

Learning Places Fall 2016

SITE REPORT #1- Expanded Grand Central Terminal



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INTRODUCTION

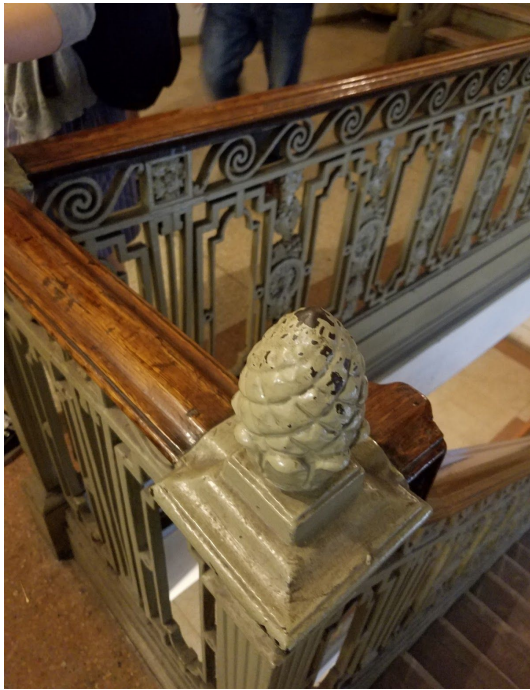
We got a chance to revisit the grand central terminal this time with a tour guide. He was a very well informed and funny guy and made the experience even better. We got to see grand central from a view that not many get to witness. Also learn various things that we didn't discover the last time we

visited.

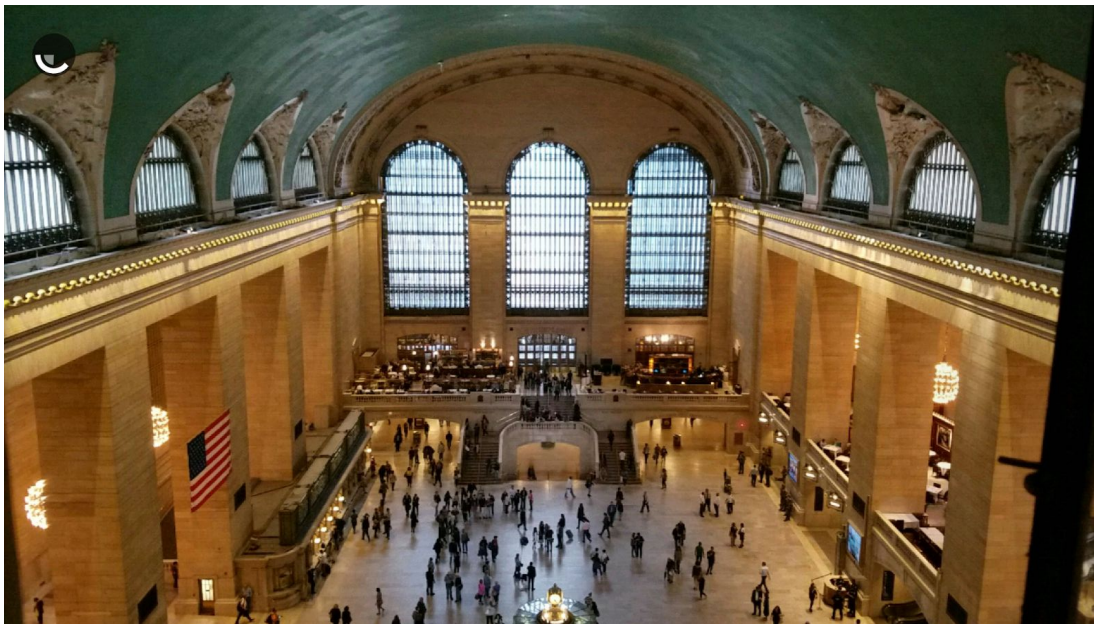
SITE DOCUMENTATION (photos*)



Here we started and stared at the immense windows, which later we find out that double up as a glass cat walk. Being a glass cat walk you barely notice it. It's not until you see people walking by is it that you realize you can get up there. Like I mentioned before though not everyone gets to go up there, you must be authorized. What we also found out during this trip was that there wasn't always mirrored staircases in this main concourse. Another secret is that one of the staircases is actually off by an inch.



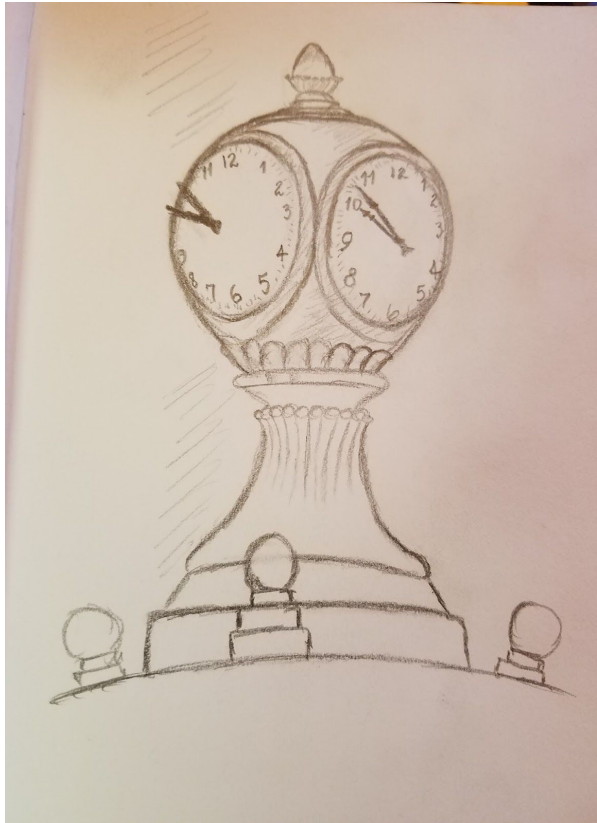
This may not be the best picture to represent this but, the symbol we see on this staircase is an acorn. In fact all over the terminal we see acorns and oak leaves. I was also curious to why, the guide explains. That the Vanderbilt heirs financed the building of this terminal and so they wanted a token of a sort to represent their family. Their family crest also consists of acorns and oak leaves and so when the terminal was being detailed they incorporated this accent.



Talk about views huh? This is the view from inside the big windows in the main concourse. We had the privilege to walk on the glass cat walks and take pictures through an

open window inside the window (window-ception?)

SITE DOCUMENTATION (sketches*)



This is the famous clock that sits in the center of the main concourse. This clock is made from solid gold and opal crystal making it the most valuable piece in the entire terminal. Worth millions!! The acorn on top for the Vanderbilt family symbol. This clock is one the most accurate clocks in the WORLD! Even more than the one on your phone.

This is one the entrances to the terminal on 42nd and vanderbilt ave. You can see the many lightbulbs that are all around the entrance kind of like a reminder of Broadway theater lights. You can also see the eagle statue at the top. The tripartite is also visible with the 3 entrances and doors.



GENERAL NOTES:

- over 700,000 people travel through grand central daily.
- The terminal occupies 49 acres of land.
- In 1967 , landmarks and Service Act saves GCT from getting demolished.
- 1996-1998 Terminal undergoes massive restoration.
- FDR had his own secret train station in the terminal during his time of presidency.

INSIGHTS/DISCOVERIES

During this trip I came across many things that caught my eye or that I just never would've guessed. For example, When the guide mentioned the secret train station for FDR and how he had polio. I was never aware that he had polio and that with the help from this track he could go from train to the street via the platform and a service elevator. Then we had the fact that clock in the middle of the main concourse is worth millions because of its age and because made of solid gold and opal crystal. The guastavino tiles also intrigued me when we tested the resonance effect that happens within the tiles when you whisper into opposite corners of the pendentive. During World war I the terminal was used as a storage and means of transport for military weapons and supplies. Lastly because the invention of the automobile and the interstate highway systems the railroad business was rapidly declining until grand central took the initiative and made the railroad more convenient to take than a car.

KEYWORDS/VOCABULARY & DEFINITIONS

Meridian Line: a closed curved or circle that passes through the poles of a spherical shape, we see this line in the painting above the main concourse.

Reverse ridership: when passengers can plan a round trip whether on bus, train, railroad, etc.

Intermediate ridership: when passengers travel from one point to their desired point or destination.

Express train.

Rotary converters: it's an electrical machine that converts AC to DC but they are like huge outlets, grand central had several in its basement.

Solid state rectifiers: another form of converter but it is a lot less space consuming, they replaced the rotary converters at grand central with these.

QUESTIONS for Further RESEARCH

1. How did grand central improve its railroad system to adapt to the more modern society?
2. At the time when both the old pennstation and grand central were up and running, what were the series of unfortunate circumstances that led to the demolition of pennstation?

3. Who were the Vanderbilts and why did they get involved with the creation of grand central?