



## The Lab Notebook Special Edition

### WELCOME BACK!

Welcome to the **NEW** Thomas Edison National Historical Park, the result of several renovation initiatives at both Glenmont and the Laboratory Complex.

No longer confined to a brief ranger-led tour of the first floor of Building 5, visitors now have access to all three floors. Ranger-led tours can be arranged by appointment. New exhibit panels and video kiosks are on display throughout the building. For an additional fee, you can take along one of our new audio tours.

The Precision Machine Shop on the second floor features the birthplace of the first motion picture camera. Elsewhere on the second floor are Room 12, Edison's private experimental room, and the Drafting Room, where mechanical engineers turned ideas into blueprints and drawings.

The third floor includes an extraordinary collection of phonographs that tell the sound recording story. The newly refurbished Music Room was the world's first recording studio and later the place where Edison auditioned music and musicians. The Photography Department, with an original enlarging camera, lights, backdrop, and two dark rooms, was the center of Edison advertising and publicity. The open storage area displays thousands of collection gems: Ediphones, talking dolls, battery components, mining tools, Edicraft appliances, Edison's own camping equipment, and much, much more. A new staircase tower and an elevator ensure easy access to all floors.

The **NEW** Visitor Center and Museum Store are located in a completely renovated Building 1, the former physics lab. Visitors will pick up the brand new Park brochure, their audio tours, and tickets for Glenmont and special events. Please stop and shop in the expanded museum store and watch an introductory video.

Other buildings underwent restoration, including Buildings 2 and 4. With painstaking attention to professional standards, NPS regional staff cleaned the balance room of the Building 2 Chemistry lab, painted interior walls, and repaired the floor. Building 4 now houses administrative offices and an enlarged archives research area. (For more on the new archives, see page 2.) All of this work not only

preserved the laboratory's cultural resources but almost tripled the space that the public can now enjoy.

The National Park Service did not do all this alone; we had the help of several partners. Throughout the National Park system, partnerships are essential for the continued protection and enhancement of parks and historic sites and have been instrumental in establishing educational programs, living history demonstrations, fundraising campaigns, habitat restorations, and a host of other activities. They supplement the federal government's limited resources to help the parks fulfill their stewardship responsibilities.

Our partners include the Edison Innovation Foundation, the Friends of Thomas Edison National Historical Park, Inc., Charles Edison Fund, Rutgers University/The Thomas A. Edison Papers Project, Edison Memorial Tower Corporation, and the Garden Club of the Oranges.

The Edison Innovation Foundation and the Charles Edison Fund secured over \$13 million for major construction from their own resources, plus contributions from, among others, *Save America's Treasures*, General Electric, SONY, and federal funds for NPS construction. Other projects made our archival collection more accessible, conserved phonographs, and restored the home and greenhouse at Glenmont. Some contributions are modest and some are extraordinary. They have all been essential in achieving our mission. The leadership of our partners and former Superintendents sparked the campaign to restore, renovate, and enhance the significant resources of the Laboratory Complex and saw the project to its completion. We are extremely grateful.

We want to celebrate our achievements and build on them to create a bright **NEW** future for the Park. We are looking forward to: new visitor orientation and educational spaces, a theater for semi-

nars, screening rooms for films, new retail operations, state-of-the-art open storage for the vast Edison collection, and additional renovations for the Glenmont outbuildings. We are confident that the continued growth of resources will not only enhance our stewardship of the Park collection and facilities, but also increase opportunities for our visitors, researchers, and new audiences still to be identified. But there is so much to be appreciated at this stage in the Park's renaissance, let's take time now to enjoy our Grand Opening.

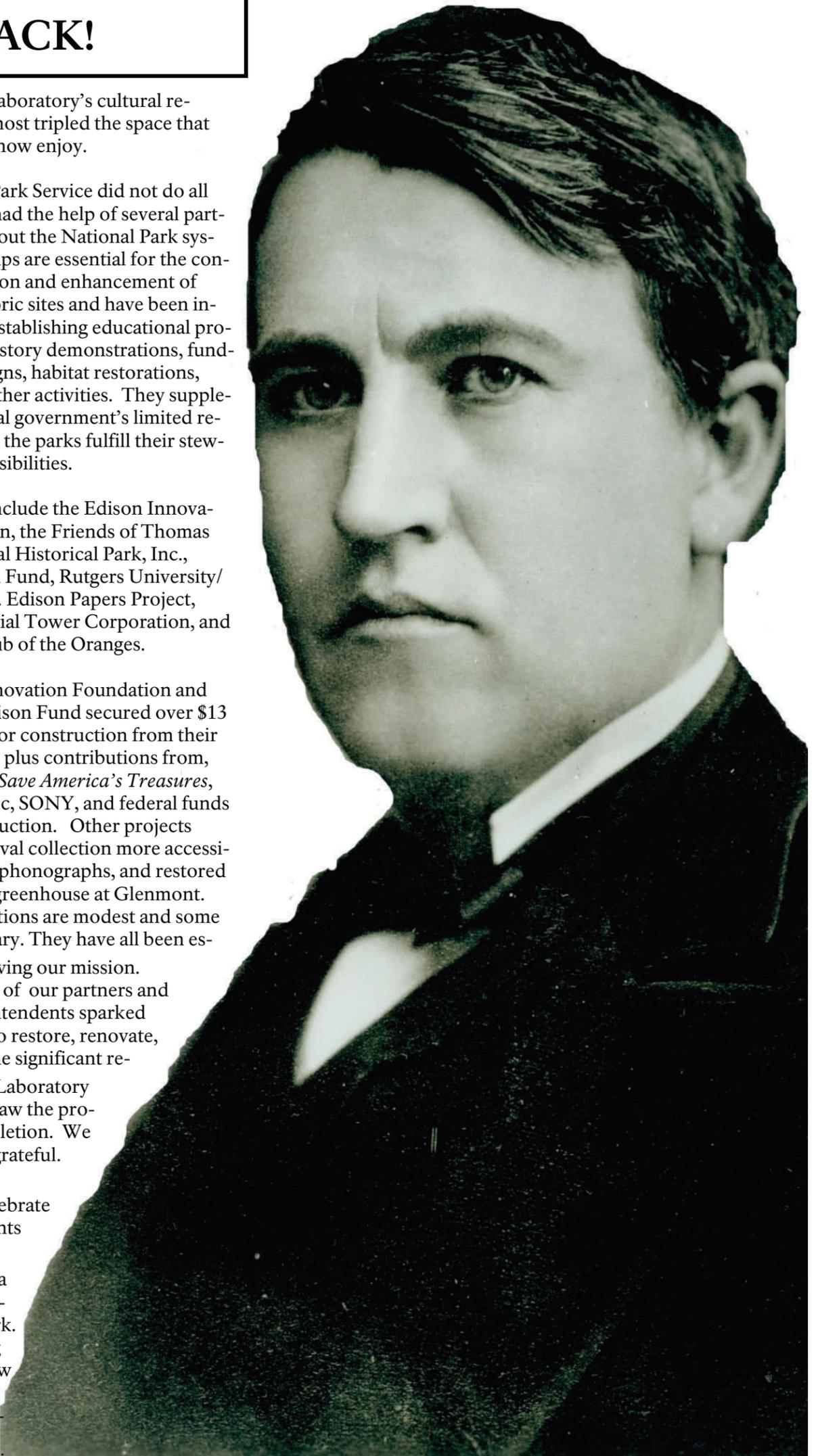
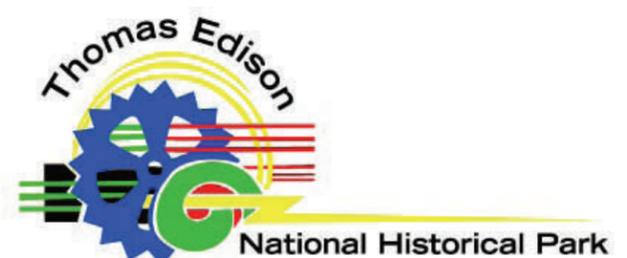


Photo of Thomas Alva Edison, 1883.



## Superintendent's Message

October 9, 2009, is a special day for many people and a special day for Thomas Edison National Historical Park. It was a special day for the Washington Monument that opened on this day in 1888; it was a special day for John Lennon because it was his birthday.

What makes today special for us is that it is a time of celebration—the grand opening of the Laboratory Complex. This special day is not about the renovations, not the elevator or the stairs or the many new heating and fire systems. It is special because of our visitors. After today, our visitors can enjoy and experience the wonders of the Laboratory Complex—newly refurbished rooms, an improved archival research center, and 20,000 square feet of new exhibit space are all awaiting our visitors.

The special day has given us an opportunity not only to enhance our visitors' experience but also to focus on our partners' help in getting us to where we are today. We celebrate a new Thomas Edison National Historical Park with its Laboratory Complex that engages our visitors and encourages us to create a new vision for our bright future.

While we are looking to the future I want to share two reflections from our Park staff.

"As an interpreter at Thomas Edison National Historical Park I have spoken with many of our visitors during the closure and restoration project. During my four years here, not one visitor has failed to ask about the restoration project. In recent years there has been much public discussion that Americans no longer care about history. After talking with many of our visitors and handling numerous requests for off-site programs, I would caution against such generalizations. The patrons of our Park maintain not only their interest in America's heritage but also enthusiasm for their own roles as stewards. At this Grand Opening of Edison's Laboratory Complex I look forward to seeing visitors enjoying the new Thomas Edison National Historical Park."

—Brigid Jennings, Park Ranger

"The new Laboratory Complex is opening after being closed for six years. As the Grand Opening day arrives I can't help but remember the day it closed and the events that led up to that day. I remember reading that Edison National Historic Site had been named among the top ten of 'Most Endangered Historic Sites.' It was in disrepair and artifacts were not being preserved properly due to lack of resources and necessary upgrades. After Hillary Clinton visited the site during her *Save America's Treasures* tour, restoration was inevitable. Construction began; we spent countless hours in cold dark spaces guarding contractors. Feelings of emptiness flooded me after the buildings had been stripped and their fragile artifacts packed away, nothing was left but the ghosts of visitors. Co-workers left to take new positions, tentative opening dates came and went too many times.

"As the construction ended, the countless artifacts were brought back to their places and new staff started to arrive. The pulse of this place started beating once more. The new Superintendent arrived and the Park's name changed. Around my desk are three things: the National Park Service's *Core Values*, my family pictures, and a poem by Lewis Latimer titled "Hope." Today as I reflect on the Grand Opening, I put aside fear of the unknown and remember that sometimes it's best just to keep in mind the purpose of a National Park Ranger. With that, the opening day brings me excitement and pride for the new Thomas Edison National Historical Park."

—Shemaine McKelvin, Park Ranger

I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to my Division Chiefs, Assistant Superintendent, and the entire Park staff and volunteers. Also, a special thanks to former Superintendent Maryanne Gerbauckas for her leadership in crafting and implementing an effective plan to bring both Glenmont and the Laboratory to "world class" status. We also appreciated Superintendent Randy Turner's stewardship and guidance for the time he spent here at the Park.

On this special day we all give thanks to John Keegan, the President and Chairman of the Edison Innovation Foundation and the Charles Edison Fund. Webster's Dictionary failed to provide me with an appropriate array of superlatives to express our appreciation to John and his staff for everything they have done to make this a special day.

—Greg Marshall

## New Audio Tour Adds to Your Visit

The new audio tour will guide visitors throughout Building 5 and around the courtyard. The tour is available in English, Spanish, German, and Japanese.

The tour brings to life the frenzied activity that took place when over one hundred experimenters bustled throughout the buildings engaged in dozens of projects. Plus, additional voices assist the narrator in making the tour informative and enjoyable. John Keegan of the Edison Innovation Foundation, which has done so much to sponsor the entire restoration project, provides an opening greeting to listeners and a wrap-up at the end.

Bernie Carlson, a professor of the history of technology at the University of Virginia, is a featured guide. Carlson has a long connection to Edison; in addition to his current teaching duties, he was an early staff member of the *Thomas A. Edison Papers* back in the 1970s and early 1980s. Bernie tells what Edison hoped to achieve in building a new lab in West Orange, offers insights on the workers and what it was like to work in these shops and labs, and explains many of the technologies. Joining him are Jerry Fabris, curator of the phonograph and recording collection, with thoughts on the complexities of the Edison phonograph business, and Lenny DeGraaf, archivist, with observations on the riches of the Park's archives and the light they shed on Edison's activities.

Voices from the past also join the tour through the use of oral histories. Norman Spieden joined the staff of Edison's Historical Research Department, which was set up in 1928 to answer questions from both the press and the public. He later worked for Edison Industries and stayed on into the Park Service era as a museum curator. He talks about Edison's proposal to Mina Miller, the difficulties workers had in trying to communicate with the near-deaf boss, and the camping trips with Henry Ford and their friends. Paul Kasakove, a member of Edison's funeral honor guard, talks about the mystery of the Library clock that was stopped after Edison's death. Ernest Stevens, who worked as a pianist and music director, recalls Edison's experimental recordings. And Harold Anderson, who joined the staff in 1924, talks

## The New Museum Store

The expanded Museum Store, operated by Eastern National, a National Park Service partner, offers a variety of books and gifts including Edison biographies, books on motion pictures and sound recordings, posters, DVD's, collections of photographs from the archives, postcards, and even replica light bulbs.

Materials for young visitors are also available, including biographies, scrapbooks, coloring books, and books on science experiments and other activities. Junior Ranger items are also on display.

Don't forget to visit the Garden Shop at the Glenmont Potting Shed on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays during its business hours. In addition to many of the items available at the Laboratory Complex Museum Store you will find materials on gardens and gardening, birds, bird watching, and wildlife.

## Edison Archives Grand Opening

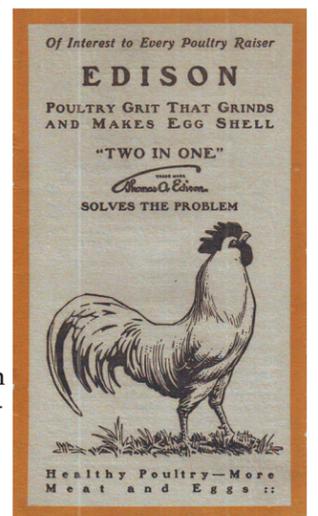


Researchers now have more space to examine archival material from the Edison Archives.

The Thomas Edison NHP Archives opens to researchers this fall with a newly expanded reading room. Located in Building 4 at the Laboratory Complex, the new room offers on-site researchers a clean, comfortable space in which to study the park's extensive collection of Edison documents and photographs. The reading room features a refinished wood floor, new library furniture, and a large flat-panel video screen to view historic Edison films on DVD. The room also includes equipment to examine microfilmed material, a collection of books and articles about Edison, and computer work stations, which will give researchers and staff access to finding aids, databases and other electronic reference tools.

With over five million documents, Thomas Edison NHP has one of the largest archival collections in the National Park System. Along with Edison's personal and business correspondence, patents and laboratory notebooks, the archives preserves the records of dozens of companies Edison created to develop his inventions. Holdings also include advertising material, Edison's legal and financial records and 60,000 historic photographs. The Edison Archives is a significant collection for the study of technology, business and popular culture in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and documents the creation of the electric light and power, sound recording and motion picture industries.

The Thomas Edison NHP Archives is open to on-site researchers by appointment 9 am to 4 pm, Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. For information about the archives, or to schedule a research appointment, call 973-736-0550, ext 22, or send an email to [EDIS\\_Archives@nps.gov](mailto:EDIS_Archives@nps.gov).



This advertisement, one of thousands in the archives, promotes Edison's chicken grit, a by-product of Portland cement manufacturing. Poultry farmers fed it to their chickens to help them digest their feed.

## Volunteers Still Needed

The past several issues of *The Lab Notebook* have featured the contributions of our volunteers to the Park's restoration. We couldn't have done it without them.

With the reopening of the Laboratory Complex, our need for volunteers remains as great as ever. If you ever pictured yourself leading a tour, preparing an exhibit, unpacking artifacts, or helping with landscaping, we might have what you're looking for. To find out more about volunteering, please contact Michelle Ortwein, our Volunteer Coordinator at 973-736-0550, x31 or via e-mail at [michelle\\_ortwein@nps.gov](mailto:michelle_ortwein@nps.gov).



Museum Store at the Laboratory Complex.



National Park Service  
UNITED STATES Department of the Interior

Thomas Edison National Historical Park was established to preserve and protect Thomas Alva Edison's West Orange Laboratory, home, and for the education and inspiration of people worldwide.

**Thomas Edison National Historical Park**  
211 Main Street  
West Orange, NJ 07052  
Web site: [www.nps.gov/edis](http://www.nps.gov/edis)  
Email: [edis\\_superintendent@nps.gov](mailto:edis_superintendent@nps.gov)

**Visitor Information**  
973-736-0550  
Fax: 973-243-7172

The National Park Service cares for the special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.

## OUR PARTNERS AND CONTRIBUTORS

We express our gratitude to the many friends who have made the renovation of the Laboratory Complex possible.

**The Honorable Frank R. Lautenberg,  
United States Senate**

**The Honorable Robert Menendez,  
United States Senate**

**The Honorable Bill Pascrell, Jr.,  
United States House of  
Representatives**



**The Honorable Donald M. Payne,  
United States House of  
Representatives**

~~~~~ Donors ~~~~~

**Charles Edison Fund  
Edison Innovation Foundation  
General Electric Company  
Mitsui & Co., LTD  
Mitsui & Co., (USA), Inc.  
Mitsui USA Foundation  
Toshiba Corporation  
Toshiba America, Inc.  
Sony Corporation  
Sony Corporation of America  
Alcatel-Lucent  
John H. Martinson  
Save America's Treasures  
Friends of Thomas Edison National  
Historical Park  
Corning Incorporation Foundation  
Ford Motor Company Fund  
Estate of Vivian Katz  
Elizabeth Baigent  
DTE Energy  
TXU Energy  
Beck Foundation  
California Community Foundation  
AT&T  
MCJ Foundation  
Minkota Power  
Sandy Hill Foundation  
William Henderson  
Llewellyn Park Residents  
Florida Power & Light  
Walker Digital  
Edison Electric Institute  
Thomas J. Ungerland  
David Rockefeller  
Charles Van Ooteghem  
David Giovannoni  
Rich Charitable Trust  
John P. Keegan  
Robert E. Murray  
Mary O'Byrne  
US Trust Company  
John Edison  
Stephen Oliphant  
Jeffrey Oliphant  
Massachusetts Old Colony Antique  
Phonograph Society  
Eric von Grimmerstein  
Charles Hummel  
Eric Schmidl  
The Antique Photo Store**

**Charles Edison Fund**  
John P. Keegan, Chairman, President &  
Treasurer  
Robert E. Murray, Vice President  
Alberta Ench, Secretary  
Edward L. Allman, Trustee  
James E. Howe, Trustee  
George Q. Keegan, Trustee  
John M. O'Shea, Trustee  
Dr. John N. Schullinger, Trustee  
Thomas Smoot, Trustee  
Thomas J. Ungerland, Trustee  
Lorena Lalicata, Executive Assistant to  
the Chairman  
Kathleen Gannon, Executive Assistant  
to the Chairman  
Patrick Warren  
Harry Roman, Educational Consultant  
**Edison Innovation Foundation**

John P. Keegan, Chairman & President  
Wade Knowles, Vice President  
Robert E. Murray, Treasurer  
Thomas J. Ungerland, Secretary  
George Q. Keegan, Trustee  
Christine D'Amico, Executive  
Assistant to the Chairman  
**Andy Spahn & Associates**  
Andy Spahn  
Jennifer Gonring  
Kevin Ryan

**All Signs**  
Steve Bienstock

**Alpha Corporation**  
Jim Rodgers

**Antenna Audio, Inc.**  
Mara Gerstein  
Hilary Henning

**Apple Restoration**

**Arbee Associates**

**Art Guild, Inc.**  
Lath Carlson  
George Mayer  
Meredith Pedersen  
Andrew Tomasulo

**Art Pack, Inc.**  
Melanie Brussat, Conservator

**Beyer, Blinder, Belle Architects &  
Planners, LLP**  
John Belle  
Richard Southwick  
Boswell Engineering  
Stephen Boswell

**Bunting Graphics, Inc.**  
Raleigh Caesar, Exhibit Specialist

**S.J. Carney Roofing/Ench Roofing  
Supply**  
Frank "Bo" Ench

**Chat of Michigan**

**Conservation Center for Art and  
Historic Artifacts**

**Craddock Painting Conservation,  
Inc.**  
Daisy Craddock

**DavEd**

**Dosch-King Company**  
David King

**E&M O'Hara**  
Mike O'Hara  
Ed O'Hara  
John Manee

**Eastern National**  
George Minnucci, President  
Chesley Moroz, Past President  
Monta Harrington  
Dave Wagner  
Midge Wohl

**Friends of Thomas Edison National  
Historical Park**  
Charles Hummel, President  
John B. O'Reilly, Jr.

**Great Film Projects**  
Carmine Giermo  
Catherine Hawks, Conservator

**The Henry Ford**  
Judy Endelman

**JD Conservation**  
Jon Derow

**Masini & Sons**

**Master Fire Protection, Inc.**  
Drew Zarpentine

**McCarter & English LLP**  
Beth Yingling  
Robert Smith  
David Ludgin  
Stephen Vajtay

**McKelvey Museum Services**  
Frank J. McKelvey, Jr.  
Rob Howard

**M.E.R.I.T., Inc.**

**Morse Moving Company**  
**Page Belting Company, Inc.**  
Mark Coen  
Shawn Tewksbury

**Pamela Morgan Framing**  
Pamela Morgan

**Partners + Jeary**

**Pav-Con**

Ben Polsky, Mount Maker

**Precision Flooring LLC**

**Ralph Appelbaum Associates**  
Ralph Appelbaum  
Rick Sobel

**Spark Electric**  
Matt DeVito

**Tec-Con**

**Tectonic, Inc.**

**Troop Construction & Electric, Inc.**  
Denis Cainero  
Michael Elias  
Nick Ravasheire

**Video Corporation of America**

~~~~~ National Park Service ~~~~~

**Architectural Preservation Branch**  
Tom Ballos  
Paul Sky Atchinson  
Jeff Finch  
Greg Law  
Craig Oleszewski  
Linda Pate  
Walter Peek  
Michael Shane

**Collections Conservation Branch,  
Northeast Museum Services Center**  
Margaret Breuker  
Carol Warner  
Brigid Sullivan

**Denver Service Center**  
Sam Whittington, Manager  
Dave Aitken, General Engineer  
Darrin Knapp, Contract Specialist  
Margaret Lemke  
Joelle M. Mascarena  
Brian Olson  
Carol Whipple

**Harpers Ferry Center**  
Larry Bowers  
Sheila Payaqui

**Morristown National Historical Park**  
Randy Turner, Superintendent

**Northeast Region**  
Dennis Reidenbach, Regional Director  
Mike Reynolds, Deputy Regional  
Director  
Maryanne Gerbauckas, Associate  
Regional Director, Heritage



Preservation, Planning and  
Compliance  
Bob McIntosh, Associate Regional  
Director, Construction and Facility  
Management  
Donna Baumgaertner, Structural Fire  
Prevention Specialist  
Jill Hawk Regional Chief Ranger  
Bob Holzheimer, Project Manager  
Duncan Hay, Historian  
Alexa Molnar, Comptroller  
Tom Dyer, Partnerships  
Naomi Kroll, Architectural Conservator  
Richard Chilcoat, Project Manager

**Sagamore Hill National Historic Site**  
Amy Verone, Supervisory Museum  
Curator

**Southeast Region**  
Todd Neitzel  
**Thomas Edison National Historical  
Park**

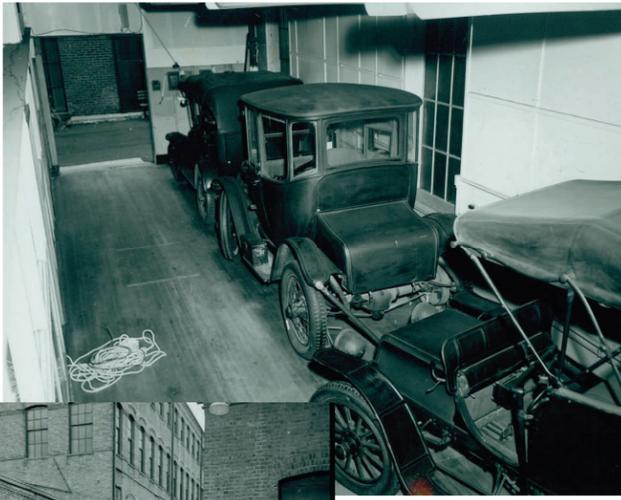
Greg Marshall  
Theresa Jung  
Peter Alexander  
Dave Ault  
Mina Awad  
Walter Baginski  
Ben Bolger  
Jean Castro  
Chris Coglein  
Karen Cox  
Lenny DeGraaf  
Joe DeMonte  
Jerry Fabris  
Willie Fowler  
Kimele Gray  
Arnold Griffin  
Joan Harris Rico  
Jenny Isaacs  
Brigid Jennings  
Nicholas Johnson  
Adela Joyce  
Albert Kagler  
Edward Kahle  
Ben Lee  
Frantz Lucien  
Charly Magale  
Jamie Magale  
Akshay Mampilly  
Holly Marino  
Shemaine McKelvin  
Beth Miller  
Obina Okani  
Eric Ondrasik  
Susan Orr  
Michelle Ortwein  
Michael Pacyna  
Tim Pagano  
Ryan Plessner  
Theresa Polixa  
Anthony Pontoriero  
Greg Schmidl  
Adam Sliwowski  
Tom Sliwowski  
Karen Sloat-Olsen  
Ramona Smart-Green  
Jonathan "Herc" Suydam  
Greg Washburne  
Lisa Wasser-Berlin  
Alyssa Williams  
Jeremy Winters  
Adrian Wirstiuk  
Edward Wirth  
Scott Withers

**Thomas Edison National Historical  
Park Volunteers**  
David Ault  
Alan Bennett  
Susan Bennett  
Christopher Breetveld  
Susan Butler  
Sean Coakley  
Judith DeMouthie  
Jessica Diedalis  
Rita DeMatteo  
Nancy Farley

# Thomas Edison NHP: Snapshots From Our Past

Over the past fifty years, since becoming part of the National Park Service, the site has experienced many changes. Here are some visual memories.

Building 4, Edison's metallurgical lab, was leased to the U. S. Navy during World War II and later housed the Edison family cars. In September 1969, the cars made their last trip as the building was adapted to store more archival and photographic material.



The rear of Building 4 was a catch-all. The wooden crates are filled with journals in fields such as mining, rubber research, and film and phonograph production. Elsewhere are rolled archival documents and hundreds of glass plate negatives. Today this area contains offices for the Superintendent and administrative staff. (September 1970.)



The new visitor parking lot, new in March 1963, that is. The Dodge/Saab dealership at the right has been replaced by a lawn in front of the Park's maintenance garage. The Edison Administration building and other factory buildings (demolished in the early 1970s) are visible in the distance at left.

A huge group of campers poses for a snapshot in the Library in the mid-1960s.



A ranger talks about Edison's early motion picture work outside the replica of the Black Maria. (July 1966.)



Charles Edison paid a visit to the Park in 1967 and posed in the courtyard with his great niece Madeleine Edison Sloane, who was a park ranger.



This isn't part of the recent restoration work. These workers were repairing a Library window in March 1963.



Taking a break in the courtyard, visitors enjoy the newly-purchased benches, August 1966. Try out our brand-new courtyard benches on your visit.

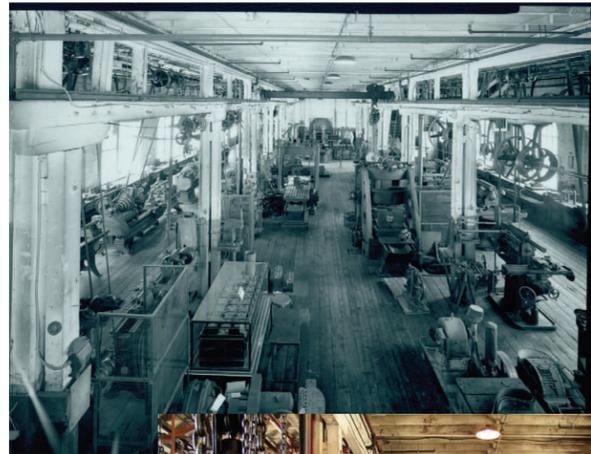


A tour group pauses for a photograph before entering Building 4 sometime in the 1960s. The Edison Industries Administration building is in the background.

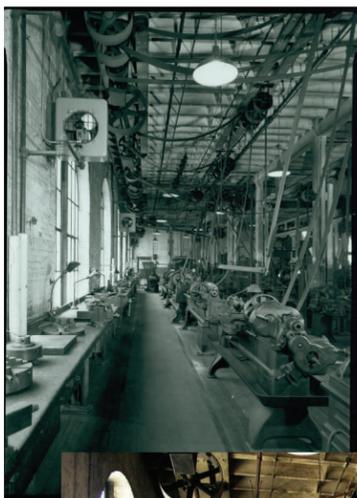
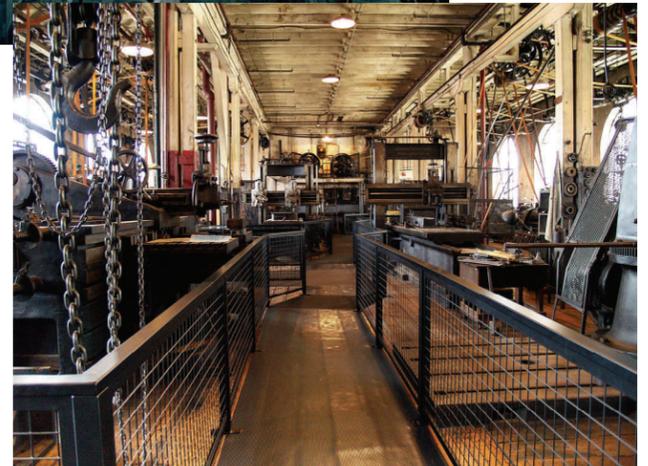
# THE RENOVATION: BEFORE AND AFTER



The Library was carefully packed up in preparation for restoration (left). With new interpretive panels and video kiosks, the Library is prepared to receive visitors.(below).



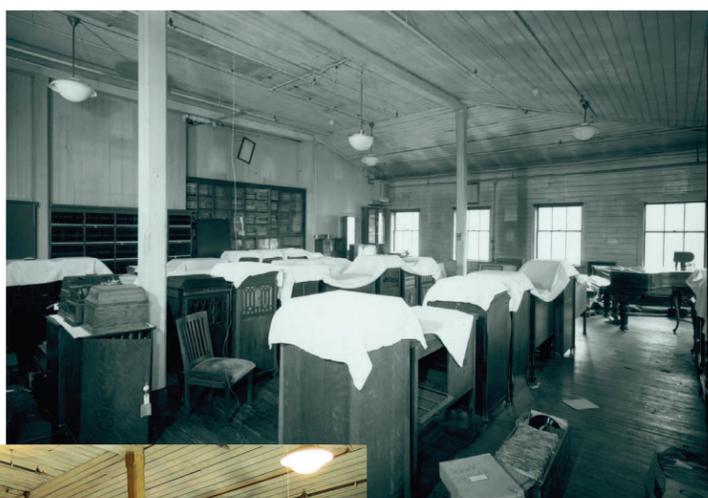
The Heavy Machine Shop now features a railing that guides visitors through the room and serves as a security barrier.



This counter in the Heavy Machine Shop now boasts a set of workers' toolboxes, visible in the photo below. These boxes were vital to a craftsman's livelihood and moved with him from job to job. Thus we had none in the collection, and these were purchased to complete the Machine Shop display.



The Drafting Room, on the second floor, served for most of the past thirty years as office space for the staff of *The Thomas A. Edison Papers*. Now the room has been returned to its original purpose, complete with drafting tables and filing cabinets. Incidentally, in the picture at the far left, the man dictating into an Ediphone, as well as his desk, was pasted in later, probably for an Ediphone advertisement.



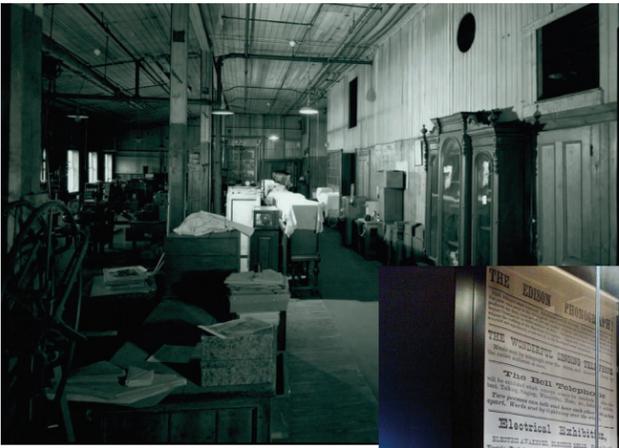
The Precision Machine Shop, on the second floor, became cluttered over the years. Today, spruced up and emptied of all but the machines and furnishings that were there in the mid-1910s, it presents a cleaner, more efficient look.



The Music Room, on the third floor, was storage space for some of the phonographs that were donated to the Park over the decades. The current furnishings reflect the room's use in the mid-1910s.



# THE RENOVATION: BEFORE AND AFTER



This open area on the third floor outside the Music Room held some of the overflow of phonographs. Today, a newly built phonograph storage facility occupies the space and gives visitors a brief history of Edison's role in the sound recording business.



This area on the third floor—half the length of Building 5—housed the overflow of the endless phonograph collection, plus thousands of other artifacts that made their way upstairs. It truly was Edison's attic. Today most of the artifacts are still there, although now fully cataloged and stored in a more systematic manner. Visitors can stroll through this area and view artifacts on racks in open storage plus exhibit cases that display some examples of Edison's lesser known products.



Building 6, the power house in Edison's day, was refitted as the Visitor Center in the 1970s. The artifacts on display provided an overview of the inventor's career. Today Building 6 is once again the power house, the home of modern heating and cooling systems.



In the Chemistry Lab thousands of small artifacts, such as delicate glass bottles and test tubes, were wrapped, boxed, and stored. Larger objects were protected in place on worktables, which were then enclosed in plywood. The Building 2 project concluded with a cleaning and repainting of the walls, and repair of the floor.



Park Guide Edward Cary plays a phonograph in the front room of Building 1 in the late summer of 1957. Cary began working for Edison as a boy in 1915, hired to clean up the debris of the 1914 fire. He retired in 1968.



The space served as a phonograph demonstration area into the 1990s. Today the new Visitor Center and its Museum Shop are located here.



The central room of the Visitor Center in Building 1 was an exhibition area in April 1957. This school group appears to divide its attention between the photographer and a model of Edison's Pearl Street station. Today the space is a theater presenting an orientation film.



## Friends of Edison Celebrate Silver Anniversary



Visitors gather for *A Taste of West Orange* in the mid-1990s, one of several fund-raising community events co-sponsored by The Friends of Edison to benefit the Park.

The Friends of Thomas Edison National Historical Park is a non-profit membership organization dedicated to the preservation of the Edison Laboratory and Glenmont, and to the appreciation of Thomas Alva Edison, the man, and the promotion of the Edison legacy now and for the future. In this the twenty-fifth anniversary of supporting the National Park Service's stewardship of his home and laboratory the Friends reaffirms its commitment to this mission as an NPS Partner. During this quarter century of service the Friends has raised more than \$1,000,000 to preserve, interpret and promote Edison's home and laboratory to keep the legacy of Edison's genius vitally present for future generations.

The Friends commits the donated funds, materials and/or goods and services to assist in the protection of these cultural resources and strives to enhance their interpretation and understanding. Activities include donating library materials, materials for public programming, and materials or donated services to fund operations of the Thomas Edison NHP. New accessions to fill in gaps in the historic Edison collection have also been funded by the Friends of Thomas Edison NHP.

Information about joining the Friends or making contributions to benefit Thomas Edison NHP may be found on their website, [foedison.org](http://foedison.org). The Friends may also be contacted via e-mail at [foe00@verizon.net](mailto:foe00@verizon.net).



**CHARLES EDISON FUND**

The Charles Edison Fund ("CEF"), incorporated in 1948 by Charles Edison was, and continues to be, an endowed philanthropic institution dedicated to the support of worthwhile endeavors generally within the areas of medical research, science education and historic preservation. It both operates programs and makes grants to support these endeavors. Since its inception CEF has served as an extension of the benefactions and aspirations of its Founder, a man of discerning foresight, rare achievement and background.  
[www.charlesedisonfund.org](http://www.charlesedisonfund.org)



**EDISON INNOVATION FOUNDATION**

The mission of Edison Innovation Foundation, a New Jersey nonprofit corporation, is to preserve and promote the historical homes, laboratories and papers of Thomas Edison where and in which he invented the products that shaped the modern world. The Campaign's results will benefit minorities and children by providing them the necessary skills to pursue careers in science and technology as well as advance a national and international spirit of innovation.  
[www.thomasedison.org](http://www.thomasedison.org)



The new Park logo, displayed elsewhere in this issue of *The Lab Notebook*, is adapted from advertising art designed for Edison's line of Edicraft kitchen appliances, introduced in the late 1920s. The brightly colored gears reflect the Art Deco sensibility of the period.

## Facts and Figures for the "Preserve Historic Buildings and Collections" Partnership Project

The complex project was necessary to preserve the historic buildings and the artifact and archival collections at the Laboratory Complex and the Glenmont Estate. The original historic furnishings and documents had been deteriorating for decades due to the absence of adequate heating and cooling systems. They were at risk of loss or damage from fire because of old, outdated alarm and sprinkler systems. Finally, the vast majority of the artifact collection was inaccessible to visitors and researchers while stored on the upper floors of the historic main laboratory. Below is a summary of facts and figures.

### Glenmont Estate

Project Management: NPS, Denver Service Center, Denver, CO  
Architect: Beyer, Blinder, Belle Architects & Planners, LLP, New York, NY  
Contractor: Integrated Construction Enterprises, Belleville, NJ  
NPS Superintendent: Maryanne Gerbauckas  
NPS Partner: Edison Innovation Foundation, Newark, NJ

Renovations Began: January 2003  
Contract completed: January 2004  
Cost: \$1,000,000

### Laboratory Complex

Project Management: NPS, Denver Service Center, Denver, CO  
Architect: Beyer, Blinder, Belle Architects & Planners, LLP, New York, NY  
Exhibit Design: Ralph Applebaum Associates Inc., New York, NY  
Exhibit Fabrication: Art Guild, Inc., Thorofare, NJ  
Audio Tour: Antenna Audio, Inc., New York, NY  
General Contractor: Troop Construction and Electric, Inc., Perth Amboy, NJ  
NPS Superintendent: Maryanne Gerbauckas (1992 - 2007)  
Randy Turner (2007)  
Greg Marshall (2008 - present)  
NPS Partner: Edison Innovation Foundation, Newark, NJ

Renovations Began: January 2004  
Contract completed: October 2009  
Cost: \$13,000,000

Background photo: Building 11 being dismantled for transportation to The Henry Ford museum in Dearborn, Michigan, 1940.

## Other Highlights of the Preservation Project

The major changes in the Park are described elsewhere in this issue and have been featured in *The Lab Notebook* over the past few years. Here, though, is a summary of some of the lesser-known but essential improvements made during the project.

### Laboratory Complex

Staff relocated their offices from Building 5 in order to open all floors for visitors.

The **Pattern Shop** in Building 3 has been furnished to its 1917 appearance.

The **Black Maria** replica along Main Street has been rehabilitated with new siding and electrical upgrades. The building can now be used for exhibits and programs.

The halon fire suppression system that protected many buildings since the late 1970s has been replaced with an environmentally friendly water sprinkler system.

Masonry repairs and repointing were completed on many of the buildings along with replacement of deteriorated bluestone coping and window sills. Broken window panes were replaced and metal window frames have been repaired. The original terracotta storm drains were replaced with an integrated drainage system to alleviate the surface and subsurface drainage problems that have worsened over the years. The surface of the courtyard was re-graded and accessible entry ramps have been installed into the buildings. Most heating and cooling systems were relocated to Building 6, the original power house.

**Building 11** has been returned from The Henry Ford Museum in Michigan to its original location in the laboratory courtyard. Built about 1898, it was adapted to a variety of uses by Edison and his experimenters who worked on numerous research projects at any one time. The original building was dismantled in 1940 and donated to The Henry Ford museum. It will be used for a variety of educational and interpretive programs.

The **historic view along Main Street** in front of the Laboratory Complex was restored to its early 1900s appearance. Five large evergreen trees

were removed along Main Street; the cleared landscape reveals the carefully designed architectural features of the buildings. New sidewalks and granite pavers recreate the historic cobblestone and bluestone walkways along Main Street and down Lakeside Avenue.

Across Main Street from the historic laboratory buildings, new curbs and sidewalks, decorative lighting and fencing, and a new landscaped visitor parking lot welcomes visitors. Marked pedestrian crosswalks at each corner lead visitors to the new Main Street entrance. The exterior of **Building 35**, the park maintenance building across Main Street was re-sided, and heating and cooling systems were upgraded. A new addressable fire detection system was installed and the fire sprinkler system was upgraded.

### Glenmont

The new geothermal heating and cooling system for the house features underground piping that connects twelve 300-foot deep wells installed in the lawn to the west of the visitor parking lot to the heat pumps in the mansion. All the piping of the new fire detection and suppression system was concealed within wall and door cavities to retain the historic appearance of the furnished rooms.

Electrical service was upgraded throughout the building and drainage repairs were made around the exterior of the house.

The historic **Greenhouse** was completely rehabilitated. All historic glass was removed, numbered, cleaned, and reinstalled. Cyprus rails and their steel frames were repaired or replaced. Broken glass and glazing was replaced. Ridge vents were repaired and made operational, and cracks in the concrete foundation were repaired. A partnership with the Garden Club of the Oranges has returned the Greenhouse to full operation.

The exterior concrete and stucco of the **Potting Shed** were repaired; interior and exterior walls were repainted; and drainage repairs were completed around the building foundations. A Garden Shop and visitor information center are now open in the Potting Shed.

The deteriorated wood siding of the 1908 **Barn** was restored. The slate roof was repaired, and exterior walls were painted. Roof drains, gutters, windows and doors were repaired.



National Park Service  
 UNITED STATES Department of the Interior

Thomas Edison National Historical Park  
 211 Main Street  
 West Orange, NJ 07052



EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA

**Hours of Operation:**

**Laboratory Complex**  
 Wednesday—Sunday 9am-5pm

**Glenmont Estate**  
 Friday—Sunday 11:30am-5pm

**Entrance Fee—\$7 (Under 16 Free)**  
**Optional Audio Tour — \$5**

**Volunteers-In-Parks Coordinator**  
**Thomas Edison National Historical Park**

Michelle Ortwein  
 973-736-0550 x31 phone  
 michelle\_ortwein@nps.gov

[www.nps.gov/edis](http://www.nps.gov/edis) Click on "Support the National Park Service"

"The Lab Notebook" is a quarterly publication of Thomas Edison National Historical Park.

Printed on recycled paper.

**Editor**  
 Edward Wirth

**Contributors**  
 Leonard DeGraaf  
 Theresa Jung  
 Greg Marshall  
 John O'Reilly  
 Michelle Ortwein  
 Karen Sloat-Olsen  
 Edward Wirth

**Comments? Write to:**  
 Greg Marshall, Superintendent  
 Thomas Edison National Historical Park  
 211 Main Street  
 West Orange, NJ 07052



*From the Photo Collection.* This 1917 photograph unites the successive periods of Edison's career: the early Menlo Park days, of which the railway carriage is a trophy; Building 5, the 1887 jewel of his new West Orange complex; and to the right, the Edison Storage Battery factory (1913). The battery factory was literally a concrete example of the manufacturing empire Edison's research allowed him to build. Edison's pride in displaying the carriage is evident in both his expression and his stance. We are equally proud to welcome you to the NEW Laboratory Complex for this Grand Opening.