell (Sallie Jane Story).

He came home late Saturdays driving what looked like six of the biggest oxen in the world. They were named Spot and Coley, Left and Routy, Buck and Jerry. Their horns reached from the middle of the road to the edge of the brush. There was a spare Roan Ox, his name was Ben, and when he sulked and wouldn’t pull, Papa would have to build a fire under his nose to make him move. When we would hear Papa hollering at the oxen and popping his bull whip, we would run down the road to meet him. He would get off the ox wagon and let each one of us on one of the oxen and let us ride home. We dared not play with Papa’s woodcutting tools. He used a froe and a mall to split board shingles and make fence pailings. And with his broad axe, he scooped our logs to make feed and water troughs.

In his later years, Ike Story could still swing a dangerous axe. He died December 5, 1918, from a blood clot on the brain suffered in an accident on a jitney.

Ike Story’s brother, Jonathan Story, came to Texas, in part, to avoid being caught in the coming national conflict. When Texas joined the Confederacy, however, he was forced to go. His great-granddaughter, Lenora Bess Muense, said Jonathan Story was a true conscientious objector. “He said he couldn’t shoot the Yankees because some of them were his brothers. So he was put in charge of
the horses.” He had horses shot out from under him several times in the war, but he came back. The day he arrived, the rest of his family was returning from the funeral of his five year old son, Marmaduke, named for his grandfather, who had fallen off a seesaw and stuck he head. Surely it was among the most tragic of homecomings.

After the Civil War, a few hundred people lived between the Elm and West Forks of the Trinity River, an area of teeming river bottoms, thickly wooded hills, and broad prairies that had been a wilderness in 1850. The great majority of these settlers were farmers who found the area to have portable water, rich soil, plentiful firewood, and the option of good shallow wells for surface irrigation. Land was free to homesteaders or available at low cost from the owners of headright’s or bounties recognized by the state. Among the settlers were a few store owners and professionals, and notably several teachers and physicians. The small communities at Kit, Sowers, and Estelle were located on well-known trails used for the delivery of mail. The large city of Dallas to the east was a place to buy needed goods and to sell produce; it was accessible by fording the Elm Fork or the West Fork of the Trinity River at several crossings, the most important being at Eagle Ford.

The settlers had great respect for teaching and religion and established schools and churches accordingly. They also were fortunate to have well-trained physicians who lived and worked in the area. The settlers worked hard and they seemed to have a sense of obligation to their neighbors, a feeling that promoted community good will. They also loved music and occasional parties.

In Kit, good times often were associated with Ike Story’s general store and post office.
The Kit Cemetery

According to a story passed down through the Story family, a group of settlers heading West stopped at Ike Story's store in Kit. Their child was sick. While they stayed in Kit area, the child died. Because the family wished to continue on to the West, they asked if the child might be buried in Kit. There were at the time other cemeteries, some belonging to families. But this account of the child seems to have been the genesis of cemetery near the town of Kit that served a larger group of families.

On January 11, 1896, D. C. Britain filed for record the deed to one acre of land to the control of A. J. Lucas, J. P. Stockton and himself, as deacons of the New Providence Baptist Church and to their successors in perpetuity as long as the land was used as a community cemetery. This was recorded January 18, 1896. (vol. 202, p.64) Records of Dallas County.

The name of the church that was located adjacent to the cemetery changed several times over the years. In 1935, it became the Glad Tidings Assembly of God Church; in 1948, the church became the East Side Church of Christ. Today, the name of the Church proper is Apostolica Primera Asamble, and it is located at 1417 E. Irving Boulevard.

The Kit Cemetery, which is located immediately behind the church and next to Oak Grove Cemetery, and their address is 1415 E. Irving Boulevard. The cemetery has continued cared for and intact from its inception in 1896.

A formal charter for Old Kit Cemetery, Inc. was created on December 28, 1948, with three directors: Sam King, R. S. Cox, and Dan Bell, and was recognized by Kirk R. Mallory, assistant Secretary of the State of Texas on January 4, 1949. (Copies of these documents are appended.)
The modern by-laws of the Old Kit Cemetery Corporation are included. The corporation meets four times a year and publishes a newsletter.

Over a period of years, Mr. and Mrs. O. D. Bates in cooperation with other Irving Citizens and the Young Historians Clubs compiled a list of the markers in all Irving area cemeteries. This project was completed in 1974, and a list of the markers in the Kit Cemetery is included with this application.

Selected Bibliography

Bates, Mrs. O. D. “Pioneer Citizens Tell of Early Irving.” (Especially tapes with Lenora Story Muncie and Rosa Bell Walker (Mrs. Tom Bell)). Located in Reserve Room of the Irving Central Library.


Greene, A. C. A Place Called Dallas. Dallas: The Dallas County Heritage Society, Inc. 1975.
