

Learning Places Fall 2016

SITE REPORT #1

Grand Central



Neil Seenarine

19.09.2016

INTRODUCTION

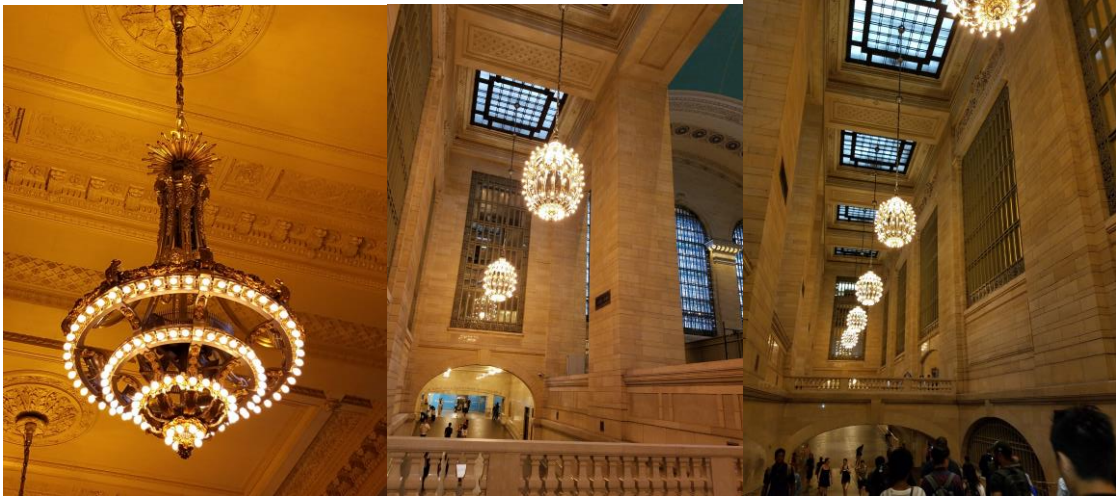
Grand Central Terminal as we know it today is in midtown Manhattan at the intersection of 42nd street and Park Avenue, is a marvel of civil engineering and architecture. It is the biggest terminal in the world because of the number of available platforms. This makes it a popular tourist attraction and although I lived close to it for 10 years, I did not know the amazing work that went into bring this terminal to be this beautiful landmark. This is what makes Grand Central Terminal so interesting to me. To learn about how Cornelius Vanderbilt changed it from a Depot to a Station and finally to a Terminal and how William Wilgus designed the platforms and levels so that service will not be interrupted, is a marvel.

SITE DOCUMENTATION (photos*)

*3 photos minimum required per site visit



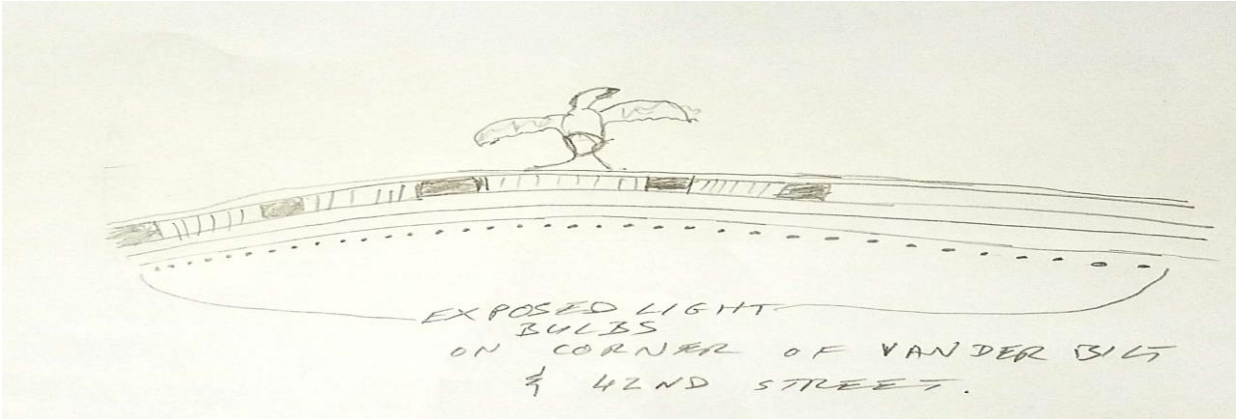
This picture shows the Gustavino Ceiling where someone can whisper something and someone else can hear it on the other side.



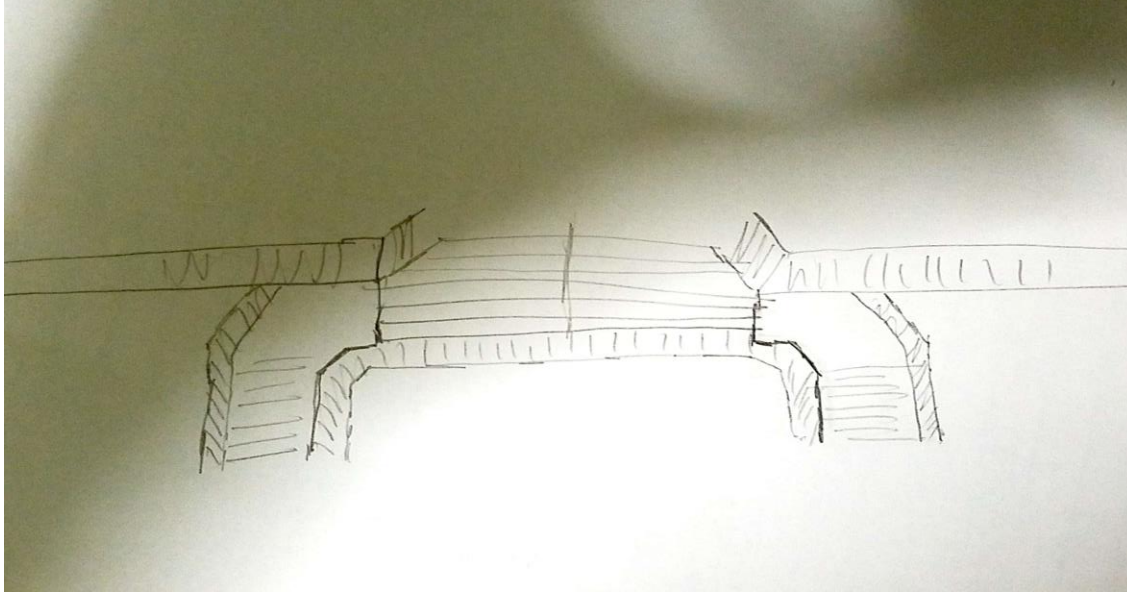
These are pictures of the chandeliers with the exposed light bulbs. The light bulbs were originally exposed because of electrification being a big deal at the time.

SITE DOCUMENTATION (sketches*)

*2 sketches minimum required per site visit



Sketch of the exposed light bulbs. Exposed light bulbs are beautiful to me and they originally exposed them as a show that Grand Central had electricity. This is because electrification was a big deal at the time.



Sketch of the Staircases. The staircases were inspired by the Oprah Houses.

GENERAL NOTES:

- The exposed light bulbs and why they were exposed.
- The Vanderbilt Hall originally a waiting area.
- The beautiful ceiling has some astronomy to it.
- Black spot on the ceiling.
- Gustavino tiles.

INSIGHTS/DISCOVERIES

I have only been to grand central once before and it was a great experience to see the beauty of. The one time I did go, I did not stop to look at the ceiling. The ceiling was beautiful and I learned that it was inspired by astronomy. The Vanderbilt Hall is a beautiful area especially with the chandeliers. I learned that it was once a waiting area and that it was closed to the public since a lot of homeless people use to live or stay there. The exposed lighting, I learned the reason that they are exposed is because electrification was a big deal.

KEYWORDS/VOCABULARY & DEFINITIONS

***5 keywords minimum required per site visit**

Electrification – when Grand Central first got electricity.

Cornelius Vanderbilt – Switched from steam boat transportation to railroad and consolidated various railroads to make Grand Central.

Grand Central Depot – Grand central was first a Depot in 1871

Grand Central Station – Grand Central changed from Depot to Station in 1900

Grand Central Terminal – Grand Central changed from Station to Terminal in 1913.

Oprah Houses – The stair Cases were inspired by Oprah Houses because of 1 huge stair split into 2 and makes a semi-circle making it look grand.

QUESTIONS for Further RESEARCH

1. Why is Gustavino Tiles important in the design or why couldn't it be another style?
2. Why is there a black spot in the ceiling that we saw?
3. Who figured out that someone can whisper something and someone else can hear it on the other side of the arch?