

• Preston Park Places of Interest •

Welcome to Preston Park an 88-acre English garden donated to Butler Township by Dr. Frank and Mrs. Jane Preston. Dr. Preston was the founder of Preston Laboratories, a forerunner of AGR Industries. Here, Dr. Preston, a glass scientist, ornithologist, and ecologist created an English garden – designed as a place to live, work and enjoy nature. Enjoy your visit. (Refer to the Preston Park Trail Map for locations.)

Site A The Flagpole and Information Board

The flagpole was a gift from Woodmen of the World in 2012. Butler Area Vo-Tech students built the Information Board in 2010.

Site B Machine Shop and Pump House

The pump house supplies water to all buildings. A tunnel connects both buildings.

Site C The Compass Rose

The plaques here indicate the distance and location of faraway places. Dr. Preston called this his “geography lesson.” Eagle Scouts refurbished it in 2010 and 2011.

Site D The Residence / Laboratory

Constructed of concrete blocks in 1937 and later refaced with brick. The second story has a three-room apartment built for a resident caretaker. In 1947, the Prestons moved into the apartment for the remainder of their lives.

Site E The Lily Pond

The lily pond was built as a water garden for Mrs. Preston. Both goldfish and water lilies are found in the pond. It was refurbished as an Eagle Scout project in 2011.

Site F Jane’s Cabin

Called “The Hacienda” by the Prestons, they spent their summer evenings here because their house had no air conditioning. A number of the trees here are unique to Pennsylvania.

Site G The Pond and Prairie Grass

The pump house on the shore supplied water to several buildings. The canopy structure to the right of the pond was built for bird nesting. It covers the trestle of the old Harmony Shortline railroad that ran through the property. The prairie grass is unique to the area. Preston Park is one of only two locations in Pennsylvania with prairie grass.

Site H The Cathedrals

Dr. Preston replicated an idea found in England. This mini grove of trees would provide a shady spot for serfs working in the king’s fields.

Site I The Lilac Grove

Here is a display of several different varieties of lilacs.

Site J The Long Bridge

Built and designed by Dr. Preston and reconstructed by UAW 3303 in 2011.

Site K The Skinny Bridge

Built and designed by Dr. Preston and reconstructed by UAW 3303 and as an Eagle Scout project in 2011.

Site L The Three-Car Garage and Two-Story Building

Approximately 50 to 75 employees worked here at the Preston Laboratories offices.

Site M The Oval Arboretum

Dr. Preston planted 40 different species of evergreens in this large oval. This may be the most complete assembly of diverse evergreens east of the Mississippi River.