Come On Down and Party!
Join your neighbors for the LMA's 100th Anniversary Gala

by Bettie Cunningham and Caroline Brathwaite

A special neighborhood deserves a special celebration when it turns 100 and you are invited to share in the centennial moment.

The Lefferts Manor Association is extending an invitation to neighbors new and long-rooted—and everyone throughout Prospect Lefferts Gardens—to cele-
brate the association’s century mark on Saturday, September 14, at 7:30 p.m.

The rooftopevent space at BKLYN Commons, site of the

LMA at 100: Same as It Ever Was
by Carlene Brathwaite and Milford Prewitt

ight from its very beginnings 100 years ago, the Lefferts Manor Association’s original mission has been an enduring one.

The “improvement, general upkeep and betterment of neighborhood conditions” summed up a hundred-year

resolve whose engines are already gearing into the next

100 years; to preserve and protect the eight-block Manor

area with its 660 homes built between 1916 and 1952.

As longtime resident and former board member of the association Mary Miller put it: “The Manor Association, since its founding in 1919, has given our neighbor-

hood a history of residents working together for the

common good.”

At the end of the nineteenth century, Lefferts Manor

shared a common evolution with many surrounding

neighborhoods in Brooklyn. Sprawled on construction

of the Brooklyn Bridge, the continuing extension of mass

transit, and the increasing industrialization of the city,

many areas changed from rural farmlands into suburban

residential communities. In order to promote and preserve the residential charac-

ter of the neighborhood, these developments often con-
tained prohibitions against certain ‘incompatible’ uses

such as stables, factories and foundries.

The Lefferts family, however, also placed a single-

family covenant in the deeds for the property being devel-
oped in order to further shape the type of community

which was being created from their farmland.

As stated in the city’s landmark designation report for

Prospect Lefferts Gardens, by “restricting the area for

fairly substantial, although not exorbitantly expensive or

excessively grand houses, Lefferts hoped to attract a sta-

table middle-class population that would give the new-

ly developed area an aura of respectability.”

It was the enforcement of that single-family covenant

which sparked the creation of the Lefferts Manor

Association. When, on September 24, 1919, a group of

Lefferts Manor residents from Middletown Street, met to
discuss a reported covenant violation by a property owner

on their street.

Through the years, the association, communicating

with new residents, negotiating with homeowners who

might choose to ignore the single-family restrictions, and

through court action, took on the role of enforcing

the covenant. Those “efforts of the Lefferts Manor Asso-

ciation” have been credited with giving much of the eight-

block area defined as Lefferts Manor “a special cohesive-

ness,” the landmarks designation concluded.

Despite such a weighty mission, the association in

those early years did not limit its activities

just to the covenant. Records reveal the asso-

ciation took on a number of quality-of-life issues in

the neighborhood. Tree con-

servation, traffic regulation, street

repairs, removal of refuse, parking and postal issues were

but a few of them.

Even the neighborhood’s transition from gas street-
lamps to modern electric ones came under the organiza-

tion’s purview. Gaslights were replaced with electric ones

in 1930 after the association’s long collaboration with the
telephone companies. Not everyone was pleased about the

switch, however, as some neighbors favored the “quaint

appearance” that gas streetlamps lent to the neighbor-

dom. It’s a dinner party debate that continues today.

The association also worked with the city Parks De-

partment to fund a project to preserve trees.

Perhaps its most audacious and time-consuming

devotion was working with local police on the enforce-

ment of new traffic regulations.

It’s no surprise that by and large these issues have not

changed. Oral histories and reports from the neighbor-

hood’s centennial in 1993 show a close collaboration with

the city agencies on tree preservation and traffic control.

Wrought iron tree guards were installed throughout the
district with help from the Brooklyn borough presi-
dent’s office. And more recently, through the efforts of

the late association president Ben

Souvenir LMA Centennial Yearbook Coming This Fall
by Mary Miller

The Lefferts Manor Association is celebrating its centennial founding in

September 14: 2019
The Lefferts Manor Association
invites you to its Centennial Gala for an
evening of fellowship, food and music

with friends, neighbors and supporters.

at BKLYN COMMONS
Event Hall and Rooftop
495 Flatbush Avenue / PLG
7:30 – 11:00 p.m.
Cocktails from 7:30 – 8:45 followed by buffet dinner.

Ticket prices are $75. Adults only.
Please respond by August 31.
Order with the form below or online at
http://leffertsmansion.com/gala-tickets or at
eventbrite.com (for "LMA Centennial")

To order tickets by check, use the form at right.
Check is payable to The Lefferts Manor Association

Mail form with payment to:
The Lefferts Manor Association
PO Box 250780
Brooklyn, NY 11225-0780

TICKETS
$75 x _______ ATTENDEES
TOTAL $_________

NAMES OF ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES
NAME
ADDRESS
CITY / STATE / ZIP
PHONE
E-MAIL

(continued on page 4)
House Tour 2019: Beautiful Homes, Perfect Weather

Tour Highlights LMA Centennial

Different this year was that the entire Lefferts Manor was featured in honor of LMA’s 100th anniversary. The tour’s guidebook included historical write-ups on all of the stops on tour. The aim was to have one house on each of the ten Lefferts Manor blocks. The tour got close with nine, and exterior features were highlighted on the tenth block, Fenimore I.

The tour booklet was designed to be a keepsake item full of history and old real estate ads. Its cover was a map of the area from 1915, the closest to the founding year of LMA, 1919.

Architectural Styles Praised

The tour featured freestanding homes, row houses, and mini-mansions whose interior designs and furnishings ranged from Victorian Age traditional to modern, contemporary. Tour-goers were overwhelmingly complimentary about the diverse architectural styles of this year’s stops.

Tour-goers, many of them recent home buyers from other neighborhoods or veteran home-owners looking for decorating ideas, marveled at the unique details that make up Lefferts Manor’s architecture and interior styling and the broad approaches homeowners take despite having the same footprints and structural limitations.

Speaking of homeowners, there would be no tour without those willing to open their homes to hundreds of interested home tour fans. Nor would there be a tour without the MANY tour guides who volunteer their time to watch these beautiful homes. As they say, “It takes a village,” and we’ve got a great one!

Rutland Block Co-Named for Late UN Ambassador Dr. Stanislaus

The first block of Rutland Road at Flatbush Avenue was co-named “Dr. Laman A. Stanislaus Way” in June during a special co-naming ceremony to honor the man that many considered a giant in human rights and Caribbean islands economic development.

DR. STANISLAUS, WHO DIED at age 93 three years ago this September, lived with his wife, Beryl, on Rutland I for 63 years. They raised five children and had seven grandchildren. He was a dentist for more than 30 years, a United Nations Ambassador from Grenada—the island of his birth—and internationally recognized for his human rights activism and advocacy for the freedom and economic empowerment of the Caribbean islands.

In 1985, the prime minister of Grenada named him the island nation’s ambassador to the UN, which he used as a perch to deliver several trenchant and illuminating speeches concerning European and American benign neglect of the human kind, love of country, love of his birthplace and its people.

Despite his criticisms, the queen of England nonetheless named him a Commander of the British Empire in 2013. In February 2016, Dr. Stanislaus would be appointed a Knight Commander, earning the title, “Sir Laman.”

Closer to home, he was a confidant and friend of Shirley Chisholm, the first black woman elected to Congress and the first black person to launch a mainstream bid to become president. Later he and Gov. Mario Cuomo became political allies and friends.

With friends and family looking on, the sign designating Rutland I as “Laman A. Stanislaus Way” was unveiled.

Active locally in Brooklyn’s Caribbean community, Dr. Stanislaus would become one of the three men in the 1960s credited with starting the West Indian Day American Carnival Association, organizers of the West Indian Day Parade.

Just five months before his passing, President Barack Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama hailed Dr. Stanislaus’s life as “part of our great American story.”

A few dozen relatives, neighbors and other well-wishers—including a few political leaders, current and retired—gathered on Rutland I for the ceremony.

The event was co-sponsored by City Councilmember Mathieu Eugene who praised the honoree’s contributions and hard work.

“Dr. Stanislaus meant a great deal to this community for so many years, not only as a proud son of Grenada, but also as someone who wanted to make a difference.”

“Its work contributed to the betterment of New York as well as many countries in the Caribbean.”

Former Brooklyn Borough President Marty Markowitz praised Dr. Stanislaus’s eloquence.

“No one had a better command of the English language than Dr. Stanislaus,” he said. “During the challenges of the 1960s and ’80s, he was the voice of the Caribbean [in New York] He was truly a very, very special person.”

U.S. Rep. Yvette Clarke expressed in a letter how proud she was having someone of his stature, public service ethic and achievements live in her district.

Clarke’s Brooklyn district manager, Anita Taylor, read in part: “Dr. Stanislaus’s life demonstrated a love of God, humankind, love of country, love of his birthplace and its people as well as the Caribbean community at large.”

“He was a true man of his time and one who set an example for us to follow.”

The Stanislaus family wishes to thank all who supported and helped them and all who attended the ceremony.
Ix Mayan Café Thrives on Authentic Cuisine and Media Buzz
by MILFORD PREWITT

When it opened two and a half years ago, Ix café operated from breakfast until late afternoon and it didn’t have a liquor license. Now the café serves breakfast from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m., is a liquor license, and chef-owner Jorge Cárdenas is growing a loyal fan base thanks to mainstream media buzz and the authentic cooking practices of his ancestral roots, the Mayan culture of Guatemala.

Located on Lincoln Road near Flatbush Avenue, in the same space once occupied by the cozy coffee shop, Tip of the Tongue, Ix café is about as close to an all-day restaurant one is likely to encounter in Prospect Lefferts Gardens.

So much of its recent forward progress is due to a glowing profile in The New York Times earlier this summer and dinner reviews in the blogosphere.

Ix (a Mayan word pronounced “eezch”), which means jaguar, Cárdenas’s sign in Mayan astrology—is one of the neighborhood’s most distinctive gastronomic excursions.

The menu in Ix is a tour of the chef’s thinking traditions with interpretative updates Cárdenas created for modern gourmands.

Soups and stews make up the heart of the menu and many are prepared using the traditional cooking techniques Cárdenas learned at home. His stocks are starchy and so he uses them thickened not with flour, but crusted pumpkin, sunflower and sesame seeds.

Even on the hottest days, the stews are comforting meals.

Among the classic Mayan soups is one called pepian, a rich, multi-vegetable, seeds and chicken soup. Another crowd favorite is the joco n—chicken, tomatillo, cilantro, rice and diced vegetables.

The menu also features Mayan coffee, chocolate and teas. Among the tea choices are lemon and mint, hibiscus and jasmine.

As Ix speeds towards being Ix a full-service, all-day to late-night restaurant, Cárdenas is mulling the possibilities of lunch— “I love the idea of a Mayan café,” says the chef—“and I’d like to have a street food truck.”

Cárdenas is multi-talented and his creativity extends to other ventures. He has had a hand to work in Berlin to study and pursue his passion.

Both soups are

Gruit Diversifies PLG’s Booming Dining Scene with Kosher Gastropub

Prospect Lefferts Gardens is in the midst of a restaurant boom. Among the most recent to diversify the restaurant scene is Gruit. It has the enviable distinction of not being one of the newest concepts, but it is debuting in one of the oldest—at of its oldest—tenured restaurant locations in PLG.

Gruit (pronounced “grow-it”) opened back in June in the same iconic building where Toomey’s Diner did business for decades, at Empire Boulevard and Bloome Avenue. Up until it closed around 2011-12 and sat vacant, Toomey’s boasted that it had played host to the Brooklyn Dodgers and other borough royalty over its long reign.

“We fell in love with the location, iconic past and history of Toomey’s,” said Zalman Skolbik, one of the owners. “When we were looking for a place to open Gruit, we knew the neighborhood and saw the incredible potential.”

“Toomey’s was a place that brought everyone together. We want to bring that feeling back.”

Named after an herb mixture used for bitterness and flavoring beer, Gruit is a beer garden / gastropub that serves an eclectic mix of Jewish- and German-inspired dishes and beers.

The restaurant came into shape after a total renovation that preserved the building’s charm. The bar and seating areas are new and modern, but it still emits that classic dining vibe from the steel tables, chairs, mahogany and beechwood.

The silhouettes of the namesake herb that adorn the wallpaper are a nod to the staple of Germany’s beer making traditions. The combination is inviting blend of past and present that the part owners hope will keep them in Lefferts Gardens long into the future.

The owners aspire to serve high-quality food and eclectic cocktails and toasting local beers at affordable prices to people of all backgrounds.

“It was important to us to be in the line of what is and around Lefferts Gardens,” Skolbik says. “We also wanted to bring back the old charm of Toomey’s. We are offering a ‘melting pot’ philosophy to our business through the menu.”

The choices range from schmaltz herring—a mainstay in Jewish dining—served with grilled sourdough bread, farm fresh pickled vegetables and horseradish aioli.

Another beguiling dish is the stuffed cabbage with beef cheeks stuffed with medjool dates and Gruit’s daily-ground signature burger with a house made bacon jam.

There is also breaded chicken wiener schnitzel and beer battered fish served with mashed peas and mint.

The gastropub part of Gruit—the beer service and garden that sits behind decorative fencing on Empire—boasts beers that are regional and regularly rotate.

Patrons can choose from neighborhood-inspired spots like a ‘Toomey’s’ with tequila, muddled blueberries, crème de violette, and satvacant, Toomey’s boasted that it had played host to the Brooklyn Dodgers and other borough royalty over its long reign.

“We are here for the neighborhood,” says Toro, who has lived on Fenimore Street for five years. “Doing and I had been talking about doing something like this for years and now we’ve done it. Now we want to be the local favorite.”

Located next door to Greenlight Bookstore, Edie Jo’s boasts a small but enticing menu of American classic comfort foods. All of the dishes, wines and beer are sourced from vendors or farms that use sustainable methods and respect the environment. In addition, much of the food and beer are regionally sourced.

While the restaurant is not the largest in the neighborhood on a square footage basis, it has 72 seats, as at them located at the large L-shaped bar that allows guests to watch the cooking in action in the open kitchen.

The bar employs four veteran bartenders who honted their talents at some of Manhattan’s hippest cocktail lounges and it features a specially created menu bound to titillate the taste buds.

“I’m a huge fan of cocktails,” says Toro. “I want guests to enjoy the food and the drinks.”

Toro says there will be no televisions. Instead, he hopes guests will enjoy the music system and find the kitchen frenzy an entertaining “local point.”

The former chef, who have years combined experience in food service and who took each other’s measure over the years, first met as co-workers at the perennially hip gastropub, the Spotted Pig.

Edie Jo’s is driven by a passion, knowledge and hands-on experience is without peer.

“I remember when I started in the restaurant business here in New York and the answer to every question was ‘Ask Ben Toro,’” Friedman said. “Ben has done it all. bar manager, server, branch managing and bartender. Anyone with a question, Ask Ben Toro.”

With chef Jonathan Short at the helm of the kitchen, Edie Jo’s joins a tiny but growing number of neighborhood restaurants that are truly chef driven.

A non-culinary-school educated professional who earned his experience and honed his talents as a line cook in a few extreme restaurants, Short was referred to Toro and Friedman as a very talented chef who was the best candidate to lead their kitchen.

The partners arranged a tasting audition and were won over by his culinary skills.

“We tasted some of his food and thought it was pretty great,” Toro recalls.

A few dishes that are bound to become house signatures are the pork shoulder steak with blackberry kichmich; the chicken and churrasco with a monkey head; and for six, the 6-ounce, grass-fed cheddar cheese.

With the exception of Guinness, all of the beer and the preparation of the food ingredients are grown locally in the New York region.

Toro says the restaurant procures its inventory from small vendors and farmers who process meats from grass-fed, free-range animals, vegetables are organically grown and flat fish is line-caught.

“That’s the most of everything we serve,” Toro stresses, “sustainable and organic.”

The arrival of Edie Jo’s, which opened in July, is also a David and Goliath story. Toro claims that Staubach was nominated to be vying to open a unit at the site. But the owners of the property refused to do business with a large chain operator.

“I’d like the name of Friedman’s daughter, Edie, and Toro’s daughter, Johanna.”

Open daily, from 5 p.m. until midnight. The kitchen is open until 11 p.m.

Coffee, breakfast, lunch, brunch and late-night menus are coming soon.

“More than a neighborhood dining destination, the restaurant will be the neighborhood’s favorite for many years,” said Douglas Friedman, who is spearheading the restaurant. “I’ve been around the block many times.”

Edie Jo’s is located at 601 Flatbush Avenue, corner of Smith Street, at the intersection of the Flatbush Avenue Extension and the historic Flatbush Avenue.

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Same as It Ever Was (continued from page 1)

Edward, government funding was secured for yet another replacement of streetlights, this time with historically attractive bishop's crook lampposts.

Edward was no fly-by-night community leader. He led the LMA effectively and productively from the mid-1970s until his death in 2018. (See the Ed Edwards tribute at Echo Online at www.leafertsmansion.org.)

Indeed, while the single-family covenant is the foundation of the association, neighborhood preservation, community togetherness, assuring government services and public safety are never-ending goals.

Improvements for All of PLG

Over the decades, many of the physical improvements the LMA oversaw benefited all of Prospect Lefferts Gardens and not just the Manor.

Even the annual house and garden tour, which was started by the Prospect Lefferts Gardens Neighborhood Association and bostly co-sponsored with the LMA before the latter became the sole sponsor, features homes not just from the Manor, but throughout the neighborhood.

Bob Marvin, a deep-rooted resident and longtime LMA board member, penned an article in the latest house tour issue of the Echo in which he recalled some neighbors were resistant to the LMA becoming a co-sponsor of the event.

Ironically, the house tour came during a period of white flight, racial steering and block-busting. For neighbors to open their homes to both other and strangers was a bold move for a community in racial tension.

Celebrating diversity—not gathering interior design tips or finding good contractors—was the prime objective in the early days of the house tour.

The Echo, whose origins are lost in the mists of time, has evolved, too, into a neighborhood-wide newspaper that covers community events, profiles neighborhood entrepreneurs, reports on social and economic trends impacting the area, and liaises with police and elected officials.

More recently the LMA became a supporter of the Voices of Lefferts Community Writing/Publishing Project, which through workshops, photographs and the publication of writing journals has given voice to the stories of a diverse group of people in Prospect Lefferts Gardens, including those living in Lefferts Manor.

And so, a century after its founding, the Lefferts Manor Association is celebrating the continuation of its mission to work for the improvement of the community.

Having held its 49th annual house tour this year, the association looks forward to publishing a Centennial Yearbook and invites you to the Centennial Gala at BKLYN Commons on September 14, to celebrate with neighbors.

All of those who have supported the LMA's efforts through the years can take some credit and pride for this 100-year milestone.

With its beautiful homes, dense population and vibrant surrounding community in close proximity to some of the most attractive amenities in Brooklyn, it's no wonder our neighborhood is one of the best places to call home in the city of New York.

Publications of the LMA Centennial Yearbook is planned for the fall. Keep an eye on the website, leafertsmansion.org, for information on ordering your copy.

Centennial Yearbook (continued from page 1)

Professor Ron Howellof Midwood I, has researched the history of the area and conducted interviews with longtime residents with a focus on the significance of the single-family covenant in forming the unique character of the area.

Copies of the Centennial Yearbook will be printed to order, and are expected to be available this fall. Look for flyers and information on leafertsmansion.org to order your copy.

As much as we are celebrating the last one hundred years, we hope the Centennial Yearbook will convey to future generations our understanding of why Lefferts Manor is such a special place to live.

Dues:
- $25.00 per household or
- $15.00 per senior citizen household

NON-R esident FRIENDS:
- $15.00 per household or $15.00 per senior citizen household
- $15.00 per household or $15.00 per senior citizen household

Enclosed is my check for $ - USE ONLY FOR NON-RESIDENT FRIENDS -

M A N O R RESIDENTS:
- 1 (we) subscribe to LMA's efforts to improve our neighborhood as a community of historic, landmarked, single-family homes.
- Dues: $45.00 per household or $45.00 per senior citizen household
- 1 (we) support the work of the LMA and would like to contribute to their efforts.

NAME
ADDRESS
E-MAIL
TELEPHONE

Echo is planned for the fall. Keep an eye on the website, leafertsmansion.org, for information on ordering your copy.