When Will Keith (W.K.) Kellogg purchased this land on the highest point overlooking Gull Lake in the 1920s, he envisioned building a summer family retreat surrounded by groomed lawns, formal gardens, and large trees. W.K’s success with the Kellogg Company, his cereal company in nearby Battle Creek, allowed him to create the estate grounds of his dreams. His dream landscape was composed of many trees and plants not typically found in Michigan and large, mature native trees, including an orchard of fruit-bearing trees.

Today, the W.K. Kellogg Manor House and Estate is part of the W.K. Kellogg Biological Station (KBS), Michigan State University’s largest off-campus research facility. The grounds provide a quiet place for study and reflection and an outdoor classroom for students and staff. Visitors are welcome to explore the grounds and learn about ways to manage lakeside property. Thanks to the dedication of the KBS Grounds Department, the Rose and Thistle Garden Club and volunteers, the landscapes are maintained as they were planned by W.K. and managed with the environment in mind. Careful monitoring and use of mechanical and biological inputs minimizes the use of pesticides and fertilizers.

As you explore the grounds, keep an eye out for six Champion Trees of Michigan. These trees are the largest of their species within Michigan based on height, crown spread and trunk circumference. All six trees are original to the estate.

Informational plaques on many of the trees and within the gardens will help you learn more about these plants. The formal gardens include over 100 species of perennials. Be sure to visit the gardens by the Manor House and the Pergola by the lakeside. Also along the lakefront is the Shoreline Management Demonstration Area where you can see four alternative shoreline landscapes that are designed to reduce erosion, provide wildlife habitat and aesthetic beauty.

In 2012, an endowment for the W.K. Kellogg Manor House and Estate was created to maintain the Estate and preserve its rich history for future generations. Please contact giving@kbs.msu.edu for more information on how your gift can help support this property.