

# Historic Hotels!

## XXI: Grand Rapids's *The Pantlind*

The Amway Grand Plaza stands as a tribute to the days when Grand Rapids, Michigan, held fame for its flamboyant lumber barons and fine furniture sold the world over. A paragon of four-star luxury along the Grand River, the hotel features splendid antique furnishings and polished wood trim throughout its grand lobby and 682 designer rooms. Located on the east bank of the river, in the heart of the city's business and entertainment district, the hotel steals guests' hearts from the moment they enter the lobby. Dramatic Austrian crystal chandeliers sparkle overhead, backed by a 7,000-square-foot domed ceiling with the largest application of gold leaf in North America.

Originally built in 1913 as the Pantlind Hotel, the architecture boasts a regal English Adams design carried out by Warren & Westmore of New York City, the same firm that designed New York's Grand Central Station and Biltmore Hotel. By 1925, the Pantlind Hotel was termed "One of the Ten Finest Hotels in America." One of the world's largest gold-leafed ceilings can be found in the Pantlind lobby. Various meeting rooms are named for people who were influential in the history of Grand Rapids and our nation. The Robinson Room is named for the founder of Ada, Michigan, site of Amway Corporation world headquarters. The Campau Room is named after the city's founding father, fur trader Louis Campau. The Lyon Room is named in honor of Lucius Lyon, a US senator from 1836 to 1840 and a prominent surveyor and land developer. The President Ford Room is named

for Gerald R. Ford, 38th President and Grand Rapids' most illustrious citizen.

In 1978, the Amway Corporation purchased the hotel and restored it to its original elegance. In 1983, a 29-story glass tower joined the historic landmark.

As so many other great old hotels, the Pantlind has been given a new lease on life.

