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**\* \* \* PRESS RELEASE \* \* \***

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Long Hidden Historic Façade of Clifton's Brookdale Cafeteria Revealed**

*After more than 50 years unseen, original façade of beloved cafeteria will undergo restoration as part of the Bringing Back Broadway initiative*

**LOS ANGELES (Feb. 8, 2012)** – The long hidden historic façade of Clifton's Brookdale Cafeteria on Broadway in Downtown Los Angeles was revealed today, as a first step toward its restoration.

The historic event was hosted by Andrew Meieran, creative director of Clifton's Cafeteria and The Edison and Councilmember José Huizar in association with the Bringing Back Broadway initiative. Linda Dishman, Executive Director of the Los Angeles Conservancy was also on hand for this morning's ceremony to unveil the original façade.

The last time the original façade was seen was in the 1960s when metal grates were installed in order to "modernize" the appearance of the front of the beloved historic cafeteria.

Dozens of onlookers, preservationists and downtown leaders were on hand for the celebration.

"Clifton's is the only remaining business that has survived in its original form on Broadway since its golden era. As such, the reveal of the original façade envisioned by Clifford Clinton is an important symbolic beginning to truly bringing back the Broadway of invention, hope and wonder," said Andrew Meieran, creative director of Clifton's Brookdale.

"We hope this moment will be the driving force for positive change in the community and will continue to spark the imagination of millions of guests for many years in the future."

Councilmember Huizar heads up the Bringing Back Broadway initiative, a 10-year plan to revitalize Broadway and the Historic Core. Huizar complimented Meieran and his team for persistence and dedication to the Clifton's renovation project, despite unexpected challenges.

"Taking on renovation and preservation on this scale is no small feat," said Councilmember José Huizar. "Today offers further proof that Andrew Meieran and his team are truly dedicated to honoring Clifton's storied past while also preparing to usher it into the future. We're proud this legacy is being preserved and thank Andrew for setting an example that others on Broadway can surely follow."

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Restoration of the original façade will be a milestone in the revitalization of Broadway and in the continuation of Clifton's incredible place as a cultural, social and architectural landmark in Los Angeles. Founded by Clifford Clinton, the celebrated cafeteria is the oldest surviving cafeteria style eatery in Los Angeles, California and the largest cafeteria in the world.

Family owned and run since 1935, the last remaining Clifton's of the original restaurant chain is a treasured piece of Los Angeles history. Born from the uncertainty and need of the Great Depression, Clifton's Cafeterias became retreats from the harsh economic realities of 1930s America. A unique blend of fantasy architecture and social activism, Clifton's Cafeterias represented the best of American entrepreneurship and imagination, as the Clinton family employed a golden rule of "pay what you can," a life-saver to those hard hit by the Great Depression.

Renovation of Clifton's Cafeteria began in fall 2010, shortly after the business was purchased by Andrew Meieran. Plans are to restore much of the cafeteria to its original condition, maintaining historic elements while updating building systems, infrastructure, disabled access, restrooms and services.

Specifics of the plan include maintaining cafeteria-style food service (with an updated menu) on the ground floor during day and evening hours, complemented by the conversion of currently underutilized upper-floor space to provide a nightlife destination in the form of a neighborhood lounge with sit-down restaurant service.

Meieran also plans to reactivate Clifton's top-floor commercial bakery and offer fresh baked breads and pastries under the Clifton's brand.

The 47,000 square foot building situated on five floors with its own basement remained open through much of the work, only closing recently on a temporary basis while it undergoes its most comprehensive phase of renovation involving kitchen facility upgrades.

The much beloved Broadway location, originally known as Clifton's Brookdale, was designed to resemble a redwood glen similar to those frequented by Clifford Clinton when he was growing up in Monterey, California. The whimsical design originally included a wishing well, limeade springs and a mechanical sherbet geyser. Surviving original elements that helped create the magical setting include a small chapel, full size faux redwood trees and a waterfall that meanders its way through the dining room.

Meieran's restoration and renovation process, which will focus on preservation of character-defining elements of both the interior and exterior, will culminate in his desire to nominate Clifton's Brookdale Cafeteria for designation as a Los Angeles Cultural Monument and have it registered on state and national registries of historic places. Meieran plans to work with the Los Angeles Conservancy on these efforts.

"Clifton's is one of the treasures of Los Angeles and the LA Conservancy is looking forward to seeing the original façade when it is unveiled, putting the building one step closer to restoration," said Linda Dishman, Executive Director of the Los Angeles Conservancy.

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Huizar's Bringing Back Broadway initiative recently celebrated the fourth year of its 10-year plan for revitalization of the famous historic street. Bringing Back Broadway has had much to celebrate in recent weeks, with the announcement that national hotelier Ace Hotel and national retail giant Ross Dress for Less will locate on Broadway, while famed fashion designer Tarina Tarantino will move the world headquarters and Los Angeles flagship boutique for her brand to a Broadway building she has dubbed the Sparkle Factory. Figaro Bistro, Royal Claytons English Pub, Two Boots Pizza and Famima Market are joining the Broadway trend with openings planned this year, as the team from Umami Burger prepare for their grand opening later this month.

In 2010, Andrew Meieran's renovation plan for Clifton's Cafeteria was one of the first major Bringing Back Broadway announcements for new business plans on Broadway.

"Momentum is clearly building and we will undoubtedly see even more great things for Broadway in the coming years," said Councilmember Huizar. "As I've said before, historic preservation is not about pressing the pause button, but about finding ways to honor the wonderful history that makes Broadway so special, and utilize our historic buildings and historic businesses in ways that allow them to be successful and vital into the next generation."

This portion of Broadway falls within the boundaries of the Historic Downtown Business Improvement District (HD-BID).

"Seeing Clifton's restored is an inspiration," said Blair Besten, Executive Director of the HD-BID. "There are so many wonderful historic properties in this area that make Historic Downtown a very special place to do business. We welcome this kind of investment and vision to the district as we continue to thrive and create an even better Downtown."

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