



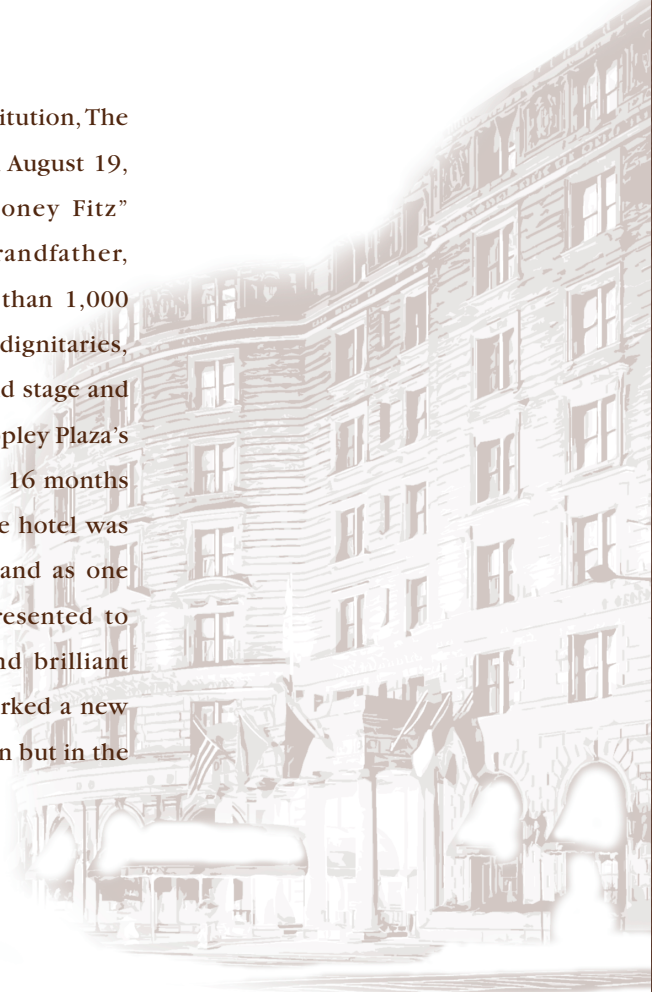
The History of a Grand Hotel



1912

MORE THAN 1,000 DISTINGUISHED VISITORS
CELEBRATED THE HOTEL'S OPENING.

*L*ong regarded as a Boston institution, The Copley Plaza was formally opened on August 19, 1912. Mayor of Boston John F. “Honey Fitz” Fitzgerald, President Kennedy’s grandfather, presided over a reception for more than 1,000 guests, including local and national dignitaries, civic leaders, captains of industry, and stage and movie stars. So prestigious was The Copley Plaza’s opening that rooms had been booked 16 months in advance. The total cost to open the hotel was an extravagant sum of \$5.5 million, and as one newspaper noted, “The opening presented to Boston one of the most colorful and brilliant pictures the city has ever seen. It marked a new era in hotel-keeping, not only in Boston but in the entire country.”





The lobby's gilded, coffered ceilings and trompe l'oeil paintings are reminiscent of an opulent European palace.

The Copley Plaza was built on the original site of the Museum of Fine Arts. Named in honor of John Singleton Copley (1738-1774), the great American painter, it stands with the Boston Public Library and Trinity Church as one of the architectural jewels of Copley Square. The hotel's architect was Henry Janeway Hardenbergh, who also designed other famous hotels, including the Willard Hotel in Washington D.C. and The Plaza in New York, The Copley Plaza's "sister" hotel. Though many decades have passed since The Plaza and The Copley Plaza opened, today's visitor would have an experience very similar to visitors in 1912. Much of the Classical architecture and décor have been preserved, including the famous back-to-back "P" monogram seen throughout both hotels today. The Copley Plaza, a seven floor limestone structure, combines elements of French and Venetian Renaissance. The "E" shaped building is a city block large and strongly supported by wooden pilings driven to the depth of 70 feet below street level.

Then and now, the inside of The Fairmont Copley Plaza has a palatial quality. The sweeping sense of space and opulent décor create a feeling of life lived on a grand scale.

In addition to being considered the last word in luxury and comfort, The Fairmont Copley Plaza is also recognized as an innovator in the hotel industry. The hotel is known for these industry firsts: the first completely air-conditioned hotel in Boston, the first hotel with an international reservations system, and the first to accept credit cards.

Since its early days, The Fairmont Copley Plaza has been host to many of the world's most distinguished citizens. Every U.S. President since William Howard Taft has visited the Copley Plaza. Royalty from Greece, Thailand, Abyssinia, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Belgium, Denmark and England have visited the hotel. Celebrities including Tony Bennett, Lena Horne, Dorothy Lewis, Frank Sinatra and Luciano Pavarotti have also been guests. In addition, Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton chose The Copley Plaza for their second honeymoon.

1951

THE COPLEY PLAZA WELCOMED
GENERAL DOUGLAS MACARTHUR.

*The wartime elevator "boys,"
of The Copley Plaza, October 7, 1942.
During World War II elevator operators
had to be at least 65 years of age,
releasing younger workers for war
production activities. The combined
age of the eight operators pictured
here is 518. (The Boston Herald)*





*A veritable jewel box of a room,
the Grand Ballroom has been the scene
of receptions for heads of state and royalty.*

1962

NEARLY ONE THOUSAND
VISITORS LINED UP TO GREET
PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY
IN THE GRAND BALLROOM.

Today, The Fairmont Copley Plaza remains the epitome of style and luxury. All the guest rooms and suites have been designed and decorated to reflect the grace of a glorious past, and updated with contemporary conveniences. The entrance hallway has been called Peacock Alley since the 1920s because of the ongoing parade of elegantly dressed Bostonians strolling past to attend tea dances and social events. The majestic 5,000 square foot lobby boasts a 21-foot high gilded coffered ceiling with Waterford crystal chandeliers and Italian marble columns.

The Grand Ballroom is a magnificent room filled with crystal chandeliers, mirrors and gilded decorations. In the past, it was known for its Waltz Evenings, during which the room would be a swirl of satin gowns, sparkling jewelry and music. For one theme ball, it was transformed into a Venetian setting. Gondolas floated down the center of the parquet floor on which a Grand Canal had been built.

In later years, excitement was equally high as 1,000 well-wishers waited to greet President John F. Kennedy and shake his hand. Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen mesmerized more than 1,000 guests in the Grand Ballroom with one of his famous addresses. And King Saud of Saudi Arabia hosted a memorable dinner for 55 guests where the Grand Ballroom was transformed into a lush garden setting with \$25,000 worth of flowers and plants flown in from California. The evening was made even more unforgettable by the opulent gold table service used for the meal.

Overlooking Copley Square is the exquisite Oval Room, whose Louis XIV décor features an iridescent “essence of pearl” finish on the shell lighting, a cloud and sky mural on the ceiling, and faithfully restored relief work. During the 1930s, the Oval Room was the scene of the popular tea dances as well as being “the” place to be for special events. While painting his murals at the Boston Public Library, John Singer Sargent, and his patron Isabella Stewart Gardner, would be seen lunching in the Oval Room.

*Rococo décor complements the fanciful
cloud and sky ceiling in the Oval Room.*





*The Oak Bar's history dates
back to the repeal of Prohibition.*

The Oval Room is such a popular venue that more people have been married there than in neighboring Trinity Church. There was a skating rink under the dance floor where Rudy Valle sang in the 1930s, and skating was arranged as an entertainment for King Saud's harem and children in the 1960s.

Today, visitors from around the world may experience The Fairmont Copley Plaza's history and charm as guests and by visiting the Oak Room and the Oak Bar. The Oak Room offers award-winning cuisine and elegant décor. Its 30-foot high vaulted ceiling features intricate plasterwork with detailed cameos. Waterford crystal chandeliers sparkle throughout the restaurant.

The upper walls have a faux bois finish to blend them with the wood paneling below, and Oriental carpets cover the floors to complete the grand effect.

During Prohibition, the Oak Bar was known as the Merry-Go-Round Bar, a lively gathering place. Today, the Oak Bar is an elegant lounge reminiscent of a British Officers' Club. An ornately gilded coffered ceiling and rich dark wood paneling, complemented by cool marble wall hangings, make this an intimate setting for relaxing with friends.

Today, with the completion of a multimillion dollar restoration, the Fairmont Copley Plaza shines brighter than ever. The hotel celebrates its connection to the city with eight culturally themed suites that celebrate the history of Boston. The Fairmont Copley Plaza is truly part of the community.

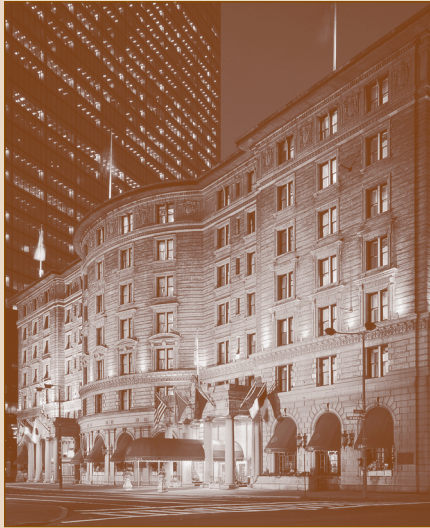


In the 1930s, patrons celebrated Prohibition's end with a flourish in the Merry-Go-Round Bar, which has since been transformed into the Oak Bar.

Since its opening in 1912, The Fairmont Copley Plaza has been known as an architectural landmark. In recognition of its rich tradition and history, it was inducted into the National Trust Historic Hotels of America in 1998. The Fairmont Copley Plaza joins more than two hundred hotels and resorts throughout the country that have been recognized for preserving historic integrity, architecture and ambiance.

Today the Fairmont Copley Plaza is part of Fairmont Hotel & Resorts, a collection of properties around the world that has been creating memories for guests for more than 100 years.

From the very moment guests step into The Fairmont Copley Plaza, they experience the hospitality of a forgotten era. As the hotel nears a century of service, the “Grande Dame of Boston,” as it is affectionately known, remains a timeless haven in which the cares of the world retreat, and luxury and gracious service are a way of life.



The Fairmont Copley Plaza is a splendid example of French and Venetian Renaissance design.

THE *Fairmont*
COPLEY PLAZA
BOSTON

138 ST. JAMES AVENUE

BOSTON, MA 02116

617-267-5300

[www.fairmont.com/copley plaza](http://www.fairmont.com/copley-plaza)

MEMBER OF NATIONAL TRUST HISTORIC HOTELS OF AMERICA™