

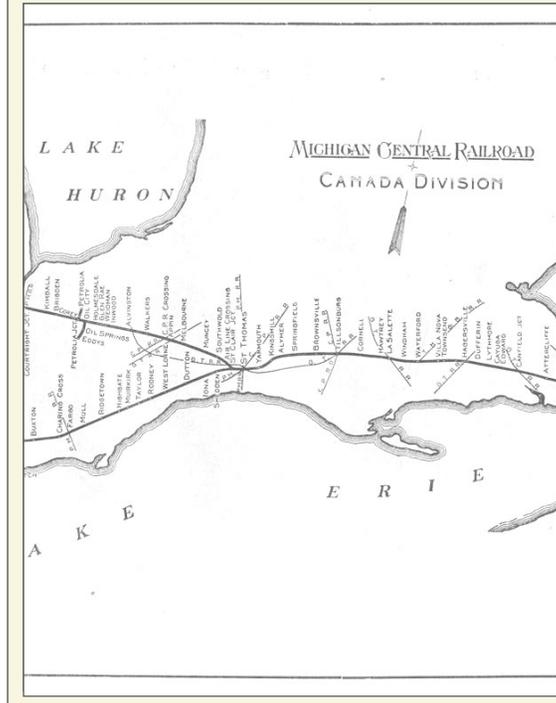
SECOND FLOOR ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES

The second floor can be entered by one of two staircases (there is also an elevator). The main staircase, and the most impressive, is accessed by the west end. Originally, this passageway was open to the elements, but with the refurbishing of the building, was enclosed with glass to give access to the waiting rooms and dining hall.

As the administrative centre for the Canada Southern until 1876, the second floor offices accommodated the superintendent, solicitor, chief engineer, clerical staff and others. When the Michigan Central Railroad assumed control in 1876, it became the divisional headquarters.

The second floor continues to provide office space, now for Member of Provincial Parliament Jeff Yurek, two lawyers, Serenity House Hospice and other spaces presently under renovation.

The far east end of the second floor provided bedrooms for the female dining hall staff.



MAP OF THE MICHIGAN CENTRAL IN 1916

CANADA SOUTHERN RAILWAY
STATION
750 TALBOT ST., ST. THOMAS, ON
N5P 1E2
CANADA
519-633-2535
WWW.NARHF.ORG

OWNED AND OPERATED BY THE
NORTH AMERICA RAILWAY HALL OF
FAME

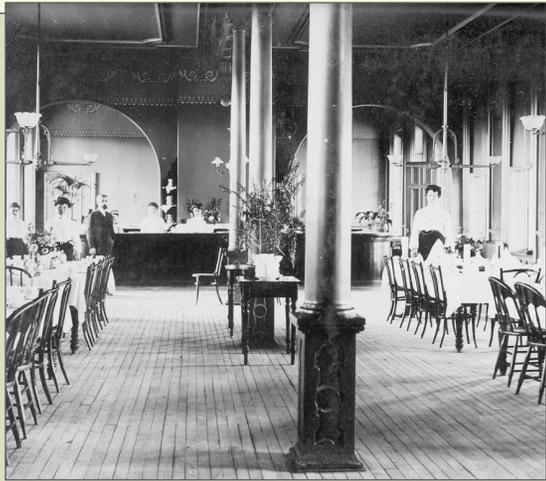
CANADA SOUTHERN RAILWAY STATION

SELF GUIDED



THE STATION IN ITS HEYDAY

The Canada Southern Railway Station, completed in 1873, made St. Thomas part of a continent-wide rail system that brought growth and prosperity to this community. The CSR (later Michigan Central and New York Central) exposed St. Thomas and many small, rural communities to American metropolitan cultural influences. This tour will take you to the waiting rooms, dining room and second floor administrative headquarters.



Layout of the building:

To the right of the glass entrance: station master's office, ladies waiting room, gentlemen's waiting room, railway detective's office (centre)

To the left of the glass entrance: Anderson Hall

Upstairs: administrative offices

Throughout the building you will find panels that interpret the history of the station.

WAITING ROOMS

There were two waiting rooms, one for gentlemen and another for ladies. Since a fire that began on the second floor in 1925, the ladies waiting room has been the joint waiting area for both sexes. The gentlemen's waiting room has its original wood floor; the other waiting room was resurfaced with terrazzo in the 1940s. Note the cast iron columns in both rooms, with their capitals of acanthus leaves, jack-in-the-pulpits and goddess heads. The columns support the span of the building.

Photo credits: MCR dining hall, view of MCR yards, staff members - Elgin County Archives; general view of station - Library & Archives Canada

Anderson Hall - station dining room

DINING ROOM 1873-1930

Before dining cars became popular, it was common for passengers to detrain for breakfast, lunch and supper, depending on the travel schedule. Passengers were able to order their meals ahead by telegraph. While the train was stopped, usually for no more than 20 minutes, it was checked for any maintenance needs, refueled and replenished with water. Since St. Thomas was the main stop between Buffalo and Detroit, it was also the main maintenance centre.

The dining hall maintains its original elegance, colour scheme and general layout. Window shutters, wainscoting and the plaster ceiling have been restored. The hall now has a servery where there was once a kitchen. The kitchen was in use until severely damaged by a fire in 1925. For a few years the Queens Hotel, located across Michigan Central Park, catered to the dining needs of the station. By the late 1930s it had become more of a lunch room (the old lunch room sign is located in the gentlemen's waiting room).

The dining room is now rented for special events, concerts, and wedding receptions. It derives its name from the Anderson family, who financially supported the restoration of this room.

STATION MASTER'S OFFICE

The station master was responsible for passenger service at the station and had a strategic location between the waiting rooms and the outside platforms. The south platform was served by the Michigan Central Railroad, the north by Canadian Pacific (CP had an office at the east end), and the west by the London & Port Stanley Railway. The L&PS had its own station but provided connections to the MCR by its electrified line. The St. Thomas Street Railway

also had a spur line to the station from its main line on Talbot St.

RAILWAY DETECTIVE'S OFFICE

The first railway detective, John Wilson Murray, began his career at the station in 1873. He gained renown in pioneering detective work and later became the provincial detective for Ontario, the forerunner of the office of the commissioner of the Ontario Provincial Police.



ARTIFACTS OF NOTE:

Michigan Central Clock: Ladies Waiting Room

Oak Desks: Gentlemen's Waiting Room, Station Master's office; these desks were in use at the station and are similar stylistically

Gang Radiator: Ladies Waiting Room; the station was heated by steam heat from a central power house built in 1918

Photograph exhibit on the history of the station - Gentlemen's Waiting Room