



A gargoyle above the entrance to the Hotel Syracuse. (Dennis Nett / dnett@syracuse.com)

Save the date

OHA fundraiser will let you check in to the Hotel Syracuse

By Rick Moriarty
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A fund-raising event for the Onondaga Historical Association will give the public one of its first chances to stay at the historic Hotel Syracuse when it reopens next year.

The event is scheduled for the evening of April 23 and will include dinner, music and dancing, said Lynne Pascale, director of development for the association.

Dinner will be served in three locations in the hotel and involve three levels of service to showcase what will be available when the hotel fully opens in the spring after a \$70 million renovation, she said.

In the Grand Ballroom, a formal sit-down dinner will be served. In the Persian Terrace, dinner will be served at food stations. And the Imperial Ballroom will feature a buffet dinner.

After dinner, people will be allowed to rent rooms for the night.

Pascale said ticket prices will be set this fall and will vary depending on the level of service people choose. A website for people to make reservations for the event will be launched later this year, she said.

Pascale said the association expects the event to attract 1,200 to 1,400 people.

"We want to fill the place and make the hotel really come alive," she said.

Proceeds from the dinner will go to the historical association, which has been working closely with hotel owner Ed Riley to inform the public about the building's 91-year history.

A permanent exhibit on the hotel's history is being designed by the association and will be displayed on the mezzanine above the hotel's main lobby. The association recently extended a temporary exhibit about the hotel at its museum at 321 Montgomery St.

Copies of historical photos and paintings from the association's archives, showing the history of the hotel and surrounding area, will be hung



The Hotel Syracuse, now the Marriott Downtown Syracuse, on South Warren Street. (Kevin Rivoli / krivoli@syracuse.com)

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ONONDAGA HISTORICAL
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in every guest room and in the hotel's hallways.

The association has contracted with Otto Media, of Syracuse, to produce a video documentary of the hotel's restoration. Portions of the documentary may be shown at the fundraiser, Pascale said.

The hotel opened at South Warren and Onondaga streets in 1924 and was the premier hotel in Central New York until it closed due to financial troubles in 2004. Riley bought the hotel last year and has launched a major renovation. He plans to reopen the hotel in the spring with 261 rooms and a new name, Marriott Downtown Syracuse.

The very first public event that is expected to be held at the hotel following the renovations is a St. Patrick's Day party. However, guest rooms will not be available to rent during that event.