

Happy Holidays!



Best wishes for a fabulous 2013 from all of us at Vertical Access.

UPCOMING CONFERENCES & EXHIBITS

❖ [2013 Annual SPRAT Conference](#)

Anaheim, CA / February 6-9
Mike Gilbert and Keith Luscinski attending

❖ [SMPS Annual Principals' Breakfast](#)

New York, NY / January 16
Kent Diebolt attending

❖ [Palaces for the People: Guastavino and America's Great Public Spaces - Open to the General Public](#)

[Boston Public Library](#)
Boston, MA / thru February 24
[National Building Museum](#)
Washington DC / March 16 - September 2

❖ [2013 Winter Technical Meeting - Sealant Waterproofing & Restoration Institute](#)

Scottsdale, AZ / March 3-6
Kelly Streecher presenting

Transformative Technology

[Chambers, Murphy & Burge](#) (CMB) Restoration Architects, is an architecture firm based in Akron, Ohio, and also a development partner with TPAS LLC. They have been using TPAS™ (Tablet PC Assessment System) for building condition assessments to capture their findings digitally - directly into AutoCAD on-site.



Read about how they are using this technology in an article

published in the October 2012 edition of *Properties*, a monthly construction and architecture magazine of northeast Ohio.

[Transformative Technology, Tablet PC Software Modernizes Facility Condition Assessments](#), is

authored by Michael Sanbury and Elizabeth Corbin Murphy, FAIA and is a practical description of the functionalities and benefits this system provides to serve their surveying needs.

Introduction to TPAS™ Webinar

The Old Post Office Gets A Makeover



Keith Luscinski performing one of the drops at the tower of the Old Post Office in Washington DC. VA technicians documented existing conditions using tablet computers and TPAS direct-to-digital software.

The Old Post Office building is a popular, historic landmark in Washington DC owned by the General Services Administration (GSA). In 2008, in response to recognizing that the building was underused and needed new life breathed into it, Congress directed GSA to lease it under Section 111 of the National Historic Preservation Act. This would guarantee the restoration of its historic features while allowing the private sector to develop its revenue potential. After a lengthy and highly competitive proposal process, in February of 2012 the GSA selected The Trump Organization to redevelop the property. The plan is to rehabilitate the building as the Trump International Hotel. Vertical Access worked with [Robert Silman Associates](#) for the [Trump Organization](#) to complete the due diligence survey in advance of the lease of the property. In August 2012 a VA team completed a thorough exterior survey of the 315 foot clock tower and areas of the main building.



Constructed between 1892 and 1899, the Old Post Office was designed by Willoughby J. Edbrooke, the Supervising Architect of the Treasury Department. Purpose-built to house the Post Office, it is considered the last significant

building of the Romanesque Revival style constructed in Washington DC. It was also the first building in the city to incorporate a steel frame to support the interior structures of the building while exterior granite (Vinalhaven, ME) is load-bearing and tapers from 5' thick near the foundation to approximately 1' thick at the eave of the mansard roof.

❖ [See slideshow](#)

Berta de Miguel Returns to NYC after Worldwide Travel Adventure



[Register here](#) for a free online demonstration and Q & A forum about TPAS™. If you

can't make it, we'll record it and send you a link to watch it at your convenience.

[Visit the TPAS Blog](#)

On the Cover of Rolling Stone ... Well ... Almost.

A photograph of VA on the US Capitol Dome has been spotted recently in two major publications.

First, we saw it in a *New York Times* article from August 24, [Capitol Dome Is Imperiled by 1,300 Cracks and Partisan Rift](#). Then, we spotted it again in the Oct 11th issue of *Rolling Stone* (p34). The photo was taken in 2010 while we were documenting existing conditions.

In both cases it was used to illustrate articles written about the poor condition of the Capitol and the need for non-partisan action to pass spending legislation for its comprehensive rehabilitation. Fortunately, since the publishing of those pieces, the funding has come through, the RFP has hit the streets, and the Capitol is on its way to a full restoration.

About Vertical Access

Vertical Access LLC collaborates with architecture, engineering and construction firms, and real estate professionals nationwide to perform specialized inspection services and condition assessments on buildings and civil structures using industrial rope access techniques and direct-to-digital information systems. [Visit our website to learn more.](#)

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Newsletter Archives

View earlier *Vertical Access Quarterly* [here](#).



Berta caught glancing upwards while in descent on the former MetLife Tower at 5 Madison Avenue in NYC (Nov 2012). Photo by Kent Diebolt

Berta de Miguel is an architectural conservator and rope access technician with VA. She was born and raised in Spain and graduated from the School of Architecture of the Polytechnic University of Valencia. The past 5 months she has been traveling throughout Spain, Portugal, France, and Southeast Asia and has written a travelogue for our newsletter describing the cities she visited including historic cathedrals, palaces, temples, and monestaries. Enjoy reading about her travels.

"I am back in the New York City office after 5 months traveling. On April I flew to Spain, where I spent some weeks visiting family and traveling through ancient cities such Avila, Salamanca or Ciudad Rodrigo in my way to Portugal, a country that I love for several reasons, being its wonderful people and their amazing food two of the main ones. Also, the cultural and architectural heritage of the country is awesome and kept as a secret treasure: Coimbra, Santa Maria da Feira, Aveiro, Porto... are amazing cities that I never get tired of visiting; there, you can close your eyes and feel transported to the old times at the same time that you enjoy a wonderful Porto wine hearing [fado music](#) and eating a plate of breathtaking [bacalhau al bras](#) (a dish with cod, potatoes, eggs and black olives) [Continue reading and see slideshow.](#)

Construction History Society of America Convened 3rd Biennial Meeting



The third biennial meeting of [The Construction History Society of America](#) was held at Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Cambridge MA

November 2-3, 2012. This scholarly forum is a venue for professionals from a wide range of construction related disciplines to come together to exchange ideas and research findings about their passions for design, engineering, and preservation.

This year, in conjunction with the opening of the exhibit, [Palaces for the People: Guastavino and America's Great Public Spaces](#) at Boston Public Library, all of Saturday's agenda was devoted to the exploration of topics pertaining to his work.



VA's presentation, *Evaluation of In-Service Tile Vaults*, was based on findings from a pilot study performed on a mockup of a Guastavino vault with simulated faults, such as voids and delaminations, built into it as it was

being constructed.

✦ [Abstract from the presentation, and full study report](#)

✦ [Meeting Program](#) (pdf)

✦ Read about the mockup vault construction with simulated faults [Building a Vault in the Style of Rafael Guastavino](#)

Setting the ANSI Standards for Rope Access Safety



The [American National Standards Institute](#) (ANSI) oversees the creation and publication of thousands of industry standards and guidelines that impact a



diverse range of businesses - from construction equipment to eyewear to livestock production. Each area has its own committees with agendas and schedules particular to their industry's needs.

Since 2009 Vertical Access has been an active member of the Z359 Committee: Safety Requirements for Personal Fall Arrest Systems, Subsystems and Components. On November 6-8 of this year, VA's Kelly Streeeter and Keith Luscinski travelled to Boulder, Colorado to join others from around the country to work on defining the standards for numerous related topics. Kelly and Keith are members of three sub-committees:

- Z359.8 Safe Practices for Rope Access
- Z359.9 Personal Equipment for Protection Against Falls
- Z359.15 Safety Requirements for Vertical Lifelines for Personal Fall Arrest Systems

Other ANSI Z359 committee members include representatives from [SPRAT](#), [PMI](#), [Petzl](#), [PenSafe](#), [Gravitec](#), and the [U.S. Department of the Interior - Bureau of Reclamation](#). A lot of discussion and debate takes place during these meetings, but ultimately the bulk of the standards writing is tackled during the months between meetings. These guidelines are critically important as regulating agencies such as OSHA rely on them to make new laws, and equipment manufacturers design new products to meet ANSI standards.