

CLASS	HEADING	SOURCE	DATE
HS i	Architecture A - 2	Southern Daily Echo	30/1/2009
DESCRIPTION	NOTES		
lake cottage			

ONCE it was a delightfully quiet corner of Southampton where boats could be taken out on the water, anglers idled away a few hours on the banks and artists regularly came to capture the charming scene.

These days the area around Shirley Pond is not quite so rural but it is still a popular place for local people to take a stroll and for youngsters to feed the ducks. Earlier this month, *Hampshire Heritage* took a nostalgic look back to the time when Shirley was considered to be out in the country, with farms, tree-lined lanes and strawberry fields.

One photograph that appeared with the story showed Lake Cottage, the last house to overlook the pond, which caused a number of *Hampshire Heritage* readers to contact the *Daily Echo* for more details.

In the early 1900s Shirley was still a village on the outskirts of Southampton and the Holly Brook stream trickled its way down through four ponds to join Tanner's Brook on the edge of Winchester Road. The area was so picturesque that in 1904 the photographer FGO Stuart set up his camera to capture the nostalgic Edwardian scene, which went on to become a popular postcard.

It was back in May 1963 that the demolition men moved in to raze Lake Cottage, the quaint, formerly thatched home that once had the lake lapping at its foundations.

There was a time when the area boasted a second,

bigger lake, which once provided water for the old Royal Mail laundry, but any traces were lost when it was filled in, with the ground used for the present cycle-speedway track. Two other ponds vanished after they silted up and disappeared.

Nearly 46 years ago, the *Daily Echo* described the scene as bulldozers moved in on Lake Cottage.

"One end of Lake Cottage gapes to the sky; at the

"Lake Cottage was once home to an eccentric character who would go to bed each evening in his coffin"

other end the tenants, Mr and Mrs Evans, move out very shortly. The quince tree is gay with faintly pink blossom; the clematis is riotously awry; the oaks are pale green in the sunshine, but the dead hand of neglect and decay lies over the Lakes, as this area is also known."

One of the four sisters who owned the site, Mrs G Budd, who lived in nearby Warren Avenue, said: "It was my home. My father, George Winter, and my mother, made it into a lovely spot with many years of happy occupation."



FAMILY HOME: Lake Cottage, a home for local families for a century, as it was being demolished in 1963.

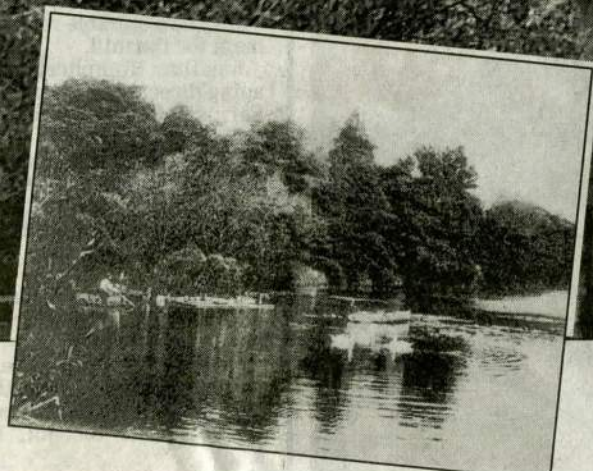
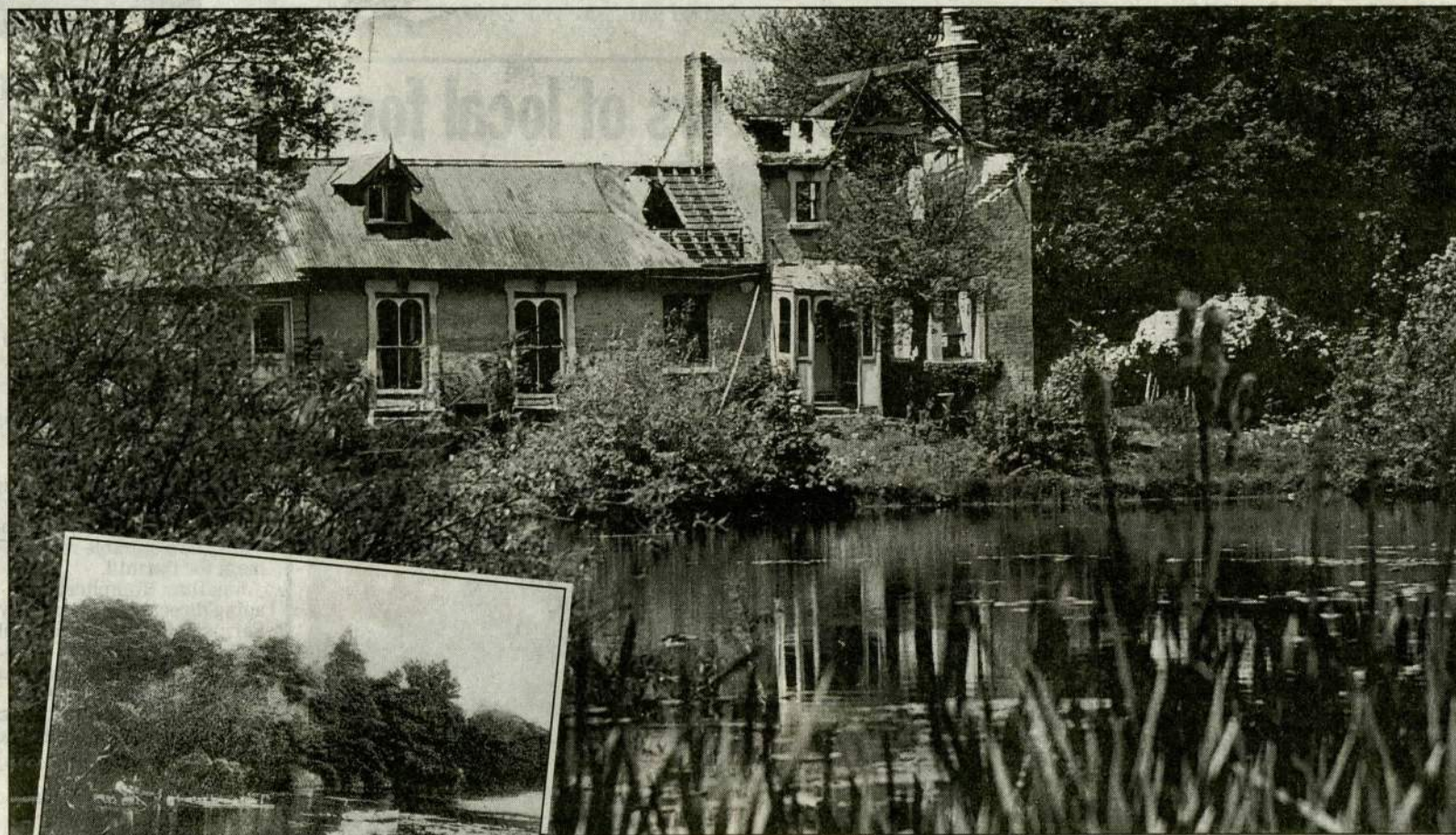
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Lake Cottage was once home to an eccentric character, William Brown Baker, who would go to bed each evening in his coffin. One night the box overturned and he was found by his housekeeper the following morning pinned beneath the coffin.

During the 1860s and 1870s, a very old, one-time resident of the area recalled that in the winter the lakes would often freeze over and a post stood in the middle of one of the ponds.

It was called "the grey mare" and with a swivel attachment provided an ice roundabout, much to the enjoyment of the skaters.





END OF AN ERA: A sad looking Lake Cottage at Southampton's Shirley Pond in 1963.

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LEFT: A 1904 postcard showing the rural surroundings of the pond.