



## SUPER BOWL PREVIEW

Game breakdown and party guide

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## BEYONCÉ BELTS BACK

Actually sings anthem in preview of Super show

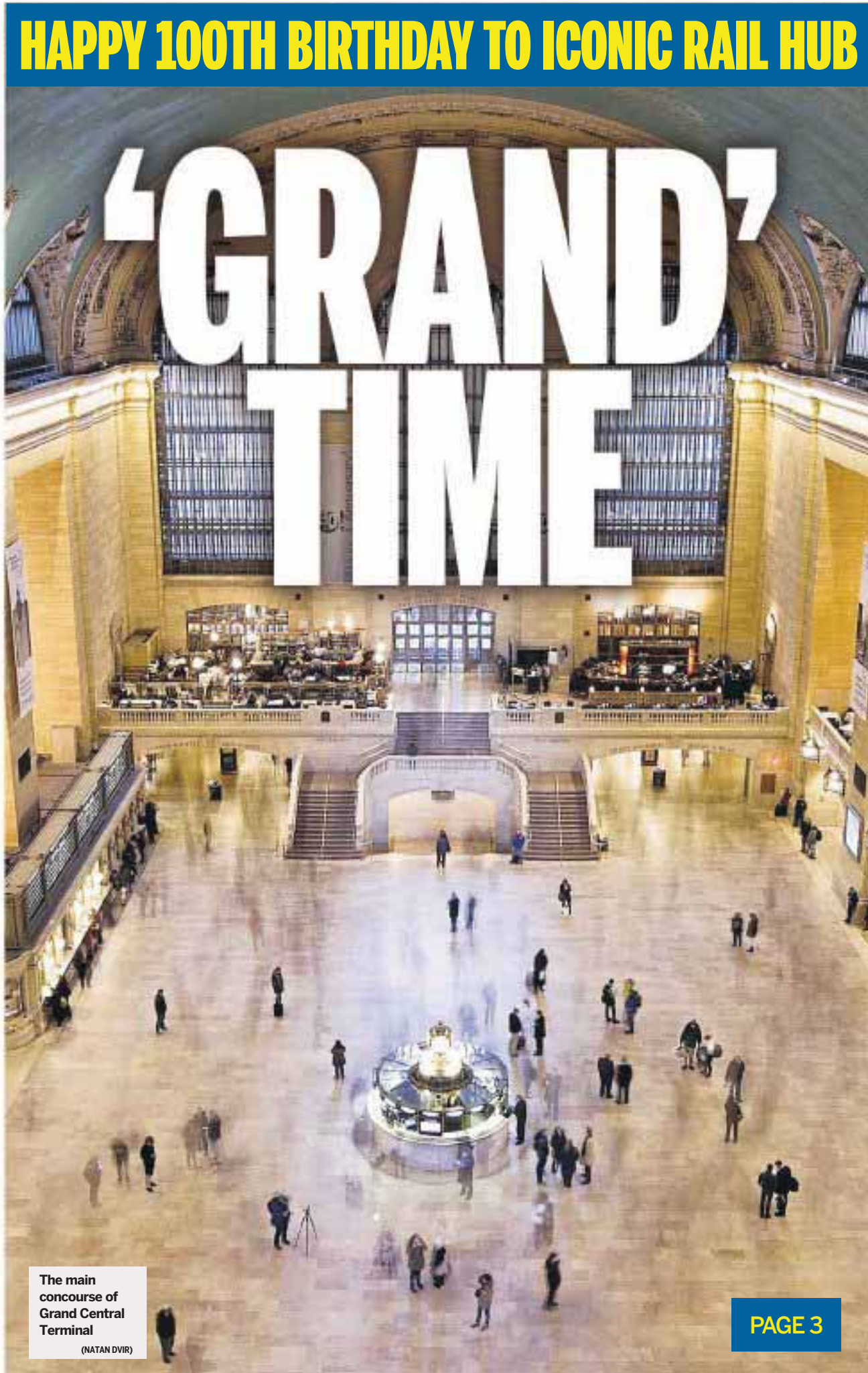
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(PHOTOS: GETTY)

# HAPPY 100TH BIRTHDAY TO ICONIC RAIL HUB

# 'GRAND' TIME



The main concourse of Grand Central Terminal

(NATAN DVIR)

# A 'Grand' ol' party for iconic hub

## GCT was 'built for the people'

BY ANNA SANDERS  
Special to amNewYork

By 4 p.m. on Feb. 2, 1913, more than 150,000 people had already visited the brand new Grand Central Terminal.

"Many people had come to marvel at this place that was built for the people," said Sam Roberts, author of "Grand Central: How a Train Station Transformed America" and The New York Times' urban affairs correspondent. "It was an egalitarian and democratic place."

Today, as many as 750,000 pass through the terminal every day. "It has become a destination," Roberts said. "People stand in that main concourse and you're just gawking in wonder at this institution."

Before, the city was mostly what's now downtown and 42nd Street and Park Avenue was considered the "middle of nowhere."

When the terminal opened as a depot in 1871, the City Council opposed railroads south of 42nd Street.

"They didn't want the steam and soot from the railroads in such a residential area," said Valerie Paley, historian at the New York Historical Society. "Horse carriages would actually haul the railcars further downtown."

After Grand Central Terminal opened, midtown became a hub of transportation, commerce and real estate.

And today, Grand Central is a symbol for New York around the world.

"Grand Central is a simile for congestion and frenzy, for the controlled chaos of urban choreography," Roberts said. "It's this iconic cultural institution."

## Big bash for 100th birthday of NYC's landmark terminal

BY IVAN PEREIRA  
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Grand Central Terminal turns the big 100 Saturday and its caretakers are going all out to make sure every commuter that walks its halls Friday learns its legacy.

Metro-North officials, the mayor and other sponsors will kick off a year-long celebration of the centennial with a rededication ceremony Friday.

Gabrielle Schubert, the director of the New York Transit Museum, which is running an exhibit on the terminal's history at Vanderbilt Hall, said the party would show visitors how far Grand Central has come over its 100 years.

"When you are a commuter and you are busy, you don't take the time to see the building and how far it has come," she said.

The ceremony will include a performance by the West Point Brass and Percussion Band, celebrity appearances and red carpets.

The terminal's various restaurants will serve their top dishes at 1913 prices, such as a 19-cent slice of cheesecake at the Oyster Bar & Restaurant.

Although those cheap prices and the fanfare are part of a one-day event, there will be more celebrations for months to come.

The transit museum's "Grand by Design" exhibit will run through the middle of March and show how the terminal enhanced Manhattan beyond simply connecting more people with the city.

Schubert said Grand Central's architecture, impact on the railroad industry during the early 20th century and its influence on the development of midtown would all be on display in the exhibit.

"We want people to recognize the beauty of this building and how it has lasted 100 years," she said.

As much as the terminal's administrators celebrate Grand Central's past, they are excited for its next 100 years.



The facade of Grand Central Terminal is unchanged from 100 years ago. The terminal opened on Feb. 2, 1913, and today some 750,000 travelers pass through it each day. (NATAN DVIR)



Dan Brucker, a docent with Metro-North, talks about a rarely seen part of the 100-year-old station. (CRAIG RUTTLE)

Howard Permut, the president of Metro-North, said the commuter reach would continue to grow once the East Side Access project brings Long Island Rail Road service to Grand Central sometime around 2019.

"We will be able to maintain it as the great hub ... it is," he said.

Future enhancements won't just be for the terminal's underground either. The city will be improving the area around Park Avenue between 41st and 42nd Streets, creating a new public space for people to enjoy.

"The entrance under Park Avenue is kind of dismissive," Permut said. "The com-

mon question people ask when they're around there is, "Where is Grand Central?"

The longtime Metro-North president said those improvements will add to the terminal's allure and continue to inspire New Yorkers and visitors alike with the charm and promise of the Big Apple.

## Friday's birthday celebration

Grand Central will be more party central Friday as it celebrates its 100th birthday. Here are some of the day's scheduled events.

**9:30 a.m.:** A performance by the West Point Brass and Percussion Band

**10:30 a.m.:** A host of celebrities, including Mets icon Keith Hernandez, Cynthia Nixon and Caroline Kennedy, will rededicate the space.

**1 p.m.:** Various performers including the Knicks City Dancers and Kids and the Westchester Philharmonic Brass Octet will perform for commuters and visitors during the remainder of the afternoon.



(GETTY)

## Fun Facts about Grand Central:

- On Oct. 21, 1944, after a speech to the Foreign Policy Association during his third presidential campaign, Franklin D. Roosevelt used Grand Central's "secret platform" — number 61 — to travel directly to the Waldorf Astoria Hotel and avoid revealing his polio to the public. Just a few commuters have ever used the platform.
- There is a whispering gallery in front of Oyster Bar on the Lower Level. Acoustics of the domed Guastavino tile ceiling allow visitors to hear whispers clearly from diagonal corners of the 50-foot chamber.
- An amateur astronomer commuting through the station a month after it opened told railroad officials that constellations in the astronomical ceiling were backward. Officials said at the time the mistake reflected God's view of the sky.
- In 1957, a five-inch hole was cut in the ceiling just above the constellation of Pisces to install a cable that held up a Redstone missile on display. The hole remains there today.
- Within the circular information booth in the middle of the main concourse, there is a "secret" spiral staircase that leads to another information booth on the lower level.

(SOURCE: "GRAND CENTRAL: HOW A TRAIN STATION TRANSFORMED AMERICA")