

Ford House Pool & Lagoon Restoration: Fact Sheet

Overall pool and lagoon facts:

- Renowned landscape architect Jens Jensen and architect Albert Kahn began the pool and lagoon with the rest of the estate in 1926.
- It was created to feel like the woods of northern Michigan with native shrubs and trees, and vantage points offered stunning views of Lake St. Clair.
- Using historic records combined with modern engineering, Ford House staff and architects and engineers from Detroit-based Albert Kahn Associates have completed the restoration of the estate's swimming pool, lagoon, and surrounding landscape.
- This is one of the most extensive restoration projects to date on the 87-acre estate.
- Before the restoration, the landscape behind the pool had become overgrown and the pool required vital repairs.

Pool facts:

- 185,000-gallon capacity. Its deep end is 9 feet.
- 550 gallons per minute recirculation pump
- The modern pool features UV sterilization that neutralizes harmful bacteria and pathogens quickly.
- Originally, an electronic chlorinator was installed in October 1930 for \$1400
- The bronze pan creates an "infinity" pool illusion. The pan consists of 3 bronze pieces welded together. The pool includes two bronze ladders that have been restored.
- Chlorine was used by the family, and bromine is now used to preserve the historical features (the bronze metals especially) as it is less aggressive to the surrounding materials.
- In 1932, the Ford's added scum gutters and bronze spray fans to help keep the pool debris free
- Three lead garden figures/gargoyles were purchased August 1930 from Detroit Mantle and Tile Company, at a cost, of \$482. To give the figures an aged look, diluted muriatic acid was used to create a patinated surface.

Replica diving board facts:

- Ford House settled on recreating the 1936 diving board design by A.G. Spalding as part of the restoration effort; this was the fourth or fifth board they had owned.
- Ford House staff searched far and wide for someone to recreate the board and finally had success with a vendor from Belgium: Mikel Tube of Mikel Tube Wooden Diving Boards.
- It is 14 ft x 19 in, 3 inches thick, and made from 4 pieces of Douglas fir.
- The original board was custom designed in 1926 by Jens Jensen.
- Edsel Ford purchased the original board in 1928 for \$150.

Pool pavers:

- The design for the pool pavers was approved by Edsel Ford and Albert Kahn on August 22, 1928.
- Taylor Stone Company was the original vendor, using Scioto sandstone from Ohio.

Ford House facts:

Ford House was the Grosse Pointe Shores home of Edsel and Eleanor Ford and their four children. Since 1978, Ford House has welcomed hundreds of thousands of visitors to share in Eleanor Ford's vision of preserving the estate for future generations to enjoy. Ford House was named a National Historic Landmark in 2017.