

50 Years of The Beverly Hilton
Entertainment / Culture Narrative Highlights

- **A Dog's Life:** When Zsa Zsa Gabor and Conrad Hilton were married, Zsa Zsa always traveled with her poodle. On one of their many trips, the couple went to Chicago where the manager of the hotel (a Hilton of course) informed them that dogs were not allowed – and there would be no exceptions, even for the wife of the founder. Apparently this situation turned into a learning experience for the hotelier. When he opened his flagship property, The Beverly Hilton, dogs were allowed from the first day – making it one of the first pet-friendly hotels in the United States.
- **Pretty in Pink: Another Gabor Tale:** When then-owner entertainer Merv Griffin was renovating a portion of the hotel, he asked his long-time friend actress Eva Gabor (Zsa Zsa's sister) to decorate the bathroom in the International Ballroom. She chose a soft pink marble that still adds pizzazz to the ballroom's restroom today. Apparently, the bathroom has so much pizzazz that twice during the Golden Globe Awards an actress, Christine Lahti in 1997 and Renee Zellweger in 2000, was in the ladies room while her name was being called to accept the award.
- **Swimming with Stars:** The Beverly Hilton's Aqua-Star Pool remains the largest in Beverly Hills, and when it first opened, nothing could rival it. The hotel's pool was so unique in its size, location and luxury, in fact, that famed swimmer and actress Esther Williams made it her personal favorite. Not only did she inaugurate the pool by diving into it full of gardenias to celebrate the hotel's grand opening, but shortly thereafter, she opened her own swim school on the premises and often performed impromptu synchronized swimming shows for any lucky guests who happened to be out, enjoying Southern California's sunshine.
- **The Show Must Go On:** Famous for their annual roasts, the Friars Club had a night they'll never forget at their evening honoring Lucille Ball and Desi Arnaz in November of 1958. After performing the evening's entertainment, comedian Harry Einstein (a.k.a. Parkyakarkus and actor Albert Brooks' father) collapsed on the dais next to actor Milton Berle. Berle helped Parkyakarkus backstage for treatment and, although there were many doctors in the house that night, the evening marked the great comedian's final performance. In order to try and get the audience back in a better mood, they sent crooner Dean Martin out to sing ... It seems Martin was feeling particularly ironic that evening and settled into a chorus of "There's No Tomorrow."
- **The Place to See and Be Seen:** Longtime Hollywood publicist and journalist Dale Olsen (his acquaintances have included the likes of Marilyn Monroe, Orson Wells, Gene Kelly, Steve McQueen, Tony Curtis and Laurence Olivier) recently stated in an interview, "There hasn't been a celebrity in Hollywood for the past 50 years that hasn't been to The Beverly Hilton at least several times ... it is the gathering place of the stars."

- **The Golden Touch:** The Golden Globe Awards – an annual event at The Beverly Hilton that is broadcast throughout the world, has been held in the International Ballroom for more than 35 years. There is no other hotel in Los Angeles, and few others in the world, that could host the Golden Globes with the same ease, style and glamour. The hotel’s vast size and upscale event space not only allows over 1200 guests to gather in the International Ballroom for the live telecast, five entertainment companies also throw large after-parties simultaneously in areas throughout The Beverly Hilton’s 8.9 acre property.
- **Sidney Says ...:** In a speech at the Carousel Ball, a bi-annual event to raise money for the fight against juvenile diabetes, award-winning actor Sidney Poitier commented, “I believe more money has been raised in this ballroom than in any other in the world.” It’s no wonder – with nearly 175 red carpet events each year – the hotel has played host to approximately 10,000 celebrations since its opening in 1955. Recently named the new home of the Jerry Lewis Muscular Dystrophy Telethon, the International Ballroom helps raise money for charity organizations throughout the world nearly every day.