

The Historical Society Of Bloomfield

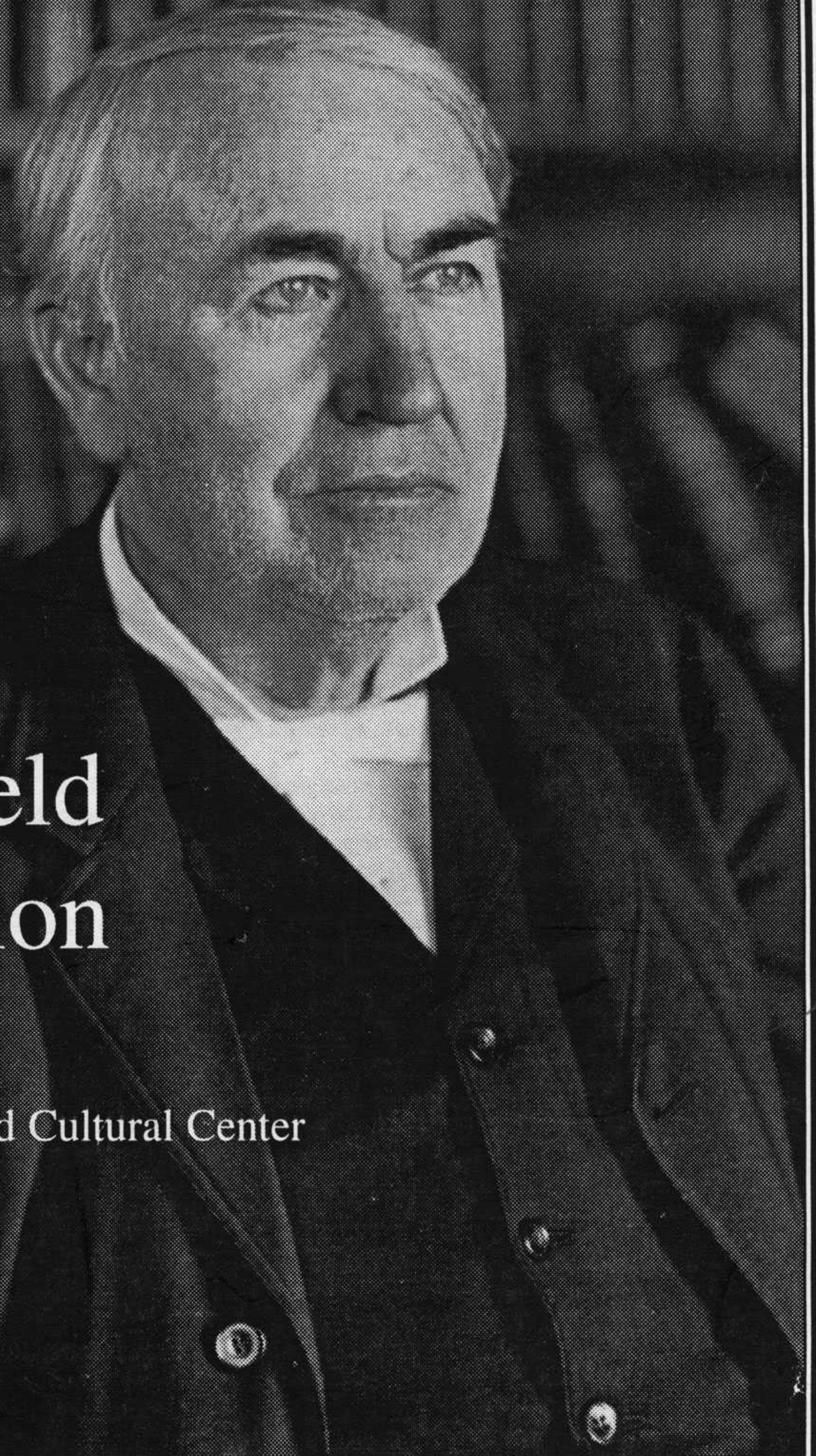
Newsletter

September 1996

The Historical
Society Of
Bloomfield
presents

Thomas Edison And The Bloomfield Connection

Thursday , Sept 12
At The
Oakeside Bloomfield Cultural Center



Historic News Around The Area

Historic Train Station May Become Senior Citizen Center

A historic train station that has stood vacant in Glen Ridge for the past five years may soon become a senior citizens center and mini-museum.

Although NJ Transit will not sell its Ridgewood Avenue station to Glen Ridge, officials are negotiating a long-term lease on the property.

"It's vacant property right smack in the middle of town, and nothing is being done with it, so we thought we should take it over and do something," said Glen Ridge Councilman Frank Schulte in a recent Star Ledger article.

The stone station was built in 1887 to replace a smaller structure, said Schulte, who has been trying for years to create a senior citizens center.

he said the developer, A.G. Darwin of Glen Ridge, deeded the station to the railroad in the 1920s, with the stipulation that all passenger trains would stop in town. Darwin thought train service would aid Glen Ridge's development, Schulte added.

The center would contain not only meeting rooms, but also an area for paintings of past mayors and other historic artifacts, Schulte said. he said doctors and other professionals would be invited to speak on health care and other issues affecting older people.

Lambert Castle Being Restored With help Of Supporters

Most of the estimated \$5 million needed for the restoration of the Lambert Castle in Paterson, once home to a Paterson silk mill baron, has been raised.

members of a non-profit group seeking to raise the remainder are asking interested donors to become part of the organization—The Lambert Castle Trust—for a \$20 membership.

"This has been an important part of the social history of Passaic County," Freeholder Norman Robertson said during a press tour of the castle to announce the trust's formation. "We all have a stake in supporting the preservation of this treasure."

Pointing to a three-story interior atrium that has been partially restored to reveal a skylight, he added, "It's going to be breathtaking when you walk in."

Some \$4.5 million has already been raised, including \$1.5 mil-

Did You Know...

In the 1940's, Bloomfield was known as the horseradish capital of the United States. Newspaper accounts from the period said that the farms, which no longer exist, produced about 5,000 bushels a year. The largest market was New York City during Passover, when horseradish is used in the Seder as the "bitter herb" to remind Jews of their slavery in Egypt. The farms were later replaced by development.

lion from the Passaic County freeholder board. \$1.1 million from the NJ Historic Trust, \$870,000 from a state Department of Transportation fund for historic preservation, and \$1 million in Green Acres funding for work on the park adjacent to the castle.

Built by local silk baron Catholina Lambert on a 15-acre parcel on Garret Mountain in 1892, the majestic brownstone and granite structure Lambert called Belle Vista provided him with a "beautiful view" of Paterson and its silk mills.

Organizers of the project want the restoration of the castle to provide future generations with the same sort of view into the past.

Canal Society Of New Jersey Proposes Historic Markers For Bloomfield.

In a recent letter to Mayor Norton, The Canal Society Of New Jersey expressed interest in continuing the program to install historic markers along the Morris Canal route through New Jersey.

The Society recently completed the installation of these markers at over 50 locations.

Bloomfield would be the first Essex County community to receive these markers. In addition to the remaining rights of way there exists in Bloomfield, signs would be erected behind Lindbergh Boulevard and just west of the Parkway at Watchung Avenue. Also John F. Kennedy Drive rises to Hoover Ave on one of the 23 famous inclined planes that carried boats up the higher hills between canal levels.

Arts And Humanities Month In October

In October, 1993, scholars, artists, and organizations representing history, the arts and the humanities across the United States reached out to President Clinton, governors from 45 states and more than 300 mayors to initiate the first National Arts & Humanities Month. People from all across the country held events and attracted media coverage that helped celebrate the excitement, color and depth that the arts, history and the humanities bring to our lives.

This October marks the fourth annual National Arts & Humanities Month. For the past three years, New Jersey cultural organizations, coordinated through the New Jersey Cultural Alliance, have been successful in their month-long celebration, offering hundreds of events during the month, and generating a great deal of positive publicity.

The New Jersey Cultural Alliance will be distributing 25,000 copies of the calendar of events for this year. Copies can be picked up at any local library, or by calling (609)-292-6062

The Historical Society Welcomes...

Mr. & Mrs. Dominick and Phyllis Ferraca

Zack Esler

Virginia Fetterly

Helen Flannery

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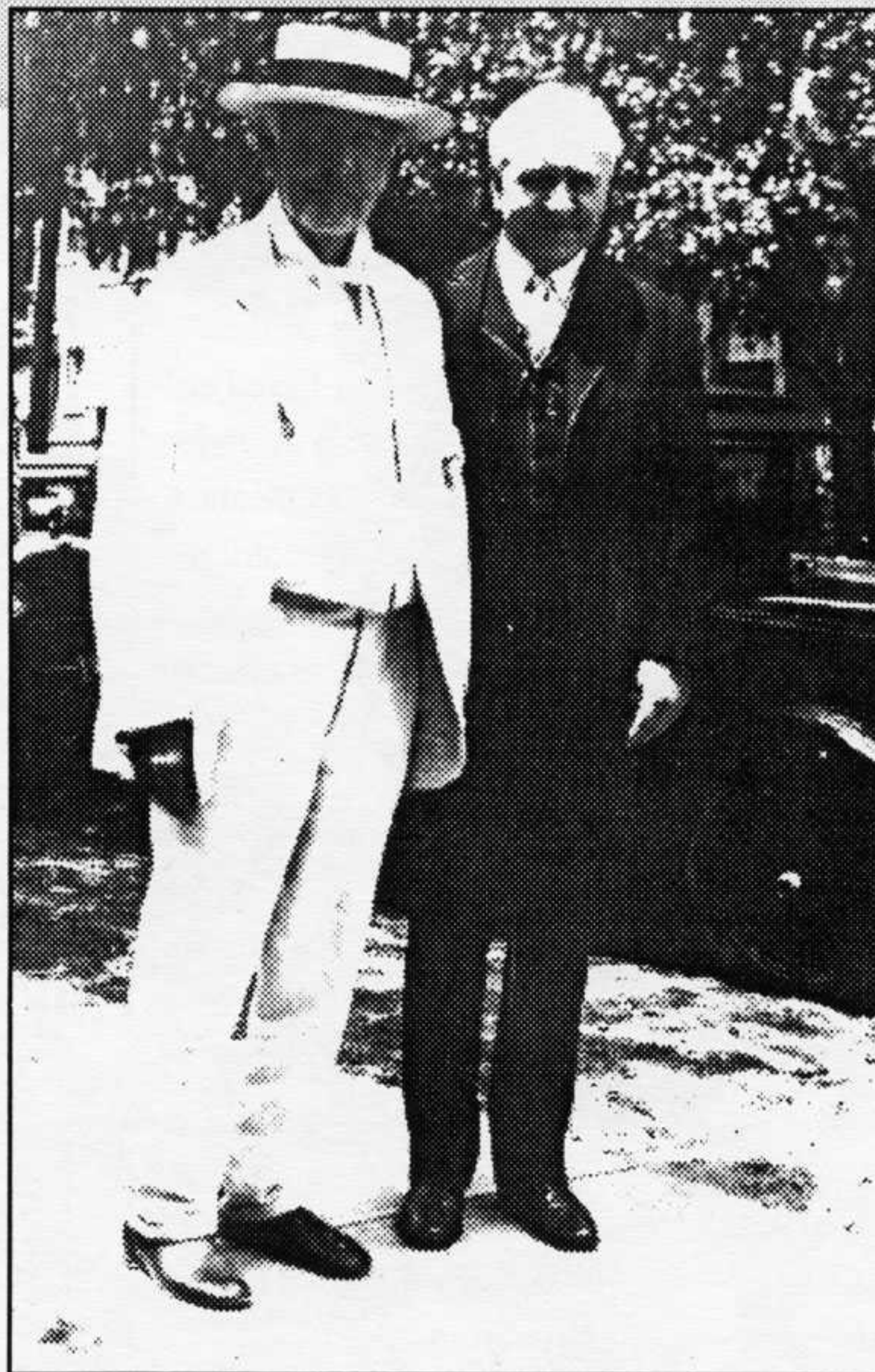
The Historical Society Of Bloomfield will present on Thursday, September 12 at The Oakeside Cultural Center "Thomas Edison And The Bloomfield Connection," a lecture and slide presentation by George Tselos, archivist at the Edison National Historic Site in West Orange.

In his lifetime, Thomas Edison was awarded 1,093 patents. His first was in 1869 for his electric vote recorder, when he was 22. He was still experimenting with rubber from goldenrod when he died at 84.

The inventions ranged from subtle refinements of existing technology to major new concepts, such as the phonograph, which profoundly altered our culture. Though not a theoretical scientist, as he was the first to admit—even proudly—Edison contributed more to technological progress in America than any other person, and in some area added significantly to the store of purely scientific knowledge. He helped lead America from the age of steam into the age of electricity.

Edison had factories and warehouses in Bloomfield. Mr. Tselos will talk about about Edison, the man, and also his ties to Bloomfield and the surrounding towns.

This will be the first program of the Historical Society in conjunction with the Oakeside Bloomfield Cultural Center which is located at 240 Belleville Ave., Bloomfield. The meeting is free and will begin at 8p.m. Please come and bring a friend.



Thomas Edison (left) chats with Rev. Frederick Willey in Bloomfield.

The New Jersey Historical Society Wants Your Poodle Skirt

The New Jersey Historical Society is asking for donations of your childhood. It could be your old lunchbox, high school photos or anything related to being a teenager in New Jersey.

"Teenage New Jersey: From Frank Sinatra To Bruce Springsteen," is an expansive show that will celebrate the society's new digs when it opens in June of 1997.

Whether you saved poodle skirts or bellbottoms, bobby socks or platform shoes, dance cards or disco jackets, the historical society wants them. They need this kind of everyday stuff in order to explore New Jersey's Teen life from the '40s to the mid-'70s.

"Part of the problem is conveying to people that we think the old stuff is important," says curator Ellen Snyder in the *Star Ledger*. "We get the response "You wouldn't want this or that."

But they do. This exhibit is a broad-based collecting project, arguably the largest ever undertaken by the historical society, that is meant to build on its collection of 20th Century holdings.

Its teen theme is meant to catch attention, since many people have memories—and items that illustrate those memories—from their high school years.

On the society's wish list are: items pertaining to school, including yearbooks, class rings, sports uniforms, report cards and textbooks; leisure-time items like beach badges, amusement park souvenirs, and car-related memorabilia. They also seek clothing, music and church items as well as things representing the politics of the time—including buttons, letters from World War II GIs, anti-Vietnam bumper stickers, POW bracelets or campaign materials.

If you have any items you think may interest the historical society, please call (201) 483-1988.

We regret the passing of two members of the Historical Society, Miss Gladys Moffat and Maryann H. Dorn.

Gladys Moffat passed away on May 28. She was 96 years old and a member of the society since 1966 and also a charter member of the organization.

Maryann Dorn passed away July 27 at her home in Irvine CA. She was a lifetime member of the Historical Society and received the Outstanding Citizens Award Of The Year in 1970 from the Miles A. Suarez Post 711, for her many civic activities throughout her 40 years in Bloomfield.

While living in California, Maryann was a volunteer at Irvine Medical Center and formed the center's Galeria, which raised thousands of dollars for student scholarships.

* * *

A room in the Bloomfield Public Library was dedicated to Dorothy Johnson for her 40 years of service on August 28. A plaque was placed on the new Dorothy E. Johnson Reference Room.

* * *

Our curator, Lucy Sant'Ambrogio was recently contacted by the State Of New Jersey inquiring about military markers and memorials in the town of Bloomfield.

Thomas A Edison
Incorporated



Are you a former employee of Thomas A. Edison, Incorporated, the McGraw-Edison Company, or at Thomas Edison's home Glenmont?

Do you know any living former Edison employees?

Edison National Historic Site of West Orange, New Jersey is putting together a list of former Edison employees so that they can be involved in some of our upcoming special events and an oral history project.

We need your help.

Please send a postcard with the former employee's name and address to:

**Former Edison Employees List
c/o Kristin Herron
Edison National Historic Site
Main Street and Lakeside Avenue
West Orange, NJ 07052
or call: (201) 736-0550, extension 89**

**McGRAW
EDISON**

**Don't Forget To Visit The
Historical Society Museum
At Bloomfield's Harvestfest
On Sept 21**