



—  GLENMONT  —

 A walking tour of the grounds at Glenmont 

The grounds and home at Glenmont were designed by architect Henry Hudson Holly in 1880 for Henry C. Pedder, a New York businessman. Thomas Edison purchased the estate and its furnishings in 1886. The grounds walk explores the 13.5 acre estate that Edison called his “country home.”

A short distance from the Visitor parking area (A) stands Glenmont (B), Thomas Edison’s 23 room brick and timber Queen Anne style mansion. The Edison gravesite (C) is to the rear of the house. Thomas and Mina were first buried at Rosedale Cemetery in Orange, New Jersey. In 1962 their children arranged for the remains to be brought back to Glenmont—the home they had shared and loved.

In the front of the house is a man-made Pond (D) used by the Edison family for ice skating. The nearby Garage (E), constructed in 1907, is made of poured cement. It was built using a pre-cast iron mold, a building technique Edison was experimenting with as a means of constructing low cost housing. The garage held the family’s gasoline and electric automobiles, a gas pump, a battery charger, and a turntable to assist in parking. The chauffeur lived on the second floor.


Across Honeysuckle Road are the remains of the family Swimming pool (F). Estate living in Victorian times called for a certain degree of independence. The Barn (G) held a small flock of chickens and several milk cows. A kitchen garden also provided food for the table.

Gardens were an important part of the Glenmont scene with fruit trees, lawns, and flower beds maintained by a full time staff. The Edisons enjoyed horticulture and spent a great deal of their time outdoors. The estate grounds include exotic plantings, trees, and shrubs from around the world.

Tropical plants, flowers, and palms for display inside Glenmont were grown in the Greenhouse and Potting shed (H). A gardener lived in the attached Gardener’s cottage (I), another Edison poured cement structure.

SAFETY

For your safety, follow all speed limits, watch out for speed bumps in Llewellyn Park, and take care in crossing roads and uneven or slippery surfaces.





The Edison Family

The 23-year-old, Thomas Edison, met Mary Stillwell soon after he had opened his first small factory and invention laboratory in Newark, New Jersey. They married in 1871 and lived first in Newark and later, while Edison conducted his electric light experiments, in Menlo Park. When Mary died in 1884, Edison, though wealthy and world-famous, was ill-prepared to care for their three young children—Marion, Thomas, Jr., and William.

A year later, mutual friends introduced Edison to Mina Miller, the young daughter of a successful businessman from Akron, Ohio. Mina was intelligent, well-educated, and attractive. They were married on February 24, 1886 and moved into Glenmont that spring. Over the next twelve years, Thomas and Mina had three children—Madeleine, Charles, and Theodore, all of whom were born at Glenmont.

Edison loved his “country home” and used Glenmont as a place of retreat and relaxation. It was also a place to host friends and dignitaries. Charles Lindbergh, Helen Keller, General John Pershing, George Eastman, Herbert Hoover, Woodrow Wilson, and Henry Ford were among those who visited.



Mina Edison with her children.

Edison and Mina in the Chemistry Laboratory, 1906.



After Edison's death in 1931, Mina lived on at Glenmont where she continued to devote her time to charitable organizations, and to preserving the memory of her late husband. She died in 1947 at the age of eighty-one. In 1954, the National Park Service assumed responsibility for administering the home and grounds.

Charles and Madeleine with their father.

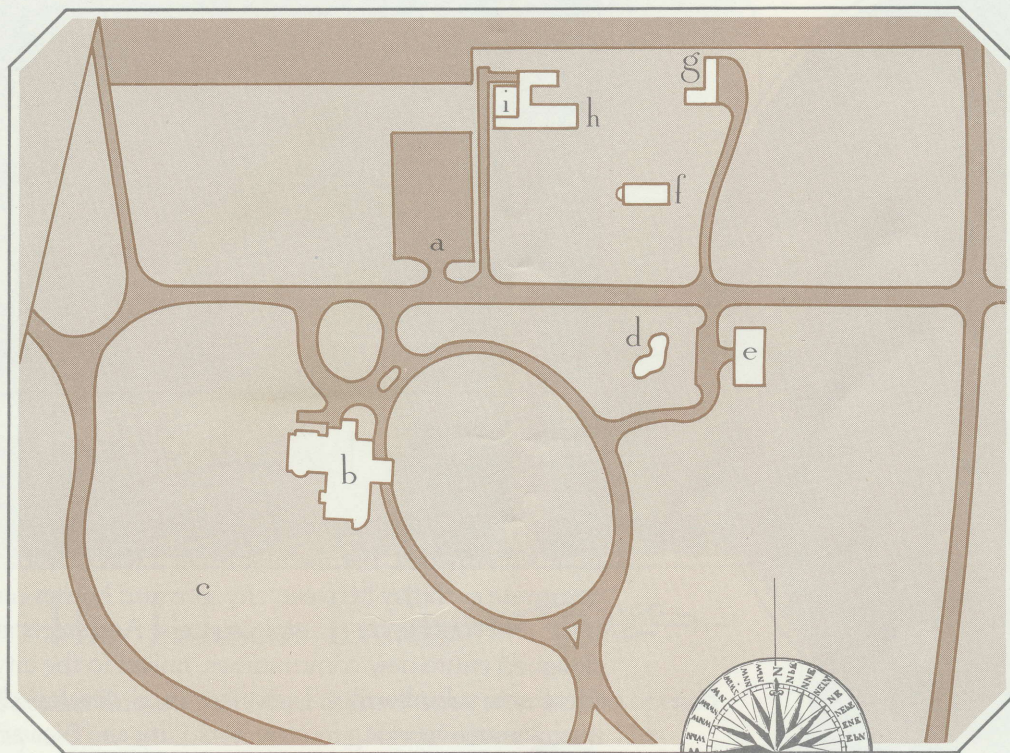


Llewellyn Park

In the 1850's, rail transportation began to change the way people lived in urban America. For the first time, it was possible for the wealthy to commute each day between city jobs and homes removed from the noise and congestion of urban centers. Architects and planners designed entire new communities, linked to the city by rail lines, for these new suburbanites. Llewellyn Park, developed for merchants and businessmen working in New York City and Newark, was one such oasis. By 1857 Llewellyn S. Haskell had acquired nearly 300 acres on the east slope of the Orange Mountains. He, along with landscape architect, Alexander Jackson Davis, laid out a plan for more than 100 private estates in a setting that preserved the rural ideal and harmonized with the landscape of the Orange foothills. Curving roadways followed the contours of the land and areas of the park were permanently set aside as open fields and woodlands. A major feature was "The Ramble," a wooded area of foot paths and scenic vistas, that extends through the center of the park. With 13.5 acres, Glenmont was one of the largest estates in Llewellyn Park and the house is one of the earliest homes still standing.

Llewellyn Park, today, continues to be maintained by annual assessments from its home owners or Proprietors. Please respect the privacy of the residents during your visit to Glenmont.

The entrance to Llewellyn Park, 1892.



a. Visitor parking

b. Glenmont

c. Edison gravesite

d. Pond

e. Garage

f. Swimming pool

g. Barn

h. Greenhouse and Potting shed

i. Gardener's cottage



Glenmont is administered by the National Park Service as part of Edison National Historic Site.
For further information write to the Superintendent,
Edison National Historic Site, West Orange, New Jersey 07052
or call (201) 736-0550.

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