



**MEDIA CONTACTS:**

KTCpr

Telephone: (516) 594-4100

Hilari Graff / [H.Graff@KTCpr.com](mailto:H.Graff@KTCpr.com)

Theresa M. Oakes / [T.Oakes@KTCpr.com](mailto:T.Oakes@KTCpr.com)

PRESS RELEASE #126

**THE NEW YORKER HOTEL HONORED BY IEEE  
WITH MILESTONE AWARD IN ENGINEERING**

***Only Hotel to Make Milestone List of More Than 75; Joins Edison, Marconi and Others***

NEW YORK, NY – The historic New Yorker Hotel (<http://www.newyorkerhotel.com>), located in the heart of New York City, joins Thomas Edison and Marconi and becomes the first hotel to be honored with the prestigious Milestone Award in Electrical Engineering and Computing from IEEE, the world’s leading professional association for the advancement of technology (<http://www.ieee.org>). The New Yorker Hotel has been recognized for having the largest private generating plant in the United States when the hotel opened its doors 78 years ago.

During a special dedication ceremony held at The New Yorker Hotel on Sept. 25, the hotel received a commemorative plaque that reads:

*Largest Private (DC) Generating Plant in the U.S.A., 1929*

*The Direct Current (dc) generating plant installed at The New Yorker Hotel, capable of supplying electrical power sufficient for a city of 35,000 people, was the largest private generating plant in the U.S.A. Steam engines drove electric generators, with exhaust steam used for heating and other facilities. The installation used more than two hundred dc motors, and was controlled from a seven-foot (two-meter) high, sixty-foot (eighteen-meter) long switchboard.*

Keynote speaker Dr. Alexander B. Magoun, curator of the Sarnoff Corporation and a member of the IEEE History Committee, said, “The Milestones, and the recognition of human

accomplishment that their plaques represent, serve a greater purpose than rosy retrospectives, for both the IEEE and the global society in which its members act. Even more than a solution to engineering problems, regionally or globally, Milestone technologies represent a solution to social problems that is ways to improve life or mitigate its difficulties for the much larger population of non-engineers.”

He continued, “In the case of The New Yorker Hotel’s power plant, its designers created a model of efficiency that sets an example of environmental as well as economic consideration, one that their successors should follow two and three generations later.

“The New Yorker’s power plant points toward an increasingly co-generational future, which can come none too quickly in an industry where traditional coal- and oil-fired plants have been netting only one-third of the energy in their fuels for over 50 years. Here is where we can identify a practical as well as historical role for honoring the best engineers of the IEEE and its predecessor organizations.”

In a second keynote address delivered by Joe Kinney, senior project engineer at The New Yorker Hotel, Kinney asked, “What is so special about a power plant constructed 80 years ago and decommissioned about 40 years ago that we still remember it today? It’s not because it was the biggest private power plant, though it was, and it’s not because any single component of the system was revolutionary. It’s because of the way they were put together.”

Kinney added, “Today, if we talk about burning coal from the U.S. rather than foreign oil or about distributed generation, combined heat and power, heat reclamation or co-generation, you have mentioned all the buzz words of a modern energy-efficient facility. The New Yorker Hotel was all of that when it opened in 1930. How about using a non-CFC, non-toxic, non-flammable refrigerant? Been there, done that with CO<sub>2</sub> 80 years ago.”

During Kinney’s presentation, he celebrated Warren D. Lewis, the visionary and creator of The New Yorker Hotel’s power plant, by saying, “The kind of thinking and analysis that Mr. Lewis did in 1928 would be considered state-of-the-art today.”

In addition to the purely motive function of providing power to the system, the plant located in The New Yorker Hotel was the vehicle that motorized air conditioning, refrigeration, lighting, cooking, laundering, vacuum cleaning as well as all of the collateral services requiring heat.

With this distinction, The New Yorker Hotel joins an elite group of more than 75 IEEE Milestones around the world including Volta’s Electrical Battery Invention (1799), the Electric Fire Alarm System (1852), Thomas Alva Edison Historic Site at Menlo Park (1876), Marconi’s Early Wireless Experiments (1895), FM Police Radio Communication (1940), the First Wearable Cardiac Pacemaker (1957-58), and the Electronic Quartz Wristwatch (1969). The New Yorker Hotel is also the only hotel to make this impressive list.

IEEE established its Electrical Engineering Milestones program in 1983 in order to honor significant achievements in the history of electrical and electronics engineering. IEEE is the world's largest technical professional society with more than 375,000 members in over 160 countries. The Milestone program honors notable achievements made at least 25 years ago that involved a unique solution to an engineering problem and had at least regional impact.

The New Yorker Hotel is also well-known in the engineering and electrical world as the home to visionary Nikola Tesla during the last ten years of his life. Tesla is credited with inventing AC electrical power and possessing a body of work that made possible wireless transmissions and X-rays.

“When The New Yorker Hotel debuted on Jan. 2, 1930,” said General Manager Kevin Smith, “it was big news in a multitude of ways, none the least of which was the scope of its physical structure and supporting facilities. As we continue to strive for the very best in our city with a \$65 million renovation and refurbishment nearing completion, we are pleased that IEEE singled us out to honor our storied legacy.”

The \$65 million renovation, noted Smith, is carefully designed to recapture the style and character of The New Yorker Hotel – still one of the largest art deco structures in New York City – while adding significant modernization that includes the installation of a new state-of-the-art four-pipe HVAC system to allow control of heating and cooling by individual guests throughout the year.

In addition to the HVAC system, the scope of the renovation project includes the following:

- Total overhaul of furniture, carpets, wallpaper and fixtures in both the guest rooms and the hallways on the guest floors
- Complete redesign of the lobby
- Facelift of the entire front of the hotel on Eighth Avenue – replacing signage, re-facing the stonework, and changing the marquee
- Refurbishment of the meeting space including the mezzanine, foyer, Crystal Room and Grand Ballroom (new lighting, paint, wallpaper and carpeting)
- Guest services enhancements including improved free Wi-Fi service and better television programming
- Upgrade and refurbishment of the hotel's restaurants (the 24-hour Tick Tock Diner and Cooper's Tavern)

The design concept is the exotic and glamorous New York/Hollywood art deco style of the 1930's, as a nod to the hotel's past, but with a distinctive modern edge. This project marks the property's first renovation since 2000.

### **The New Yorker Hotel**

Conveniently located at 34<sup>th</sup> Street and Eighth Avenue in Manhattan, across from Madison Square Garden, The New Yorker Hotel is one of the largest art deco buildings in New York City. Well-suited for groups, business and leisure travelers as well as anyone seeking a great value and an unrivaled location in Manhattan, The New Yorker Hotel features 912 guest rooms (several with terraces and all offering spectacular views), 25,000 square feet of meeting space (two stately ballrooms and 14 meeting and conference rooms), an award-winning catering department, the 24-hour Tick Tock Diner and Cooper's Tavern, a complimentary Fitness Center, and a fully-equipped Business Center.

**For more information about The New Yorker Hotel, contact toll-free in the U.S. and Canada 866-800-3088 or visit <http://www.newyorkerhotel.com>.**

### **IEEE**

The IEEE (Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, Inc.) is the world's largest technical professional society. Through its more than 375,000 members in 160 countries, the organization is a leading authority on a wide variety of areas ranging from aerospace systems, computers and telecommunications to biomedical engineering, electric power and consumer electronics. Dedicated to the advancement of technology, the IEEE publishes 30 percent of the world's literature in the electrical and electronics engineering and computer science fields, and has developed nearly 900 active industry standards. The organization annually sponsors more than 850 conferences worldwide. Additional information about the IEEE can be found at <http://www.ieee.org>.

###