

Union Station

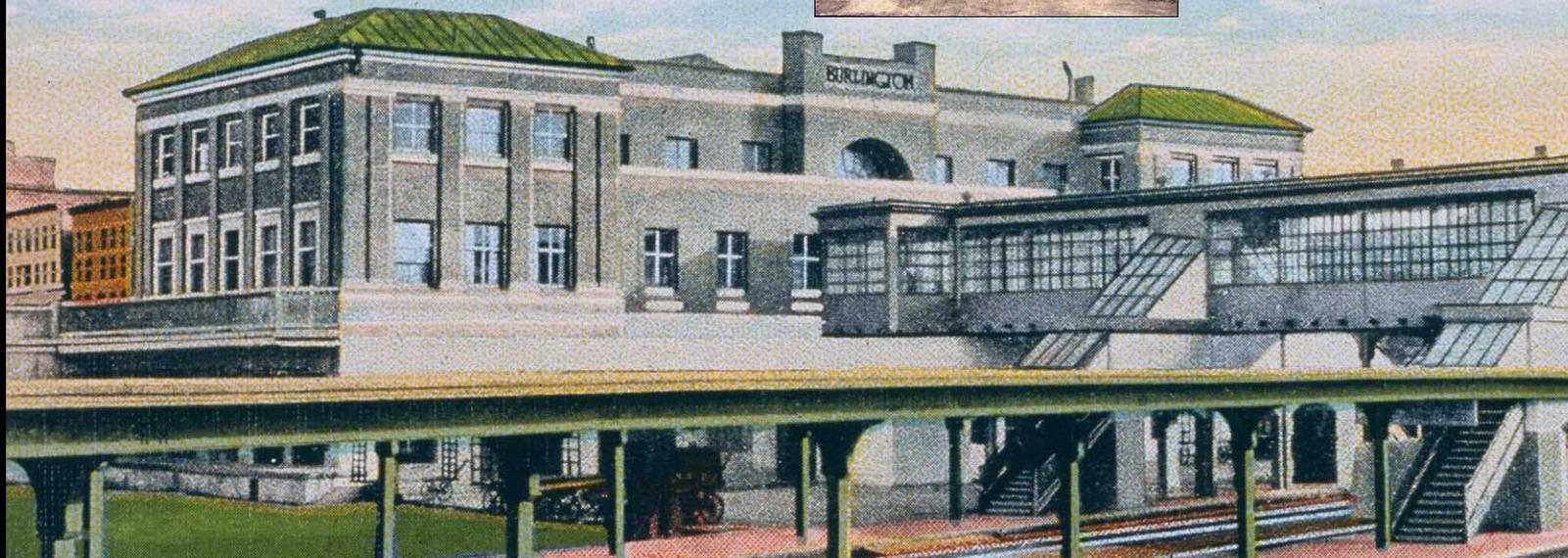


Grand Central Station in miniature! That's how proud Burlingtonians described their new train station in 1915. Like other public buildings across the country, Union Station was built to show travelers how sophisticated, wealthy, and up-to-date Burlington was. Local reporters bragged about the double track with its overhead walkway, the spacious waiting room, and the telegraph office's fancy new clock that was never more than 15 seconds slow.



In with the New

Union Station replaced this building. Burlington's first large railroad station—located near where the Waterfront's recreation area is today—became obsolete by 1906. The aging facility was too small to accommodate the busy passenger train traffic in those days. The Central Vermont Railway, the Rutland Railroad, and the City of Burlington united to construct the state-of-the-art building, hence the name "Union Station." Have you visited union stations in other cities? (Postcard courtesy of the University of Vermont Special Collections.)



20,000 Trains

Union Station used to be a very busy place. This locomotive is hauling one of the 20,000 trains that stopped here every year. Most travelers—sometimes almost 2,000 people every half hour—entered the city through this building during the first half of the 20th Century. All mail to Burlington passed through Union Station's doors. Goods—from freshly cut lumber to milk in special cars full of ice—were loaded on trains all along the waterfront. The station and the surrounding rail yard became less and less busy with the advent of the automobile and the interstate highway system. By the mid-1950's, long-distance passenger trains stopped coming to Burlington. (Photograph courtesy of Laz Scangus.)



Time is of the Essence

A clock is a very important part of any train station. Railroads ran according to strict schedules and were obsessed with accurate time. In fact, as railroads crossed the continent, they invented the time zones we use today. Burlington boasted that its clock, located on the other side of this building, was directly connected to one in Washington, D.C. for accuracy. Today, the "flying monkeys" above the clock symbolize the link between Burlington's proud past and its bold future—with a dash of creativity and fun! (Photograph courtesy of the building's owner, Main Street Landing Company.)

(Postcard courtesy of the University of Vermont Special Collections.)