

LODGING

An Enduring Legacy

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The Palmer House Hilton, the country's longest continually operating hotel and birthplace of the American Hotel & Lodging Association, celebrated its 140th anniversary in grand fashion with a dedicated ceremony in September. Speaking at the ceremony were Illinois Governor Patrick Quinn and Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley, alongside notable guests Chicago Alderman Brendan Reilly, Master of Ceremonies Bill Kurtis, and Potter Palmer IV. During the historic occasion, the property unveiled its recently appointed Chicago landmark plaque. General Manager Dean Lane and Thor Equities' Joseph J. Sitt personally welcomed guests to the event.

"This is truly a momentous occasion—a great American story centered around a visionary man," says Lane.

On Sept. 26, 1871, businessman Potter Palmer opened the hotel, initiating a history of welcoming guests from all corners of the globe, including every U.S. president. The Palmer House Hilton is one of 26 surviving grand palace hotels in the United States, and houses countless works of art, historical inventions, and memories.

"The Palmer House is part of what makes Chicago the great American city it is today," says Mayor Daley. "It's one of those rare historical treasures that we're so proud to still have today and a property that you just can't re-create."

Marrying old world grandeur with modern day amenities, the majestic hotel—situated in the heart of Chicago's Loop neighborhood—originally was a wedding gift from Palmer to his wife Bertha, a renowned socialite, philanthropist and patron of the arts.

The outdoor ceremony took place in front of the property's main entrance. After some opening remarks by dignitaries, a dedicated bronze plaque was unveiled, recognizing the hotel as a valued landmark in the City of Chicago. After the ceremony, guests were invited into the lobby of the hotel for a special celebratory reception, featuring a champagne toast and special cake cutting, which was led by Executive Pastry Chef Fabrice Bouet.

