6 In 1894 a boathouse, designed by the Borough Surveyor, Joseph Hall, was built for £90 on the north bank of the lake extension and ten boats were purchased. In 1934 the shallow children’s boating area was added, with a low fence to divide it from the rest of the lake.

The boathouse is still a popular attraction today.

7 A pedestrian tunnel, often known as the underpass, was constructed under the Evesham Road near where Wyman’s Brook is culverted. In 1905 a turnstile at the west end was added. Until 1954 two pence was charged to enter the east side of Pittville Gardens on the other side of the road. Following an increase in traffic weight and volume on the road above, the underpass had to be strengthened, which meant narrowing the passageway. White tiles at the entrance outline the original dimensions of the underpass.

It is said that during World War II it was used as an air raid shelter for the pupils of Pate’s Grammar School for Girls, which was situated in nearby Albert Road. Each girl took her gas mask and a newspaper to sit on while waiting for the all-clear.

Before and since then, many a child has “whooped” their way through the underpass.

**The Bandstand**

The rectangular bandstand shown was built in 1900 at the same time as the round one in the East park. It was placed close to the island towards the western end ‘on the site of an existing temporary bandstand’. By 1958 it was little used and the decision was made to remove it.

The picture also shows Marle Hill House in the background.

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**Marle Hill Annexe**

The western section of the present Pittville Park was not part of Joseph Pitt’s original Pittville Estate. In the early 19th century the land was divided among several owners and under the 1806 Enclosure Act, the largest portion was awarded to Francis Welles who built Marle Hill House (Mansion) on the hill above the millpond on Wyman’s Brook.

Until 1935 this insignificant stream marked the border between Cheltenham and Prestbury. The area to the south and west was marshy common land, while the high ground to the north, known as Marle Hill, was lime-based clay.

Cheltenham Corporation bought or was presented with land on this west side of Evesham Road over a number of years. It became known as the Marle Hill Annexe and was formally opened as a public pleasure ground on 25 April 1894.
Robert Capper, a wealthy lawyer, magistrate and JP, was the next owner and the millpond became known as Capper’s Fish Pond. In 1892 the then owner Charles Crawford Noble sold 12 acres of the land to Cheltenham Corporation and land known as ‘The Holts’, owned by James Batten Winterbotham, was sold to the council on the same day. Part of ‘The Holts’ is now occupied by Dunalley Primary School.

The Council bought Marle Hill House in 1931 and demolished it in the 1960s. The houses of Albemarle Gate were built on the site in 1965-67.

1. The Agg Gardner Recreation Ground, south of the lake, is named after Sir James Tynte Agg-Gardner, a former Lord of the Manor of Cheltenham and the heir to John Gardner, a business partner of Joseph Pitt. Agg-Gardner inherited Gardner’s Brewery, was Mayor of Cheltenham and served as Conservative MP for Cheltenham for 39 years in four separate terms.

2. James Tynte Agg-Gardner presented the Recreation Ground to Cheltenham Corporation in 1888. A plaque commemorating this gift can be found on the lodge on the south edge of the Recreation Ground.

3. Evidence of a corn mill, demolished ca1940, is still visible near the top of the waterfall at the western end of the lake. It is shown on maps which predate Marle Hill House. A sketch made during its later years is reproduced here.

4. The Folly Brickworks quarried clay where the western section of the present golf course is now. The clay pits then became the Folly Lane town rubbish tip until declared full in 1969 and was grassed over to extend the golf course. Gas needed to be vented from the site for decades and contours appeared in the landscape as the tip subsided. In 1965 the Council acquired the site of the now Leisure Centre opened in 1971 by H.M. Queen Elizabeth, The Queen Mother. Having been severely damaged in the July 2007 floods, it was modernised and reopened in 2008.

5. The Community Bridge, funded by Cheltenham Borough Council and Severn Trent, joins the north and south banks of the Lower Lake and was opened in 2012. The bridge is decorated with metal sculptures based on drawings made by local schoolchildren and interpreted by metal artist Christopher Lisney. There has been a bridge at the site since 1810. In 1893 the lake was extended to the east and a new bridge was constructed in bamboo. The wooden “rustic bridge” was repaired and replaced several times and removed in 1974 when considered unsafe. In 1983 a bridge was built by the Junior Leaders Regiment Royal Engineers but this was destroyed by fire and removed in 2004.

6. Cheltenham Town Football Club was founded in 1887 and played at the Agg-Gardner Recreation Ground, which was formally opened in 1888 and described at the time as “prettily wooded with beech, elms and willow, with fine views of Marle Hill House and gardens”.

7. The Lodge