Preface

When Norman Lear created the ground-breaking 1970s television situation comedy *All in the Family*, he was trying to show how cultural change, particularly racial change, was affecting the country. To typify working-class America, Lear chose the borough of Queens. At a pivotal moment in late-twentieth-century history, blue-collar worker Archie Bunker and his family were fictional witnesses to change that was transforming the country. It is no accident that Lear chose Queens as a microcosm: at the time Queens was on its way to becoming the most populated and most diverse borough in the city. In fact, in 1992 the U.S. Census Bureau declared Queens, which is also a county, the most diverse county in the country.

This diversity is visible on the streets of every one of Queens's 99 neighborhoods and subneighborhoods. People come here from all parts of the world and join those who came before them to create social, cultural, ethnic, and religious communities—neighborhoods.

People define themselves by the neighborhoods they live in—residents of Jackson Heights take pride in their myriad languages and the diverse cuisines offered on Roosevelt Avenue; those in Hollis brag about the talents of native music moguls Russell Simmons and LL Cool J. Richmond Hill boasts historical architecture, and Astoria a thriving film and television industry. Long Island City is experiencing a renaissance of art galleries and new luxury development. And the Rockaways, which for years attracted surfers to its shores, are booming, offering a new generation of homeowners affordable housing near the beach.

Citizens Committee for New York City has an intimate connection with neighborhood residents throughout the borough of Queens. Its mission since 1975 has been to support and encourage neighborhood volunteer organizations throughout the city, working with them to improve the quality of life in every neighborhood.

In 1996, Citizens Committee for New York City joined forces with Kenneth T. Jackson and Yale University Press, editor and publisher of the highly acclaimed *Encyclopedia of New York City*, to create a series that will celebrate the history and spirit of every neighborhood in the city. These volumes, organized by borough, will tell the story of the world's greatest city from an intimate and unique perspective.

We began our research by surveying the myriad neighborhood and civic associations we serve. In interviews and questionnaires, we asked residents to tell us about their neighborhood: what its boundaries are, who their neighbors are, and how they spend their time. These neighborhood groups spend thousands of hours

every year on local initiatives, coming together for meetings, festivals, and community improvement projects. Their understanding of, their pride and investment in these neighborhoods uniquely qualified them to introduce us to their homes. With their help, we began to construct neighborhood portraits.

The 45 chapters of this book tell the stories of 56 neighborhoods. They also identify 43 smaller areas that we call subneighborhoods—areas that are now merged within the larger entities, which provide various services, but that still exhibit distinct features such as architectural similarities or a shared history or ethnic background. Flushing, for example, encompasses ten subneighborhoods; Long Island City has six. Each neighborhood portrait seeks to convey the “feel” of the area through an examination of its people, history, architecture, landmarks, points of interest, curiosities, and vital statistics. Each chapter contains a street map.

A word about the maps. Other than in *The Neighborhoods of Brooklyn*, the first book in this series, no one has ever before attempted to map all 400-plus of the city’s neighborhoods, although local maps have identified a number of the largest. This caution is understandable. There are no official government boundaries, and not every boundary is agreed upon by every resident of a particular area. Yet neighborhoods are “real” social entities. We identified boundaries on the basis of hundreds of hours of research and consultation with local civic and neighborhood associations. In the course of these interviews, we were delighted to discover strong agreement among resident groups concerning their own neighborhood’s boundaries as well as those of the neighborhoods around them. The maps are therefore meant as tools in understanding each neighborhood in its current social and political context. A composite map on page xxix situates each neighborhood geographically within the borough.

We are very pleased to include 2000 census numbers, compiled by Timothy Calabrese, Geographer for the Population Division of the New York City Department of City Planning. The Neighborhood Profiles found within each chapter provide quick reference to essential places and services. Because some services, like fire departments and hospitals, cross neighborhood boundaries, we have generally listed only those that actually sit in the neighborhood. Similarly, a comprehensive list of schools or services like senior or day-care centers provided difficulties both in terms of length and because new entities are constantly springing up to accommodate growing communities and changing populations. Famous schools and longstanding neighborhood associations are discussed in the text of the chapter.

This has been a rewarding and highly satisfying journey, and there are a number of people who helped us along the way who deserve our thanks. Michael Clark, former president of Citizens Committee for New York City, Tina Weiner of

Yale University Press, and their mutual friend Thomas H. Guinzburg envisioned the project, which would not have been possible without the generous support of our funders: JPMorgan Chase and Furthermore, a program of the J.M. Kaplan Fund. Ben Ness Photos & Digital donated a portion of the photo processing. Development Director Michelle LeMay-Santiago spearheaded the fundraising.

Kenneth T. Jackson, the renowned New York City historian, general editor of the series, and editor of the *Encyclopedia of New York City*—an invaluable source of information on the neighborhoods of Queens—vetted the manuscript and wrote the introduction, which gives an overview of the borough. James Driscoll, president of the Queens Historical Society, who himself has an encyclopedic knowledge of the borough, was always on hand to answer questions and offer guidance. In addition, he created the lively timeline at the back of this volume. Stanley Cogan, Queens Borough Historian, was an early supporter of the project and has cheered us on every step of the way. The historian and prolific author Vincent Seyfried is another Queens expert to whom we are grateful for advice and support.

At the Long Island Room of the Queens Library in Jamaica, we dove into an enormous pool of files containing historical documents and archival photographs—a fascinating experience facilitated by John Hyslop, assistant manager of the Long Island Division. Other libraries throughout the Queens County system helped us with our extensive research, as did the experts at the main branch of the New York Public Library.

The various Queens neighborhood historical societies were a tremendous source of information in researching this book, and we offer our thanks to them for documenting the fascinating details of their communities. For statistics and current data, we called upon a number of Borough District Offices, which provided us with essential information. The list is long, but we would like to thank them all: 112th Precinct Community Council, Forest Hills; 118th Avenue Block Association, St. Albans; 149th Street Civic Association, Inc., South Ozone Park; 207th Street Block Association of Bayside, Inc., Bayside; 6300 Wetherole Street Homeowners Association, Rego Park; 68th Street Block Association, Maspeth; 96-97-98-99-100-104th Street Block Association, Corona; 97th Place Block Association, Corona; Academy of Aeronautics, East Elmhurst; Adoptive Families of Older Children, Flushing; American Littoral Society—Northeast Chapter, Broad Channel; American-Bangladesh Friendship Association, Jamaica; Arverne Neighborhood Organization, Arverne; Asian American Association, Corona; Astoria Local Development Corporation, Astoria; Astoria Restoration Association, Astoria; Baisley Park Community League, Jamaica; Bayside Hills Civic Association, Bayside; Bayswater Security Patrol, Far Rockaway; Be Counted For, Inc., Hollis; Bellaire/Bell-Vill Civic Association, Hollis; Bellerose Commonwealth

Civic Association, Bellerose/Bellerose Manor; Botanical Society of Sunnyside, Sunnyside; Boundary Civic Association of Little Neck, Little Neck; Bowne Park Civic Association, Flushing; The Brathwaite Group, Jamaica; Briarwood Community Association, Briarwood; Brinkerhoff Action Association, Inc., St. Albans; Brookfield Civic Association, Inc., Springfield Gardens; Bukharian Jewish Museum, Rego Park; Cambria Heights Civic Association, Cambria Heights; Catholic Charities of Brooklyn and Queens, Long Island City; Manuel Caughman; Cedar Grove Civic Homeowners Association of Queensboro Hill, Inc., Flushing; Center for American Muslim Research and Information, Inc., Richmond Hill; Central Astoria Local Development Coalition, Astoria; Central Queens Partnership/Q.C.G.C., Flushing; Cherokee Language and Cultural Circle, Rosedale; Cherry Office Products, Richmond Hill; Church of Holy Child Jesus, Richmond Hill; Citizens Against Recidivism, Inc., Arverne; City Councilman Peter Vallone, Astoria; Civic Association of Utopia Estates, Fresh Meadows; Clearview Civic Association, Bayside; College Point Civic Association, College Point; College Point Civic/Taxpayers Association, College Point; Communities of Maspeth Elmhurst Together, Inc., Maspeth; Community Board 8, Jamaica; Community Board 1, Astoria; Community Board 13, Springfield Gardens; Community Board 7, Flushing; Community Board 9, Kew Gardens; Community Board 9, Ozone Park; Community Conciliation Network, Corona; The Cornucopia Society, Inc., Springfield Gardens; Council for Unity, Jamaica/Briarwood; Creedmoor Civic Association, Bellerose/Bellerose Manor; Cultural Awareness Council, Jackson Heights; Cultural Collaborative Jamaica, Jamaica; Douglaston Bay Manor Civic Association, Douglaston; Douglaston Civic Association, Douglaston; Dunton Block Civic Association, Jamaica; Dutch Kills Civic Association, Long Island City; East Bayside Homeowners Association, Inc., Bayside; East Elmhurst Civic Association, East Elmhurst; Editorial Historian, Community Newspaper, Bayside; Elmira, Dunlop and Liberty Avenues Neighborhood Association, St. Albans; Family Learning Project, Inc., Briarwood; Federated Blocks of Laurelton, Laurelton; Federation of Italian American Organizations of Queens, Astoria; Flushing Heights Civic Association, Fresh Meadows/Flushing; Forest Hills Action League, Forest Hills; Forest Hills Chamber of Commerce, Forest Hills; Forest Hills Community and Civic Association, Inc., Forest Hills; Forest Hills Garden Corporation, Forest Hills; Forest Hills-Van Court Association, Forest Hills; Forest Hills Volunteer Ambulance Corps, Inc., Forest Hills; Forest Park Senior Citizens Center, Woodhaven; Fresh Meadows Tenant Association, Fresh Meadows; Friendly Block Association, Springfield Gardens; Friends of Baisley Pond Park, Jamaica; Friends of Crocheon Park, Bayside; Garden Club of Laurelton, Laurelton; Girl Scouts no. 6484, Springfield Gardens; Glendale Civilian Observation Patrol, Glendale; Glendale Property Owners' Association, Inc., Glendale; Goodwill Industries of Greater NY

& NJ, Astoria; The Greater Astoria Historical Society, Astoria; Greater Ridgewood Restoration Corporation, Ridgewood; Greater Woodhaven Development Corporation, Woodhaven; Haitian Americans United for Progress (HAUP Inc.), Cambria Heights; Hanover Court Mutual Housing Cooperative, Inc., Elmhurst; Arthur Hill, St. Albans; Hillcrest Estates Civic Association, Jamaica; Hispanic Society, Flushing; Holliswood Civic Association, Holliswood; The Hope United Methodist Church of New York, Corona; Hour Children, Long Island City; Hunters Point Community Coalition, Long Island City; Hunters Point Community Development Corporation, Long Island City; Ilion Area Block Association, Inc., St. Albans; Islamic Circle of North America, Jamaica; Ivanhoe Park Civic Association, Glendale; Jackie Robinson School, Springfield Gardens; Jackson Heights Beautification Group, Jackson Heights; Jackson Heights Neighborhood Association, Inc., Jackson Heights; Jamaica Hill Community Association, Jamaica; J-Cap, South Ozone Park; Jewish Community Council of the Rockaway Peninsula, Far Rockaway; Juniper Park Civic Association, Middle Village; Kew Gardens Civic Association, Inc., Kew Gardens; Kew Gardens Hills Civic Association, Inc., Kew Gardens Hills; Kissena Park Civic Association, Flushing; Korean-American Senior Citizens Counseling Center, Flushing; La Asociasion Benefica, Corona; Lama Meadows Civic Association, Fresh Meadows; Laurelton Association, Laurelton; Little Sisters of the Poor Convent, Queens Village; Long Island City Business Development Corporation, Long Island City; Long Island City Interblock Association, Long Island City; Margert Community Corporation, Far Rockaway; Maspeth Chamber of Commerce, Maspeth; Materials for the Arts, Long Island City; Merrick Boulevard Local Development Corporation, St. Albans; Montibellier Park Warriors, Inc., Laurelton; Nankama International, Jamaica; National Action Network, Flushing; New York City Outward Bound Center, Long Island City; North Bellerose Civic Association, Bellerose; North Hills Estates Civic Association, Little Neck; North Queens Home Owners Civic Association, Jackson Heights; North Star Civic Association, Jamaica; Nu Image Family Center, Jamaica; Our Savior Lutheran Church, Jamaica; Ozone Tudor Civic Association, Ozone Park; P.S. 80Q, Jamaica; Parkside Civic Association, Inc., Queens Village; Parkway Village Historical Society, Kew Gardens Hills; Partnership for Parks; Polonians Organized to Minister to Our Community (POMOC), Maspeth; The Property Civic Association, Bayside; Pomonok Neighborhood Center, Inc., Flushing; Property Owners/Resident Association, Middle Village; PS 101Q, Forest Hills; Queens Borough President; Queens Civic Congress, Inc., Flushing; Queens County Farm Museum, Bellerose; Queens Sickie Cell Advocacy Network, Inc., St. Albans; Queens Village Civic Association, Queens Village; Queensbridge Community In Action, Long Island City; Queensbridge Tenant Council, Long Island City; Queensbridge Tenants Association, Long Island City; Rachel L.

Carson Intermediate School 237Q, Flushing; Ravenswood Resident Association Inc., Long Island City; Remsen Park Coalition, Forest Hills; Richmond Hill Association, Richmond Hill; Richmond Hill Hall Corporation, Richmond Hill; Ridgewood Historical Society, Ridgewood; Rockaway Artists Alliance, Rockaway Park; Rockaway Beach Civic Association, Inc., Rockaway Beach; Rockaway Development and Revitalization Corporation, Far Rockaway; Rocky Hill Civic Association, Bellerose Manor; Rosedale Civic Association, Inc., Rosedale; Rosedale Civilian Patrol, Rosedale; Saint Johns University, Jamaica Estates; The Salvation Army, Long Island City; Silvercup Studios, Long Island City; Socrates Sculpture Park, Long Island City; South Asian Youth Action (SAYA), Elmhurst; South Ozone Park Community Development Corporation, South Ozone Park; Spring Park Civic Association, Howard Beach; Springfield Rosedale Community Action Association, Springfield Gardens; Spring-Gar Community Civic Association, Springfield Gardens; St. Michael's Church, Flushing; Steinway Child and Family Services, Long Island City; Summerfield Block Association, Ridgewood; Sunnyside Chamber of Commerce, Sunnyside; Sunnyside Community Services, Sunnyside; Sunnyside Foundation for Community Planning and Preservation, Sunnyside; Sutphin Boulevard Local Development Corporation, South Ozone Park; Theatrical and Artistic Women of NY (TAWNY), Jamaica; Times Ledger, Queens; Tri-Block Association, Jackson Heights; Two Coves Community Redevelopment and Business Advisory Councils, Astoria; United Forties Civic Association, Woodside; Utopia Improvement Association, Fresh Meadows; Wayanda Civic Association, Inc., Queens Village; West Cunningham Park Civic Association, Fresh Meadows; West Lawrence Civic Association, Far Rockaway; West Maspeth Local Development Corporation, Maspeth; The Whitestone Boosters Civic Association, Whitestone; The William Simmons Community Garden Club, Jamaica; Win-Wood Neighbors, Woodside; Women of Faith, Inc., Jamaica; Woodhaven Business Improvement District, Woodhaven; Woodhull Civic Association, Hollis; Woodside on the Move, Woodside; YMCA-NYC Flushing Branch, Flushing.

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There is no one who took this project more to heart than photographer Ray Anastas, who donated his time and huge talent to capturing the essence and spirit of Queens in visual detail. He rode his bicycle, red helmet on his head, camera dangling from his shoulder, and covered hundreds of miles in both warm and cold weather to get the right shot.

Kaleila Pu-Folkes did an enormous amount of work, from mapping neighborhood boundaries and researching area profiles to assisting in sorting through the archival photography. She is a gem. Others were critical to this project: Delia Valladares-Perez, Ana Diaz, Melissa Rodriguez, Thelma Leemans, and Jesse Eng. They each played an important part in gathering vital information. Project Coordinator Jemilah Magnusson entered the project at a late stage, but she plunged right into things, deftly handling the myriad details connected with the final stages.

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This project would not have been possible without the serendipitous reunion of two women who grew up as friends in Jackson Heights and found each other as adults: Sonia S. Estreich, from Citizens Committee for New York City, and Claudia Gryvatz Copquin, the author of this book. Sonia has been the driving force of this project from the beginning and was involved in every aspect, from raising funds and recruiting the team to overseeing the mapping and researching and editing the entries. Claudia, a South American immigrant who settled in Queens as a child with her family in the late 1960s, is an award-winning freelance journalist and editor who writes extensively for *Newsday* and other publications. Having spent thousands of hours researching and writing about Queens’s culture, history, people, and neighborhoods, she has happily discovered how extraordinary the borough she grew up in really is.

Last, we thank the people who live in this dynamic borough—they are the ones who make Queens such an intriguing place. For a glimpse into their lives and their neighborhoods, take a stroll through these pages. It’s a fascinating trip.

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