



U.S. Naval Research Laboratory

Thomas Edison Bust

Inventor who Proposed the Government Establish “a great research laboratory”



Thomas Edison Bust

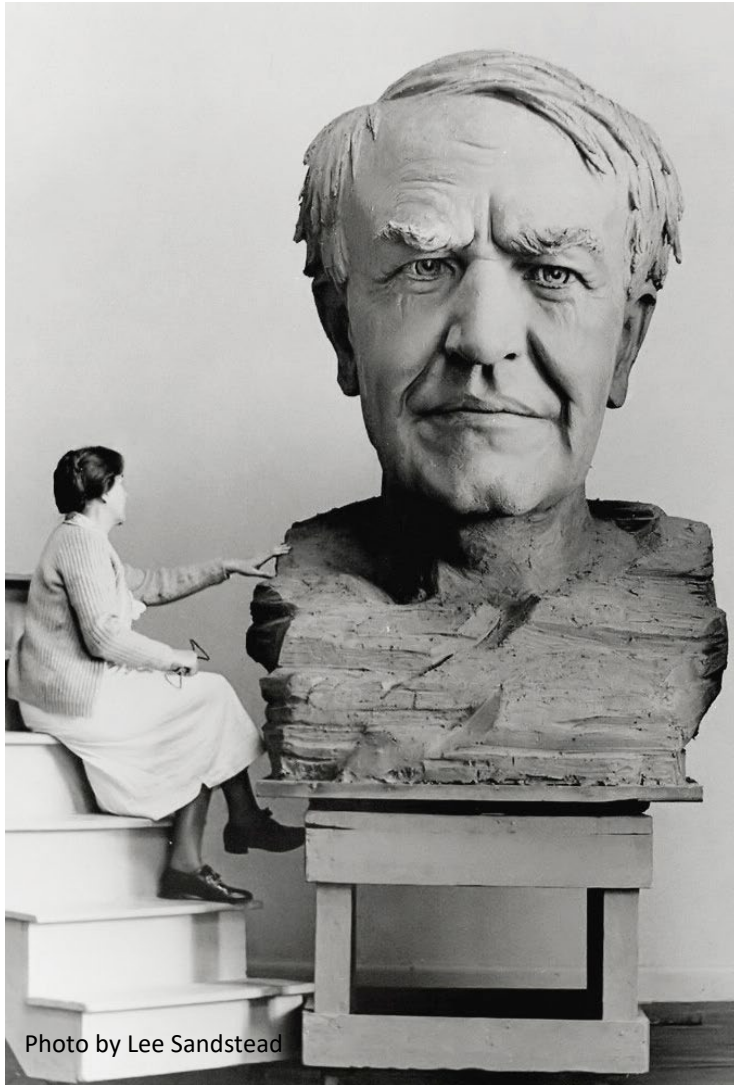


Photo by Lee Sandstead

The bust of Thomas Edison is a little-known memorial located at the US Naval Research Laboratory (NRL) in SW on the east side of the Anacostia River. Edison was a scientist who invented and manufactured many devices that influenced life around the world, including the phonograph, motion picture camera, and advanced telegraph equipment. The bust is the only formal commemorative work included in the National Capital Planning Commission's inventory of memorials in the District that is east of the Anacostia River. It is within a gated compound, barely visible from the adjacent public street, and not publicly accessible.

The bust sits atop a stone base in the Central Mall of the Naval Laboratory campus and recognizes Edison's role in founding the research facility, which began operations in 1923, seven years after the inventor suggested that the Government establish "a great research laboratory." The commemorative work was donated to the federal government by the Thomas Alva Edison Foundation and is owned by the Department of Defense. Since 1953, visitors to the lab have been greeted by the large arch at NRL's front gate, which was sculpted by Evelyn Beatrice Longman (who also did work on the Lincoln Memorial).

The bust was dedicated in 1952.