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Dorothy Draper & Company celebrates its more than 40-year partnership with [Grand Hotel](#), Mackinac Island, Michigan by unveiling the redesigned Carleton Varney Suite as the hotel opens its 2023 summer season on May 5th.

Among the many memories Grand Hotel guests love to share are descriptions of the hotel's vibrant look. The iconic colors and patterns that grace their guest rooms and public areas are the masterful creations of distinguished icon Carleton Varney, one of America's best-known and most accomplished interior designers.

Since 1976, Carleton Varney's creative eye and hand have impacted almost every inch of the hotel. His design philosophy stresses the use of bold, bright colors, large imposing stripes, and audacious floral patterns. His placement of art and antiques from many different time periods and styles helped create the hotel's unique aesthetic. Mr. Varney carefully crafted a look that was elegant but not too serious. He captured the spirit of the hotel as a fun summer place, always comfortable and with impeccable style. Mr. Varney's son, Sebastian Varney, President of Dorothy Draper & Company, along with Dorothy Draper & Company Design Director Rudy Saunders are continuing his legacy.

"Having spent my summers growing up at Grand Hotel, it gives me a great sense of pride to continue the longstanding partnership my father established over 40 years ago. Carleton helped to shape the hotel into what it is today and I am excited to be the next steward of this special place and build upon his vision that enchanted guests bringing them back year after year. I look forward to making my own contributions that will have a lasting impact, perhaps for the next 40 years," shares Sebastian Varney.

After Carleton Varney's passing in July 2022 the Dorothy Draper team in collaboration with the hotel focused on a major refresh of the Carleton Varney Suite in tribute to his career in design. Located at the west end of the hotel, with breathtaking views of the Mackinac Bridge and West Bluff historic homes, the layout of the two-bedroom, two and a half bath Suite allowed the Draper team to design each space based on a defining period in Varney's illustrious career. A few highlights include:

- A grand entrance hall pays homage to Varney's years decorating for United States presidents, governors, ambassadors, and other important international dignitaries. Walls are upholstered with gold silk damask, accented with an antique venetian mirror, and classic black and white checkerboard floors to give the space a sense of tradition and formality.
- The parlor reflects the true Draper style with the use of furnishings from the Dorothy Draper Collection made by Kindel Grand Rapids upholstered in brightly colored fabric. For this occasion, the design team used the "Growing Wild" pattern originally designed by Mr. Varney in 1975 for Carleton V Ltd. which is used for the window treatments and on seating.

- Hollywood glamour reigns supreme in the King Bedroom which is appointed with a crown canopy bed draped in silk, a tole palm mirror, and memorabilia featuring some of Varney's notable Hollywood star clients.
- The second guest bedroom takes you back to Mr. Varney's New England roots and his fond memories of summer getaways. The room features white painted antique furniture, classical botanical prints, lemon yellow cane print wallpaper, and framed photos of the designer's time spent on Mackinac Island.
- The powder room is a nod to Mr. Varney's fondness for the tropics. Having spent much time in the Caribbean, the design team used the famous Dorothy Draper Brazilliance wallpaper and one of Varney's signature scarves with hibiscus framed.

"Growing up visiting Grand Hotel with my family is how I first discovered and fell in love with the Draper look. Some of my favorite memories are on Mackinac Island, gift wrapped in Carleton Varney florals and stripes. My passion for design is rooted in the lessons I learned from Mr. Varney and it is an honor to help carry on his legacy. Tapping into my love for Grand Hotel and years of cherished family memories combined with our company's decades of dedication and Mr. Varney's bold vision, I look forward to shaping the future look of America's Summer Place," comments Rudy Saunders.

In 2022 Carleton Varney was selected the Grand Legend Award winner and the hotel invited Sebastian to accept the award on his father's behalf and ring the bell to close the season. For the 2023 season opening, Sebastian will return to ring the bell to honor his legacy and continue the longstanding friendship these two companies have enjoyed.

"While part of our role in working with Grand Hotel is to preserve the past, it is also to look to the future. We are already dreaming up ways to serve the needs of guests for the next century," adds Varney.

About Dorothy Draper & Company

Founded in 1925 Dorothy Draper & Company is one of the oldest continually operating design firms in the United States creating interiors, furnishings, fabrics and accessories that excite and delight. Dorothy Draper was the first to professionalize interior design and her work continues to inspire today. She is the only interior designer to have had a major museum retrospective of her work, receiving over one million visitors in 2006 at the Museum of the City of New York. From 1966 until his death in 2022 Carleton Varney was president of Dorothy Draper & Company and is considered one of the best known and most accomplished designers in the U.S. He helped shape the way we see the world through his iconic hospitality designs, including The Greenbrier in White Sulphur Springs, WV; Grand Hotel, Mackinac Island; and The Colony Hotel, Palm Beach. In 2022 Varney's son, Sebastian Varney, became President of Dorothy Draper & Company.

About Grand Hotel

Celebrating its 137th season in 2023, Grand Hotel is an iconic and storied property with deep roots on Mackinac Island in Northern Michigan and widely recognized as "America's Summer Place." First opened in 1887, Grand Hotel is now a registered National Historic Landmark that welcomes generations of travelers each season. The resort offers 388 signature rooms and suites – of which no two are the same – alongside 13 unique culinary concepts and a host of amenities, including The Jewel golf course, renowned gardens, The Grand Hotel Stables, and the Esther Williams swimming pool. In 2022, the property debuted a new multi-million-dollar recreational facility, The Woodlands Activity Center, with mini-golf, greenhouse, bike rentals, pickleball, and more. For more information, visit www.grandhotel.com.