HOTEL MADISON

In 1958, the Boston and Maine Railroad, which owned 50 percent of The Manger since it was built, bought the other 50 percent and became the sole owner of the hotel. The Manger was then renamed The Madison and retained its management, but opened up a few new features such as direct entrance to a free 24-hour parking area for its guests.

The Beatles stayed there in 1964 when they played the Boston Garden as part of their first North American tour. When it was found out that John, Paul, George, and Ringo were staying on the 11th floor of the Madison, 5000 screaming fans perched outside. Anyone slightly resembling a Beatles member or suspected to possess any item relating to them was subsequently mobbed. Madison security, in conjunction with Boston police fended the hotel like a fortress, complete with barricades and plenty of security checkpoints. The crowd only continued to grow as The Beatles hosted their press conference at the hotel, and the following concert next door at The Garden.

The once grand hotel had a shorter run as The Madison than it did as The Manger. Halls that once echoed with the footsteps of basketball, hockey, circus, and superstars came to house a much more lackluster crowd of homeless and low-income individuals. The late 1960s and early 1970s saw The Madison and the area around North Station become run down and apt to the urban renewal that was redeveloping the nearby West End and Government Center. The hotel ownership changed hands several more times before it finally closed its doors in 1976.

Its imposing presence was a constant reminder of the days when trains brought visitors from all corners of the country to North Station, which was connected to the Madison by a walkway. The hotel was eventually destroyed by implosion on May 15, 1983. Flashes of bright lights brought down the once-distinguished Madison Hotel, ending a half-century of history touched by celebrities such as The Beatles, Primo Carnera, Roy Rogers, Gene Autry and Arthur Godfrey. The "Tip" O'Neil Federal Building now stands in its place.