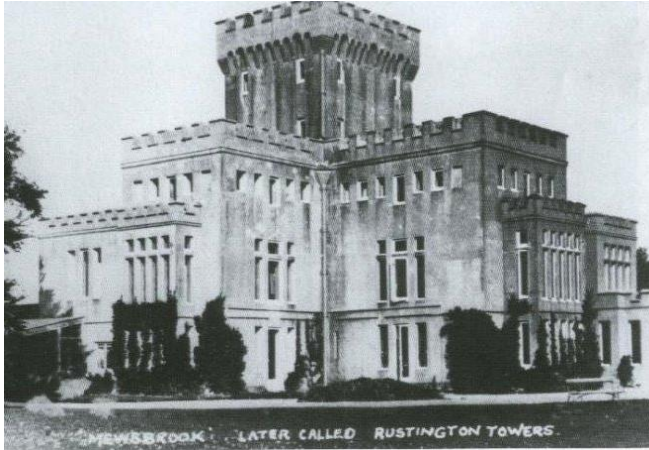


Mewsbrook Park

Situated between Littlehampton and Rustington on the site of Mewsbrook House. This was a grand house built in a gothic style by Mr Robert Bushby for Mr Lois Barnes.



It was set in seven and half acres of pleasure grounds. It had its own water tower which stood out around the surrounding area. In 1927 the house changes hands and became Rustington Towers hotel. However, in 1934 there was a great fire and most of the hotel was destroyed, leaving the smoking room intact! This was eventually knocked down.

Mewsbrook House.



A mechanical digger at work mid 1930s



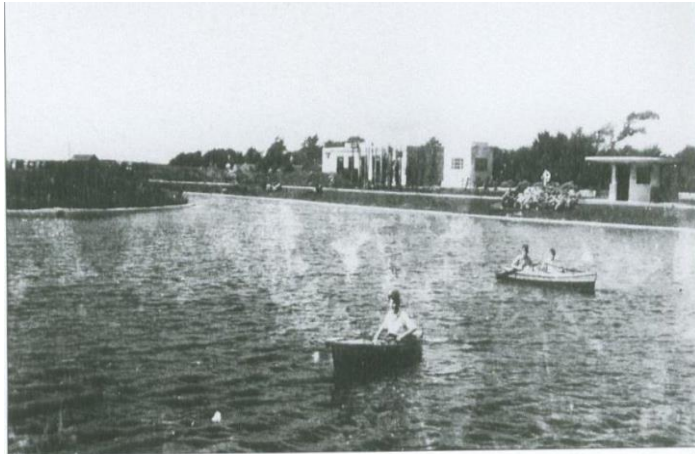
Art Deco shelter

in 1936 boundaries were changed and the area became part of Littlehampton.

Then as now massive house building was undertaken in the area and the park and lake were created as part of a flood relief scheme. The marshland was turned into the lake. The area was a mosquito infested swamp. At high tide, the sea level is higher than the lake and water can only be released from the lake at low tide. A lot of discussions took place before Littlehampton Urban District Council brought the land in 1933 by means of a compulsory purchase order. Work began in 1935 to create the park and lake. The lake is built over the original river Arun delta where the sea entered the river many hundreds of years ago.

The park is full of Art Deco shelters and bridges and then as now was used as a boating lake

In 1939 Mewsbrook Park was opened named after the previous house.



A landscape transformed: Mewsbrook, probably 1939. The Mewsbrook Pleasure Grounds opened to the public in 1939.

The Park in 1939

Two ramps were created, one by the boating kiosk and another on the left-hand side of the lake which is no longer there.

After the war the park was returned to the council. In 1948 the Miniature Railway was opened to attract tourists to the town. The lake became a boating lake and swimming was phased out.

In 1973 the lake was dredged out the silt that was deposited in mounds were used in 1992 to create Ruby Gardens.



Above the railway in 1948

Left the lake in 1948



Today the lake is not only a place for families to enjoy but a haven for wildlife



The Park today

Acknowledgements: Friends of Mewsbrook Park and David Ruffle