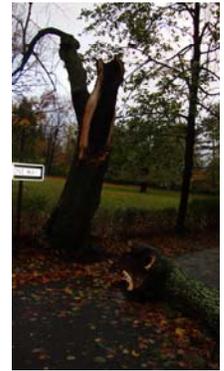




The Lab Notebook

Hurricane Sandy Hits Thomas Edison

Hurricane Sandy delivered a knockout punch to the Northeast at the end of October, and Thomas Edison NHP was not spared. Landscape and buildings suffered extensive damage, including uprooted trees, downed power lines, and broken windows. A power outage closed the park for almost two weeks. Here is a photo album of the disaster.



The park was closed from October 29 to November 1, but Maintenance and Protection staff worked tirelessly during that time to clean up, remove debris, shepherd contractors and public utility workers, check supplies, and maintain security. Many thanks to Maintenance team Charly Magale, Walter Baginski, Arnold Griffith, Ricky Suarez, and Herc Suydam,

and Protection Rangers Alex Whitten, Eddie Grimes, and Michael Hanna. Assistant Superintendent Terri Jung was on-site coordinating the response.

Message from the Superintendent

Season's Greetings! It is that time of year again when we reflect upon the past year. This year brought many challenges to the park, but those challenges were the foundation on which we built significant success. Superstorm Sandy dealt quite a blow to the park and personally to our employees. The park lost power for almost two weeks, while many of our employees dealt with the same challenge at home. Even though we lost power, our employees worked tirelessly to protect the park's resources and spent significant time and energy on-site, before, during, and after the storm event. All employees worked before the storm to protect the site, our collections, and government property. During and after the storm, our Maintenance and Protection worked tirelessly to remove debris, provide access to contractors, and maintain security for a number of weeks. This work was challenging to say the least. However, when this disaster struck, our team came together to help each other and to protect the park. No amount of salary can motivate an employee to work at this level, in post-storm circumstances, and for any length of time. This dedication to public service is a testament to every employee at Thomas Edison National Historical Park and the pride that is involved in protecting the park and its resources for future generations. I am so very proud of the work that has been done...and look forward to what we will accomplish together in 2013.

Jill Hawk

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



National Park Service
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Interior



Volunteers Contribute 5000 Hours in FY 2012

Our volunteers and interns contributed almost 5000 hours to Thomas Edison NHP during the fiscal year that ended on September 30.

In November 2011, the park received the 2011 NPS Accessibility Achievement Award for Educational Leadership. In FY2011, the park received Special VIP Funds to offer Disability Awareness Workshops. Volunteers helped plan these workshops and were among the attendees. The workshops addressed program needs of visitors on the autism spectrum and visitors who are blind or visually impaired. This was the first time the award was given for educational leadership.

Volunteer hours declined 34% in FY12 in part because volunteers moved away or began new jobs (Congratulations to you!) and were unable to volunteer as frequently. Also, delays in completing background checks may have depressed volunteer hours. These checks are required for all curatorial and interpretation volunteers who work with the museum collections or may be alone in an historic building.

Our internship programs foster connections between a younger generation and parks through a series of diverse park experiences. Internships create a pathway to NPS employment with a focus on diversifying the workforce. Our partnership with the Edison Innovation Foundation brings us five high school summer interns from Seton Hall Preparatory School who gain experience in all program areas. Over the years, 14 Seton Hall Prep graduates have gone on to fill 39 seasonal appointments in the park. We have also developed an inter-disciplinary internship for college students in which they gain experience in the interpretation and curatorial programs. They conduct research with primary resources in the archives and museum collection to develop interpretive programs and museum exhibits as their final projects.

FY 2012: Total VIP hours: 4,954

Volunteers: 65

FY2011: Total VIP hours: 7,561 hours

Volunteers: 74

Our high-achievers this year were:

Gaye Olin, 455 hours

Arthur Gordon, 339 hours

Tom Hilmer, 330

Evelyn Gurland, 256

Yvan Beausoleil, 247 hours

CJ Magale, 160 hours

Nancy Farley, 120 hours

Harry Roman, 112 hours

Robert Sprecher, 106 hours

Harvey Cohen, 103 hours

Amy Trimarco, 98 hours

Special thanks to everyone who volunteered at Thomas Edison NHP this year!



Holidays at Glenmont

Once again the Edison home at Glenmont is dressed up for the Christmas holidays just as it was when the family was in residence. Visit us through January 6.



The dining room is ready to welcome guests at a dinner party. The subdued lighting draws the visitor's attention to the bright lights of the Christmas tree in the den.



"The stockings were hung by the chimney with care."



We've reproduced some of the small, delicate Christmas cards that were fashionable in the 1910s and 1920s. Mina Edison received hundreds over the years and saved them in several scrapbooks that are now in the archives.

Edison Laboratory Celebrates 125th Anniversary

On November 17th, the park began a week-long celebration of the 125th anniversary of Thomas Edison's Laboratory with a symposium entitled "Thomas Edison: 125 Years in West Orange."

The program addressed several topics: Edison's relevance today, the creation of the Edison advertising "brand," the preservation of the park and its collections, and the nineteenth-century origins of audio. A discussion with the audience followed. The day ended with a wax cylinder recording demonstration.

On Sunday, the Friends of Thomas Edison NHP sponsored "Explore Audio with Electronic Music Pioneer Larry Fast" at the West Orange Public Library. Over Thanksgiving weekend, visitors could stop in Building 4 and see documents dealing with the (contentious) construction of the Laboratory complex in 1887.



Archivist Lenny DeGraaf discussed Edison's role as an innovator and his ongoing importance today. His colleague Ed Wirth presented images of Edison's "homemade" advertising.

Supervisory Museum Curator Michelle Ortwein reviewed several preservation projects that had taken place over the past few years, from conservation of individual artifacts at Glenmont to landscape rehabilitation and building repairs.



The Raya Brass Band records on a wax cylinder as curator Jerry Fabris fine tunes the phonograph. At the symposium, Jerry discussed the inventors who preceded Edison in the quest to record sound.



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

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



Join us for
Holidays at Glenmont
Friday—Sunday through January 6
Additional dates:
Wednesday—Thursday
December 26 and 27

EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA

Volunteers-In-Parks Coordinator
Thomas Edison National Historical Park

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Service"

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Edison wears a festive, hand-drawn lab coat and garland for the park Holiday party after work on December 12.

All of us at Thomas Edison NHP hope you have a happy and safe holiday season.