



The Lab Notebook

EDISON DAY IS JUNE 4



Mamie Minch

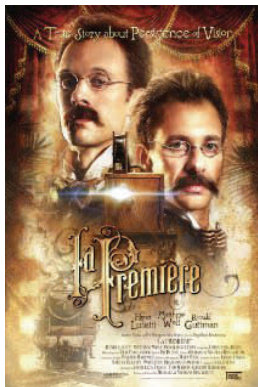
Join us for the fun. There are activities for everyone from 10:00am to 4:00pm.

The popular wax cylinder recording sessions will feature the Paragon Ragtime Laboratory Band, the Bob Ferrel Trombone Quartet, and blues singer Mamie Minch. The heavy machine shop will be in operation, its belts and pulleys certain to raise a terrific racket. Rangers will lead tours of the chemistry lab and present additional programs all day. Stop by the Archives exhibit in Building 4 and see some of the documents behind our Twitter postings on Edison's activities in 1911.

Take a tour of Glenmont, and then check out the Edisons' cars in the garage. Play Parcheesi, Edison's favorite game! Sign up for tours of the geothermal system. Stop by the Conservatory and see the exhibit "From Famous to Forgotten: 125 Years of Guests at Glenmont."



Bob Ferrel



La Première, a film about the Lumière brothers and the early days of moviemaking, will be shown. It's the work of another pair of filmmaking brothers, Nick and Michael Regalbuto. (You can make your own silent movie at the Black Maria.) Luna Stage, the West Orange-based Equity theater company, will present excerpts from the play *The Dangers of Electric Lighting*, by Ben Clawson, scheduled to open in the fall.

The day closes with a concert on the Glenmont lawn featuring the Paragon Ragtime Laboratory Band.

For a full schedule of events, check our website at www.nps.gov/edis.

Remember to follow us regularly on Twitter for news of programs and special events.

twitter.com/thomasedisonnhp



The Paragon Ragtime Orchestra at last year's Edison Day Concert.

Michelle Ortwein Receives Award from New Jersey Association of Museums



Michelle Ortwein, Supervisory Museum Curator at Thomas Edison NHP, received the John Cotton Dana Award from the New Jersey Association of Museums at the Association's annual meeting on May 13.

The award is named for the founder of the Newark Museum and long-time official of the Newark Public Library.

Michelle was recognized for "advancing the service of museums to the region, for demonstrating visionary and innovative leadership, and for exemplifying the highest standards of professional commitment."

Michelle supervises a staff of nine who take care of the Park's 400,000 artifacts and five million pages of archival documents. She oversees several projects that bring conservators and other experts on-site to provide special care for the collections or prepare detailed published reports on the buildings and landscapes. And, in the time she has left over, Michelle also runs the Park's Volunteers-In-Parks program, coordinating the activities of our many volunteers.

The entire staff congratulates Michelle on this well-earned honor.

Have you answered the Edison Quiz in the last issue? The reader with the highest score wins a prize. Reply to: theresa_jung@nps.gov.

Message from the Superintendent

Happy Spring!

I'll avoid commenting on the wonderful winter wonderland we just experienced. All I will say is that I think we're all glad it's SPRING!

Celebrating the season at Thomas Edison National Historical Park embraces everything from "Edison Day" on Saturday June 4 to the Master Gardeners of the Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Essex County working their magic at the Glenmont estate.

The staff, now in short sleeves, continues to welcome a substantial and diverse number of visitors. Volunteers in almost every division of the Park are busy working on our collections, welcoming families and groups of every kind, and, of course, assisting at the Glenmont Estate with house tours and the shop at the potting shed.

At long last, the painting and repair of Mr. Edison's home is underway, and the retaining wall at the visitors' parking lot should be repaired this summer.

As always, my sincere thanks go to our volunteers, partners, and staff for the tireless contributions they make to Thomas Edison National Historical Park.

Greg Marshall

Junior Ranger Day, April 23



Ranger Shemaine McKelvin with a young inventor.

This year's National Park Week saw about 70 youngsters earn their Junior Ranger badges, culminating on April 23 with Junior Ranger Day. Kids of all ages built models of their own inventions and took part in a scavenger hunt at Glenmont estate.

Additional programs explored growing up at Glenmont, the stewardship necessary to preserve the national parks, and the role of the Junior Ranger program in the National Park Service. The new rangers spread the word about the national parks by writing postcards describing their visit here.

National Park Week is a great opportunity to visit our national treasures, especially those in our own backyard.



Friends Donate "Army and Navy" Phonograph

In March, the Friends of Thomas Edison NHP donated an Edison "Army and Navy" Diamond Disc phonograph to the Park. Edison manufactured this model during World War I and sold it at cost to soldiers and sailors headed overseas. The portable cabinet included heavy

duty handles for two-person carrying. Moving parts could be attached or tied down inside the cabinet.

The Friends purchased the phonograph from a private collector in Virginia using proceeds from the commemorative coin fund. Although phonographs in good condition are a rare find nowadays, this example has survived the years intact. It retains its original paint finish and all its accessory parts. The phonograph is currently visible in the open storage area of the Phonograph Gallery on the third floor of Building 5. Many thanks to the Friends for their generous gift.

"Anything that won't sell, I don't want to invent. Its sale is proof of utility, and utility is success."

—Thomas A. Edison



Shedding Light on the Collection

Cabinets on the third floor have been fitted with strips of light-emitting diodes (LEDs) that are long-lasting and produce little heat. They will illuminate selected artifacts, including the unusual, unique, or simply interesting, literally the high-lights of the collection.

The Park has been open nearly two years, but cleaning, conserving, and preserving the collections are always ongoing. Here are some of the projects we've been working on.



Conservator Lauren Isaacs works some magic on Mina Edison's electric candlesticks in the Glenmont Reception Room. Lauren has been cleaning and treating decorative arts objects throughout the house for several months.



The firm of B.R. Howard & Associates replaced coats of wax preservative on the machine tools in the Precision Machine Shop.



Sprucing Up the Place



The oval near the Edison home has been a potential gardening project since 2009, when Mary Jo Patterson and Amy Trimarco of the Master Gardeners of the Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Essex County sought projects for their certification. A planting design for the oval by Master Gardeners Irene Dunsavage and Jean Grossman received generous funding from the Trustees of the Friends of Thomas Edison NHP.



Students from the 2011 Master Gardener program went to work, raising the 10" bluestone border, uplifting the vinca, turning the soil, working in topsoil and compost, and re-laying a border of vinca. On May 10, the crew planted deer-resistant perennials and annuals, supplemented with exotics such as cannas. All these plantings are consistent with the historical vegetation and will provide visitors with color and variety throughout the seasons.



Museum Technicians Holly Marino (left) and Valerie Shoffner are busy cataloging and storing 3,000 objects this year. Valerie is in the Museum Studies graduate program at Seton Hall, and Holly is graduating from Montclair State with a major in history and will continue in graduate school.



Workers start scraping and sanding the house exterior for the Glenmont painting project.



National Park Service
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EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA

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Edison's "Ball Game" Joins National Recording Registry

In April, the Library of Congress announced that Edison's 1908 wax cylinder recording of the song "Take Me Out to the Ball Game" would be among the 25 new additions to the ninth annual National Recording Registry. Comic vocalist Edward Meeker (above) performs the tune that is now known as the "unofficial national anthem."

The Library selects 25 sound recordings annually that are "culturally, historically, or aesthetically significant" and are at least 10 years old. The full National Recording Registry can be viewed on-line at <http://www.loc.gov/rr/record/nrpb/registry/nrpb-masterlist.html>.

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

Thomas Edison National Historical Park

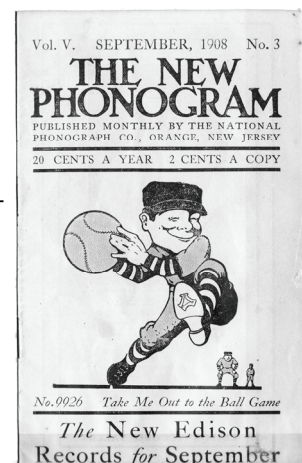
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