

STOP 6 – THE VENTILATION GRATE

Most of us would rush past this ordinary ventilation grate and not give a second look. But you'd be missing out on more high technology from 1899 and not even know it! There are about five miles or eight kilometres of flues for heating and ventilating in the building, which contains five acres of office space.

This vent was part of the original ventilation system called the Plenum Method of Mechanical Ventilation. This was part of the ventilation system in which fresh, clean and cool air from high above the city was brought down the tower, and passed through cleansing screens that removed impurities. This fresh air was blown throughout the building by large fans; you could even heat this air by passing it over a heated surface.