

THE EDISONIAN

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Welcome to the first issue of *The Edisonian*. We developed this newsletter in response to an ever-increasing variety of people who rely upon the Edison Papers to trace the path of past innovation and to find inspiration for future creativity.

One of the most ingenious figures of all time, Edison has much to teach us. Edison worked in emerging markets, global and high-tech, that placed increasing emphasis on marketing, financial services, intellectual property, and communications strategies. His signature role in electric light and power, telecommunications, sound recording, motion pictures, and other technologies make Edison's career a particularly good resource for understanding the emergence of new technologies and their impact on modern life.

Engineers see Edison's notebooks as prototypes of their design journals. Learning specialists plumb the documentary evidence of Edison's thinking to discover cognitive patterns of lasting value. Entrepreneurs look to Edison as a model of perseverance. And management consultants use Edison's example to understand teamwork, creativity, and problem-solving methods.

In this and future issues, we seek to share the excitement of Edison's life and work, to broaden the impact of his legacy, and to reach new audiences.

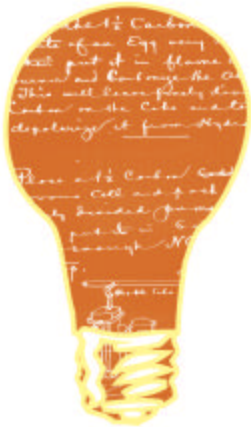
Paul Israel, Director and Editor

INSPIRING MINDS

Thomas Alva Edison and young learners have a special relationship. Edison's youthful enthusiasm for reading, experimentation, and entrepreneurship are as inspiring as his diverse technological interests and his love of adventure. Equally impressive is his ability to overcome personal challenges, like his loss of hearing, which began deteriorating by the time Edison was twelve years old and, later in life, grew worse.

With support from the GE Foundation, the IEEE Foundation, and the Martinson Family Foundation, Rutgers University is developing *Edison Across the Curriculum*, which will provide a new generation of Edison-inspired lessons for pre-college math, science, and technology education. Middle-school students will have fresh opportunities to approach any academic problem by asking themselves how Edison would have addressed it. Edison consistently got excited about his challenge, learned the key concepts surrounding it, tested his ideas with the best technology available, learned from his mistakes, and went beyond conventional standards. We know that such behavior is at the heart of successful learning.

Edison Across the Curriculum draws on the resources of three research units at Rutgers University: The Thomas A. Edison Papers, the Math and Science Learning Center (MSLC), and the Center for Mathematics, Science and Computer Education (CMSCE). Beginning in April, professional development workshops for teachers and classroom lessons for students will be offered as videoconferences through CMSCE. Hands-on exhibits developed by MSLC will be shown at the New Jersey State Museums' Super Science Weekend in May.



Edison Age 14



DATELINE 22 OCTOBER 2004

On October 22, millions of *Today Show* viewers heard anchor Ann Curry and author Harold Evans chat about a landmark occasion, the 125th anniversary of Edison's first successful experiment with the incandescent light bulb.



Later that day, Evans joined Edisonian enthusiasts at Rutgers in a more intimate celebration and discussion. The profound impact of Edison is featured significantly in Evans's latest book, *They Made America*, which inspired the recent PBS series.

"Edison married the art of invention with the business of innovation," said Evans, who was keen to point out that the magical moment in October 1879 was won after many trials – far more failures than successes. "Edison's transcendent innovation," Evans emphasized, "was to understand that the light bulb he invented would be a mere novelty unless he could find a way to integrate it into an economical and safe electrical system."

R2D@MP

Research to Development at Menlo Park (R2D@MP) is available from The Johns Hopkins University Press. The fifth volume of the Papers of Thomas A. Edison covers Edison's invention and development of the first commercial incandescent electric light and power system. From January 1879 through March 1881, he turned his famed Menlo Park laboratory into the first true research and development facility.

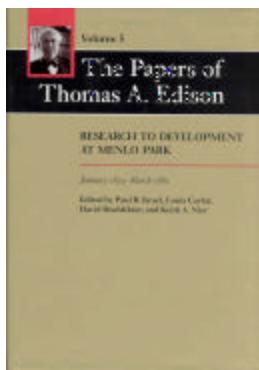
To receive your exclusive 20% discount call Hopkins Fulfillment Services at 1-800-537-5487. Mention the letter discount code: UUA.

Edison's activities resemble what startup technology companies do today. Edison courted investment capital and sought out positive publicity.

- Chris Newmarker, AP News

I shudder to think what might've happened to this historical treasure trove had those involved in the Edison Papers Project not cared enough to undertake their version of Mission Impossible. To them, and to the legislators, corporations, and individual who fund them, I say "Thank You" not only for keeping history alive, but for making it available to the masses.

- Bruce Bennett, NEC Digest



VERY LARGE WINDMILLS

EDITED BY BLAINE MCCORMICK



I conceived the idea
of building a very light railroad
of narrow gauge,
and had got all the data as to the winds on the plains
and found that it would be possible
with very large windmills
to supply enough power
to drive these wheat trains.

Visiting editor Dr. Blaine McCormick of Baylor University is discovering and publishing found poems in Edison's prose. "Very Large Windmills" originated in legal testimony given by Edison in conjunction with electric railways. *The Papers of Thomas A. Edison* Volume 5:233.

WEBSITE NEWS

The Edison Papers is pleased to announce its newly designed website. Some of the updates include essays on Edison's inventions, additional illustrations, and an improved display of our scholarly editions. Accessible free of charge, the site serves a global community of teachers, students and researchers. A leading "hit" for Edison queries on Internet search engines, it receives over 40,000 visits per month from over 100 different countries during the school year. The website also hosts our pioneering digital publication of documents from Edison's life and work through 1898.

JOIN US!!

March 16 – Middlesex County Business Week Expo

Hilton Hotel, East Brunswick 3 to 7 p.m. For more info, visit www.mcrc.org

May 1 - Sparta Mountain Day

Come see a presentation on Edison's ore milling days by Paul Israel at 10 and 11 a.m. Events will be held at the Edison Monument, Edison Road, Sparta. For more information contact: mmorrison@nac.net

May 20 & 21 - Super Science Weekend

Super Science Weekend, an annual event held by the NJ State Museum in Trenton, is a family friendly, hands-on science expo.

BOTS: ROBOTS AND TECHNOLOGY STANDARDS

This pilot videoconference from *Edison Across The Curriculum* pairs the Edisonian legacy with today's curriculum standards through an integrated set of science, math, and technology challenges. The teacher program consists of 2 two-hour sessions of professional development; students participate in the third session. The scheduled workshops below are being offered exclusively to New Jersey's teachers and schools.

Registration Fee: \$125 per teacher for series. Register for either series A, B or C For additional information visit <http://cmsce.rutgers.edu>

SERIES A:

Teacher Session: April 4, April 12, 2005 (3-5 p.m.) Student Session: April 27, 2005

SERIES B:

Teacher Session: May 17, May 24, 2005 (3-5 p.m.) Student Session: May 31, 2005

SERIES C:

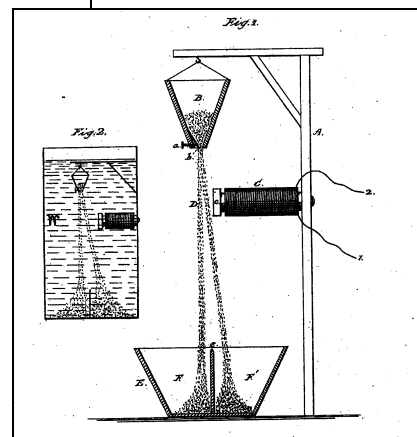
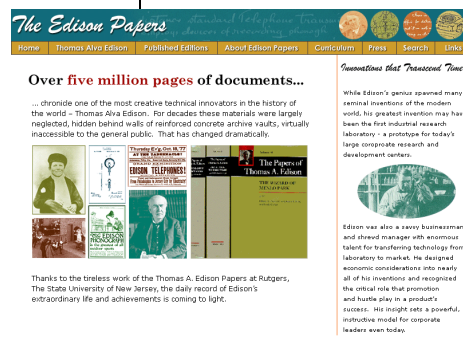
Teacher Session: June 2, June 7, 2005 (3-5 p.m.) Student Session: June 14, 2005

SUPPORT THE EDISON PAPERS

The Thomas A. Edison Papers depends on the ongoing support of many contributors, including private and public foundations, corporations and individuals. Your tax-deductible gift will help ensure all sectors of society have access to and benefit from the work of the Edison Papers. Contributions can be sent to Rutgers Foundation, Gift for the Thomas A. Edison Papers, Winants Hall, New Brunswick, NJ 08901

To make a secure online donation, please visit: <https://secure.entango.com/donate/GSuEdXhgRpV>

(Be sure to select the Thomas A. Edison Papers under Institute, Center...)



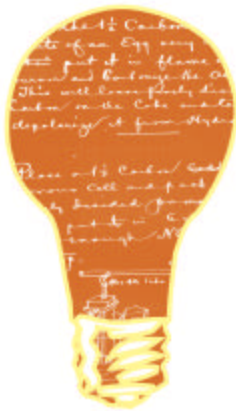
Edison's patented magnetic ore separator (1880)



News from The Thomas A. Edison Papers

Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
44 Road 3
Piscataway, NJ 08850
Phone: 732/445-8511
Fax: 732/445-8512
Email: taep@rci.rutgers.edu

Visit us online!!
[Http://edison.rutgers.edu](http://edison.rutgers.edu)



DID YOU KNOW...

With 1,093 successful U.S. patent applications, Edison secured a unique place in the history of intellectual property. In order to commercialize his phonograph and motion picture inventions, Edison fought to protect his recordings from piracy, trademarked his own signature, and pressed to extend copyright protection to motion pictures.

If you have professional interests in intellectual property and its historical dimensions, we want to hear from you. Please contact us at <http://edison.rutgers.edu/contact.htm> or 732/445-8511 and leave a message for Theresa Collins.

ABOUT THE EDISON PAPERS

The Thomas A. Edison Papers, a research center at Rutgers University, publishes and develops the documentary legacy of America's most prolific inventor and innovator. This is accomplished through books, articles, media appearances, Internet services, community outreach, and educational collaborations.