

Art, Culture of an Old New York Train Station

今回は、ニューヨークの地下鉄駅に関する話題です。1904年に開業したシティホール駅は、現在は使われていないものの、美しいアーチ天井や装飾タイルで「王冠の宝石」とまで称され、当時の人々を魅了しました。文中の **majestic** は「壮麗な」「堂々とした」という意味で、**a majestic building**（壮麗な建物）や **a majestic view**（壮観な眺め）などのように、印象的な美しさを表すときによく使われます。あなたの地域に、記憶に残る駅や、特別な思い出のある駅はありますか？



1. Article

Read the following article aloud.

The first subway station in New York City was designed to be a **masterpiece** and was considered a “jewel in the crown” when it opened.

The trains in New York City’s public transportation system, its subway, mostly run underground. Today, the main concern of subway designers is that their systems work correctly.

New York’s subway opened in 1904. City Hall Station was one of New York City’s first underground subway stations. Now called Old City Hall Station, it was built during a time when many public buildings and spaces were designed to appear **majestic**. The goal was to **demonstrate** that New York could compete culturally with great European cities, sometimes called metropolises.

“It was a statement that New York City had arrived at the level of the great European metropolises like London and Paris, Rome, Madrid...that New York City was taking its place as a world city,” said Clifton Hood. Hood is a history professor at Hobart and William Smith Colleges in Geneva, New York.

Inside Old City Hall Station, the top is not flat in shape but curved instead. The walls rise up to create a high, round shape known as a vault. Square pieces of glass, called tiles, shine. Some of the lights in the station are called chandeliers. These are beautiful hanging lights that hold many individual light bulbs and look like huge pieces of jewelry.

Polly Desjarlais is with the New York Transit Museum. She said she was “[blown away](#)” when she first saw the old station. She used words like “lovely, elegant and really unique space” to describe the station.

“I’ve heard [the station] be described as a celebration of curves, because there are a lot of curves. Everything is sort-of rounded,” Desjarlais said.

But those beautiful curves are why the station is no longer part of the normal subway system. Its rounded [platform](#) cannot fit long trains.

“The platform at City Hall is really curved. It’s a very, very tight curve, and the platform itself is just over 200 feet long. So, it’s short,” Desjarlais said. “As the subway got busier...trains got longer, and we added cars...We were growing those platforms and making them longer...”

Although it is no longer part of the subway system, Old City Hall Station is still being used. One train line, the No. 6, uses the Old City Hall Station to turn around. And while the public cannot enter the station from the street, the members of the New York Transit Museum can see the station a few times a year at a cost of about \$50.

Over the years, there have been ideas to make the old station a restaurant or a place for travelers to the city to visit. However, security concerns put those ideas to rest. Today, the unofficial way for the public to see the old station is by taking the No. 6 train and staying on after the last stop. Then, the train turns around at the Old City Hall Station, and riders will be able to see the majestic space.

I’m Caty Weaver.

Dora Mekouar reported this story for VOA. Gena Bennett adapted it for VOA Learning English.

2. Key phrases and vocabulary

First repeat after your tutor and then read aloud by yourself.

1. **masterpiece (n.)** a work of the highest possible skill and quality (often of art)

Many of the works of Hiroshige are considered masterpieces of Japanese woodblock art.

2. **majestic (adj.)** grand and dramatic

We enjoyed the majestic view of Mt. Fuji from our hotel window.

3. **demonstrate (v.)** to prove or show

Once again, Sota Fujii demonstrated his mastery of the game of shogi.

4. **blown away (adj.)** (slang) amazed or very surprised

I was blown away by the performance of our school marching band at the competition.

5. **platform (n.)** a flat area next to a train track where passengers wait for the train

We waited on the platform for about five minutes.

3. Questions

Read the questions aloud and answer them.

1. What is special about the appearance of Old City Hall Station? Describe it in detail.
2. Why can't long trains use the station now?
3. What are the two ways that you can see the station today?
4. Are there any train stations in Japan that are majestic like the Old City Hall Station?
5. What buildings or structures have you been "blown away" by, either in Japan or abroad?