

APPLICATION FORM
OFFICIAL TEXAS HISTORICAL MARKER

This marker is for (title or subject): New Providence Cemetery

County: Gregg

Marker location (street address and city, or specific directions from nearest town on state highway map):
2000 Judson Road; Longview, Texas

Distance and direction of marker topic from marker site (if applicable):



APPROVAL OF COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION

The application and narrative history must be approved by the county historical commission before forwarding to the Texas Historical Commission.

Chairperson's Signature: Norman H. Black, D.D.S. Date: 11-9-95

Address: 417 Mobberly Ave., Longview, TX 75602 Phone: 903-757-2261

The CHC chair automatically will receive all copies of correspondence regarding this marker project.

PERMISSION OF OWNER FOR MARKER PLACEMENT

Permission for placement of a marker must be obtained by the property owner. Please provide the name of a contact person if the owner is an institution, organization, or public entity. This section need not be completed if the marker is to be placed on right-of-way maintained by the Texas Department of Transportation.

Name: New Providence Cemetery, Inc.

Contact person (if applicable): Helen M. Griffin, Treasurer

Mailing address: 2600 Brookview

Kilgore, TX 75662 Phone: (903) 984-3346

Owner's Signature: Helen M. Griffin, Treasurer

Do you wish to receive copies of all correspondence concerning this marker application? Yes No

To whom should the request for payment be addressed?

Name: Helen M. Griffin

(Provide contact person if payee is an institution, organization, or public entity.)

Mailing address: 2600 Brookview

Kilgore, TX 75662 Phone: (903) 984-3346

Does this person wish to receive copies of all other correspondence concerning this application? Yes No

Is there anyone else to whom all correspondence concerning this marker application should be addressed?

(One additional name and address only, please.)

Name: _____

Mailing address: _____

Phone: _____

SHIPPING INSTRUCTIONS

In order to facilitate delivery of the marker, neither post office box numbers nor rural route numbers can be accepted. If the marker is to be placed on the highway right-of-way, it will be shipped directly to the district highway engineer.

Name: Norman Black, D.D.S.
Street address: 417 Mobberly Ave.
Phone: Longview, Texas 75602

TYPE AND SIZE OF MARKER DESIRED (please check one only)

Subject Markers

This type of marker is solely educational in nature and conveys no legal restrictions to the property. Subject markers are appropriate for topics such as cemeteries, church congregations, businesses, persons, events, and institutions. These markers should not be attached to buildings. If the marker is to be attached to a surface other than the foundry-provided post, please provide the requested information in the space below.

- 16" x 12" grave marker (comes with mounting bar) \$225
- 27" x 42" marker with post \$750
- 27" x 42" marker without post (see below) \$700
- 18" x 28" marker with post ~~\$450~~ \$550⁰⁰
- 18" x 28" marker without post (see below) \$400

If not on post, to what (block of granite, gatepost, etc.) will the marker be attached? _____
Type of material? (wood, stone, etc.) _____

Recorded Texas Historic Landmark Markers

Markers conveying the Recorded Texas Historic Landmark (RTHL) designation are reserved solely for historic structures deemed worthy of preservation for their architectural integrity and historical associations. The RTHL designation does carry a measure of legal protection for the structure (see Marker Policies 13 through 18) and for that reason we must have a legal description (lot and block numbers) for the property to be designated. The most commonly used marker for conveying this designation is the medallion and plate (also referred to as a building marker); however, the 18" x 28" or 27" x 42" size marker may be ordered for those who wish a greater amount of historical information to appear in the marker text. Careful attention should be paid so as not to damage historic building material if the marker is to be mounted directly onto the structure. The THC staff can provide alternate ideas for mounting upon request.

- Medallion and 16" x 12" plate with post \$350
- Medallion and 16" x 12" plate without post (see below) \$300
- 27" x 42" marker with post \$750
- 27" x 42" marker without post (see below) \$700
- 18" x 28" marker with post \$450
- 18" x 28" marker without post (see below) \$400

If not on post, to what (building, gate, etc.) will the marker be attached? _____
Type of material? (wood, stone, etc.) _____

LEGAL DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY (lot and block number; metes and bounds):

Lot 7, Block 1206 L. L. Woolley, P. P. Rains Survey #2, 2¹/₂ ac. more or less, Gregg Co, Texas, City of Longview.

Before forwarding your material to the Texas Historical Commission, please check to make sure you've included the following items. Incomplete applications cannot be considered and may be returned to the applicant.

- ✓ completed application form signed by the county historical commission
- ✓ narrative history with footnotes and bibliography
- ✓ photograph of the proposed marker location
- ✓ map indicating marker location and other sites related to the marker topic
- ✓ historic photo of property and current photographs of all elevations (RTHL markers only)
- ✓ legal description of property (RTHL markers only)

Mail completed applications to:
Local History Programs, Texas Historical Commission
P.O. Box 12276, Austin, Texas 78711
512/463-6100

Additional items, including paperweights, directional signs, and replacement parts for 1936 markers, are available. Please contact the Local History Programs office for a separate order form.

NEW PROVIDENCE CEMETERY

By Helen McHaney Griffin

The custom of burying the dead in designated areas goes back to ancient cultures. For example, the burial tombs of the ancient Egyptians, i. e. King Tut and the Forum in Rome. Thomas Gray's "Elegy in a Country Churchyard" cites an example of the custom being brought by the colonists to the New World. By 1825, Hayden Edwards, Texas colonist and empresario, contracted for church locations and churchyard burial grounds in East Texas.

In 1871, the Texas Legislature created a new county, Gregg, by combining parts of Rusk and Upshur counties.¹ The property which constitutes New Providence Cemetery was once a part of Upshur County, Texas. On November 6, 1892 L. Woolley and wife, Amanda, executed a deed to T. A. Newton and J. A. McCrede, Trustees of New Providence Missionary Baptist Church, being Lot 7, Block 1206 L. L. Woolley, P. P. Rains Survey#2, being 2½ acres more or less for the sum of \$20.00, being a part of the land conveyed to L. L. Woolley by S. P. Moughon and wife January 10, 1888 and adjacent to the Finch property in the P. P. Raines Survey.² The current location is described as being adjacent to and immediately north of 2600 Judson Road and between Judson Road and Airline Road, near the intersection of Judson Road and Hollybrook Drive in the City of Longview, Gregg County, Texas.

By 1883, the Judson Baptist Church, some eight miles north of Longview on Judson Road, had been organized. Many of the church members, having moved their places of residence nearer Longview, organized a new congregation called New Providence and built a building adjacent to the old Bussey School, a community school, at Judson and Airline Roads. A female teacher, a Miss Rodden, was the teacher in 1918.³ An early obituary stated that a person was buried at New Providence Cemetery in the churchyard as early as 1896.

1. Richard B. Levy, History of the Creation of Gregg, County, Texas, pg. 1

2. County Clerk, Gregg County, Texas-Deed Records, Vol. 1476, Pg. 450 File No. 16837

3. Myra Lynn Roberts, Personal Interview, Witnessed and Notarized, November 18, 1983

Before 1896, a religious group called "Martinites" came through the area and held a meeting at the church. This controversial group caused a serious rift in the congregation at New Providence Missionary Baptist Church. Members were warned not to go there for services, furthermore they would be "turned out" of the church if they attended. ⁴.

In 1903, the church building was damaged by a windstorm and later was struck by lightning and burned. By this time, there were seven graves in the churchyard burial ground. Without a church building, the congregation dwindled and members joined other churches and denominations in the surrounding area. The cemetery continued to be used and maintained by former members of the church congregation.

W. A. Ray, Trustee in 1920, discovered that the original deed to the property had not been filed for record, which was a common occurrence in that day. He quickly prepared a deed, had it executed by the grantors, and filed for record in the Gregg County Clerk's office on September 28, 1921, recorded Deed Records #43, p. 495-498, November 28, 1921. In 1937 the original deed was found and filed February 1, 1937, Volume 221 pg. 533 Deed Records of Gregg County, Texas. ⁵.

New Providence Baptist Church reorganized as a congregation in 1921 for the purpose of maintaining the cemetery. Five or more joined by letter from other Baptist churches. At this time there were 13 known graves in the burial ground and no church building. The church congregation disbanded again in 1925, however families of former members continued to maintain the cemetery and carried on an informal organization. Through the years relatives of those interred in New Providence Cemetery gave care and in 1952 provided a rock fence on all four sides. In 1962, a chain-link fence was built on all sides to insure privacy and security. Lack of proper fencing through the years created the danger of and actual loss of some of the acreage. However, a survey proved the metes and bounds, brought about recovery of footage, and a proper designation of the property boundaries. As new trustees were appointed, records continued to be filed with the Gregg County clerk.

4. Emma Ray Boyd - Personal interview by Helen M. Griffin dated January 9, 1987

5. Myra Lynn Ray Roberts - op. cit, page 2

On February 17, 1983, an organizing committee composed of all interested and known living relatives of those interred at New Providence Cemetery met to form an association for the purpose of incorporating. In May of 1983, New Providence Cemetery Association, a non-profit corporation, was chartered by the State of Texas, Charter No. 657177-1. Since 1925 New Providence Cemetery has been maintained and used only for interment of the dead by descendants of A. Judson Pruitt and wife, Rebecca Ann, the Reverend L. P. Ray and wife, Mary Frances, and J. A. McGrede. It is not a perpetual care cemetery, rather a family or community cemetery under the provisions of the Texas Civil Statutes. The corporation is governed by a Board of Directors and maintains a current membership roster. ^{6.}

Within the cemetery bounds are 58 graves, five unmarked. The oldest known grave is one of W. E. Newton dated 1896. ^{7.} Graves of veterans of five wars lie within its bounds. A Confederate soldier, A. Judson Pruitt, served with General Robert E. Lee at Appomattox. A Spanish American War veteran, William Andrew Ray, served as a County Judge of Gregg County, Texas. There are two World War I veterans, several from World War II, one a former judge of the 124th District Court, and one veteran of the Korean Campaign.

In December of 1983, a lease was made and entered with Jackson Investments, a Texas General Partnership, for the purpose of providing parking space for The Village Shopping Center, a business venture built adjacent to the cemetery property and to make possible the building of a brick and wrought-iron fence, add landscaping, and to improve maintenance of the cemetery.

Truly, New Providence Cemetery qualifies to be designated as a Texas Landmark and to be marked with an official Texas Historical Marker and Medallion because of its antiquity and the fact that it is representative of the custom of burying the dead in the grounds of the churchyard. It is particularly significant since it exemplifies the manner in which progressive business evolvments have effectively become partners with longstanding cultural customs to further the common good of the community and its populace.

6. Myra Lynn Roberts, op. cit., page 3

7. Rachel T. Garner, Obituaries, Longview Newspapers, compiled February 1987.

New Providence Cemetery is a prime example of this current practice of improving and meeting the needs of the business community while maintaining and preserving the heritage of the past in its truest form.

Footnotes

1. Richard B. Levy, History of the Creation of Gregg, County, Texas, pg. 1
2. County Clerk, Gregg County, Texas - Deed Records, Vol. 1476, Pg. 450 File No. 16837
3. Myra Lynn Roberts, Personal Interview, Witnessed and Notarized, November 18, 1983
4. Emma Ray Boyd - Personal interview by Helen M. Griffin dated January 9, 1987
5. Myra Lynn Ray Roberts - op. cit. page 2
6. Myra Lynn Ray Roberts -op. cit. page 3
7. Rachel T. Garner, Obituaries, Longview Newspapers, compiled February 1987

Bibliography

Boyd, Emma Ray, Personal interview by Helen M. Griffin, January 9, 1987
County Clerk, Gregg County, Texas, Deed Records, Vol. 1476, Pg. 450 File No. 16837
Garner, Rachel T., Obituaries, Longview Newspapers, compiled February 1987.
Levy, Richard B. , History of the Creation of Gregg County, Texas, unpublished
Roberts, Myra Lynn Ray, Personal interview, Witnessed and Notarized, November 18, 1983

New Providence Cemetery Association, Inc. Board of Directors

at time of incorporation: June 18, 1983

Lila F. Jordan, President

L. Frank Ray, Vice President

William E. Dark, Secretary

Myra Lynn Roberts, Assistant Secretary

Helen M. Griffin, Treasurer

As of June 18, 1995 -Board of Directors are:

Lila F. Jordan, President

Colonel James E. Ray, Vice President

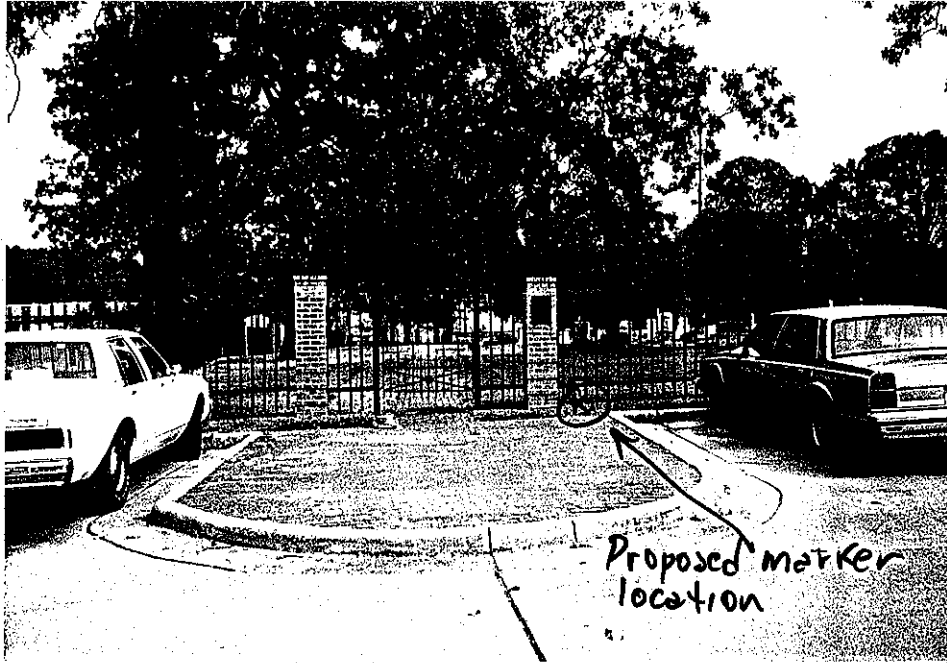
Myra Lynn Roberts, Secretary

William E. Dark, Assistant Secretary

Helen M. Griffin, Treasurer

New Providence Cemetery Association, Inc. has an enlisted membership
of 65 persons as of June 18, 1995.

Signed: Helen M. McHaney Griffin
Helen McHaney Griffin
Treasurer

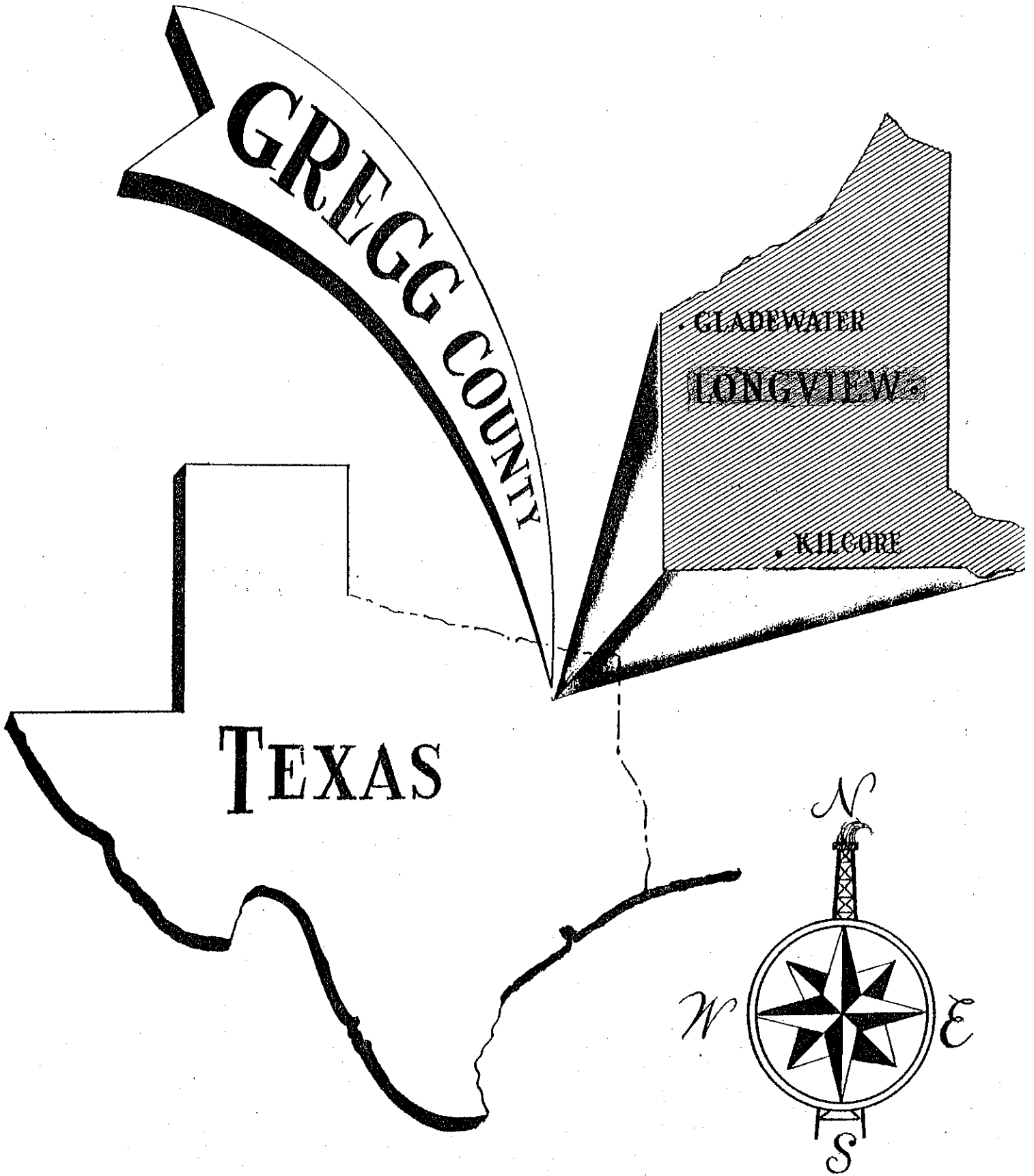


New Providence Cemetery
2000 Judson Road
Longview, Texas 75601

GREGG Co

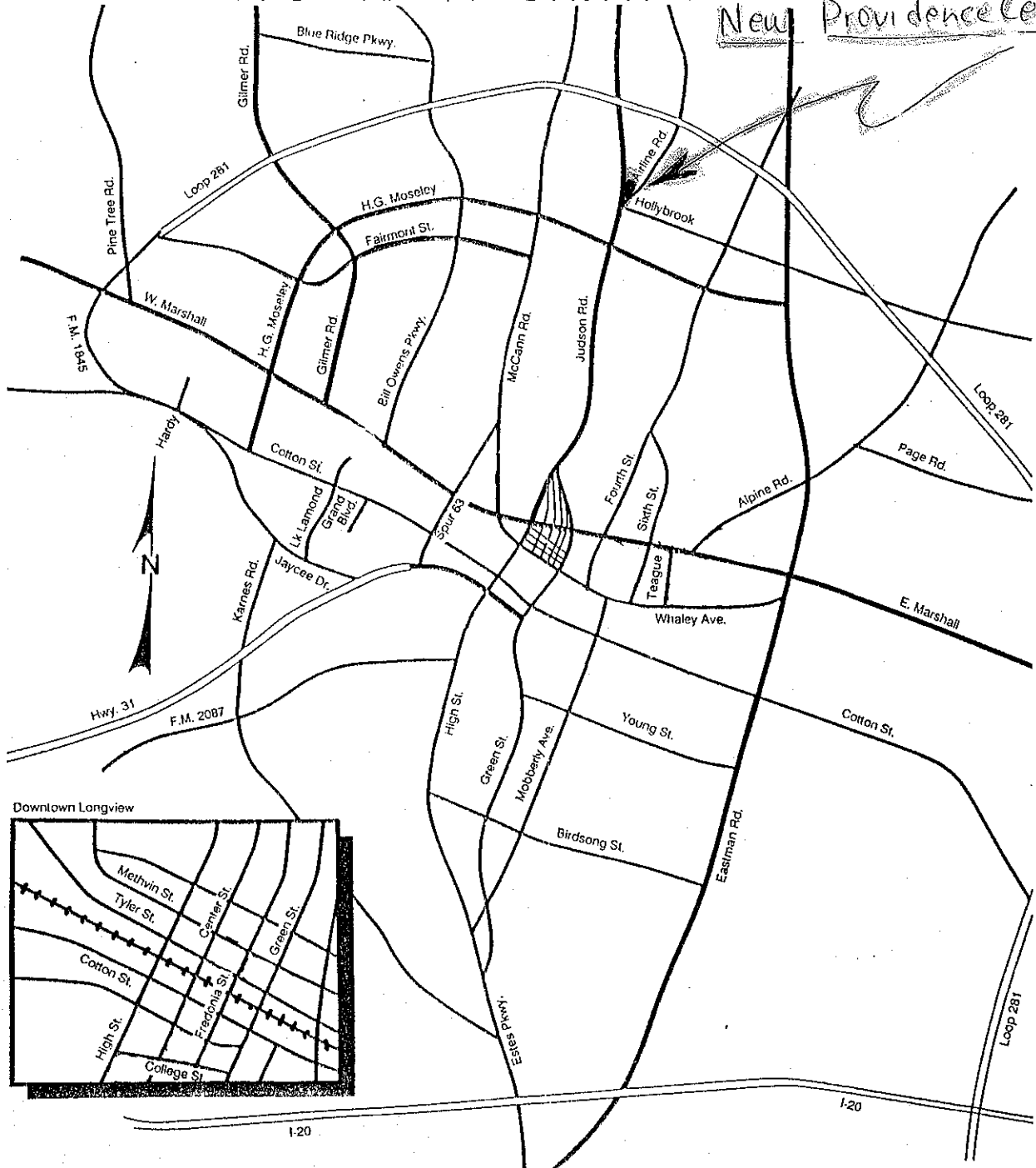
Proposed historical marker location

GREGG COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION
417 Moberly Avenue
Longview, Texas 75602
903-757-2261



LONGVIEW CITY MAP

New Providence Cemetery



GREGG COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION
417 Moberly Avenue
Longview, Texas 75602
903-757-2261



TEXAS
HISTORICAL
COMMISSION

George W. Bush • Governor

John L. Nau, III • Chairman

Curtis Tunnell • Executive Director

The State Agency for Historic Preservation

January 18, 1996

Helen M. Griffin
New Providence Cemetery, Inc.
2600 Brookview
Kilgore, TX 75662

RE: NEW PROVIDENCE CEMETERY
18" x 28" marker w/ post
Job # 07696, Gregg County

Dear Ms. Griffin:

I am pleased to notify you that the State Marker Review Board has reviewed and approved the above-referenced topic for an Official Texas Historical Marker.

Payment for the marker, in the amount of \$550.00, is now due. Please complete and return the enclosed payment form at your earliest convenience. Once payment for the marker is received, the application will be placed in line to have the marker inscription written. The inscription will not be written until after funds have been received. When the text is prepared, a copy will be sent to you and any parties listed below for review and approval.

The Texas Historical Commission congratulates you on your efforts to record and preserve Texas history.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Cynthia J. Beeman".

Cynthia J. Beeman, Administrator
Official Texas Historical Markers
Local History Programs

pc: Dr. Norman Black, Gregg CHC

Texas Historical Commission Staff (WCT), 2/1/96

18" x 28" Official Texas Historical Marker with post
Gregg County (Job # 07696)

Location: 2000 Judson Road, Longview

NEW PROVIDENCE CEMETERY*

THIS CEMETERY WAS ASSOCIATED
WITH THE NEW PROVIDENCE MISSION-
ARY BAPTIST CHURCH, WHICH WAS
FOUNDED IN THE 1880s. THE FIRST
DOCUMENTED BURIAL WAS OF W.E.
NEWTON IN 1896. IN 1903 THE CHURCH
WAS DAMAGED BY A WINDSTORM,
STRUCK BY LIGHTNING AND LATER
BURNED TO THE GROUND. WITHOUT A
CHURCH BUILDING, THE CONGREGATION
DISBANDED. IT WAS BRIEFLY REORGAN-
IZED IN 1921 TO MAINTAIN THE
CEMETERY, BUT BROKE UP AGAIN IN
1925. FIVE OF THE 58 GRAVES ARE
UNMARKED. AMONG THOSE BURIED HERE
ARE VETERANS OF FIVE WARS, A FOR-
MER COUNTY JUDGE AND A FORMER
DISTRICT JUDGE. **

(1996) ***

*3/4 inch lettering
**1/2 inch lettering
***1/4 inch lettering

PLEASE CHECK ONE AND SIGN:

I approve this text as written.

Please consider the revisions as
noted on this copy.

Norman H. Black, D.D.S.
(signature)

2-14-96

Marker ceremony to tell cemetery's tale

The dedication of an official Texas historical marker at New Providence Cemetery on Judson Road in Longview is set for 2:30 p.m. Saturday.

Sponsored by the Texas Historical Commission and the Gregg County Historical Commission, the event will feature Col. James E. Ray, a Longview native and a retired U.S. Air Force Vietnam veteran whose great-grandfather established the New Providence Church 100 years ago.

Within the cemetery bounds are 58 graves, five unmarked. The oldest known grave is one of W.E. Newton, dated 1896. Graves of veterans of five wars lie within the cemetery's bounds.

Its antiquity and the fact that it is representative of the custom of burying the dead in the grounds of a churchyard qualify it for the designation of an historical landmark, officials said.

In December 1983, a lease was made and entered with Jackson Investments to provide parking space for the Village Shopping Center, a business venture built adjacent to the cemetery property. The lease made possible the building of a brick and wrought-iron fence, additional landscaping and improved maintenance of the cemetery.

The marker, then, is also a salute to the exemplary manner in which progressive business evolvments have become partners with long-standing cultural customs to further the common good of the community, officials point out.



**Dedication
of an
Official Texas Historical Marker**

**New Providence Cemetery
Judson Road
Longview, Texas**

**Saturday, June 15, 1996
2:30 p.m.**

**Sponsored by
The Texas Historical Commission
The Gregg County Historical Commission**



NEW PROVIDENCE CEMETERY

Longview, Texas

THIS CEMETERY WAS ASSOCIATED WITH THE NEW PROVIDENCE MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH, WHICH WAS FOUNDED IN THE 1880'S. THE FIRST DOCUMENTED BURIAL WAS OF W.E. NEWTON IN 1896. IN 1903 THE CHURCH WAS DAMAGED BY A WINDSTORM, STRUCK BY LIGHTNING AND LATER BURNED TO THE GROUND. WITHOUT A CHURCH BUILDING, THE CONGREGATION DISBANDED. IT WAS BRIEFLY REORGANIZED IN 1921 TO MAINTAIN THE CEMETERY, BUT BROKE UP AGAIN IN 1925. FIVE OF THE 58 GRAVES ARE UNMARKED. AMONG THOSE BURIED HERE ARE VETERANS OF FIVE WARS, A FORMER COUNTY JUDGE AND A FORMER DISTRICT JUDGE.

1996.



This marker is given in memory of all the persons interred in this cemetery by the New Providence Cemetery, Incorporated

Program

Welcome

Invocation Reverend James Dixon
Associate Pastor Emeritus
Oakland Heights Baptist Church

Introduction of Gregg Historical Commission
Members and Guests Dr. Norman Black
Chairman, Gregg County Historical Commission

Remarks Colonel James E. Ray
Retired, United States Air Force

Dedication and Reading of Marker Inscription Dr. Black and
Helen McHaney Griffin, Researcher

Unveiling of Marker Lila Ray Jordan and
Mary Nell McMahan

Benediction Reverend James Dixon

Gregg County Historical Commission

Dr. Norman W. Black, Chairman
Mildred Wood Barker
Jack Buchanan
Pauline Cox
Ann Lacy Crain
Beth Holloway Dodson
Dr. Ken Durham
Helen McHaney Griffin
Nelda Lewis
Carol Morris Little

*Mrs. Virginia Long
Anne P. Mackenzie
Nauty Byrd Mayer
Amanda Pratt-Nobles
Dr. W.D. Northcutt, III
Elizabeth Moore Osteen
Ben Reynolds
Nancy Ruff
Joe White
W.A. Williams

* Denotes member of the Texas Historical Commission

Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. Welcome to the dedication of an Official Texas Historical Marker: **New Providence Cemetery**. We will now have the invocation by Reverend James Dixon, Associate Pastor Emeritus of Oakland Heights Baptist Church...Rev. Dixon...Thank you, Rev. Dixon.

Introduction of Guests. (any county officials, etc. and members of the GCHC - probably just Pudge and I.

The Gregg County Historical Commission is an arm of the county government appointed by the county judge and commissioners court. It is the responsibility of the historical commission to preserve our county's historical heritage and to encourage others to do the same. This ceremony today is one of the most visible and important functions of the historical commission.

May decide to use this: These hallowed grounds are the final resting place of some of the most respected citizens of this community and county as well as being your ancestors and relatives. Pioneers, if you will, are here. Leading citizens, judges and the hundred years of continuity, all these characteristics merit the honoring of this cemetery permanently by awarding it with an Official Texas Historical Marker.

We will now hear remarks from Colonel James E. Ray, Retired, United States Air Force...Col. Ray...Thank you, Col Ray.

