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## Mrs. Mews' Mews...

*A continuing tale of planning and building and disagreements with Mr. Mews*

### OBJECTIONS AND OBJECTORS

Having witnessed many many people making many many mistakes in planning and rebuilding, I knew I had to do it the right way both for myself and for Lurot Brand's reputation (no upsetting neighbours said Mr. Mews)

So, as soon as my architects drawings were ready, I wrote very polite and friendly letters to all those who might be affected by my plans, inviting comment and stressing that if there was anything at all that they did not like in the drawings, they could be changed.

There was a deathly silence. So I verbally invited neighbours to come and look at the drawings when I bumped into them in the street. No criticisms. But, the objection letters were not slow in arriving at the Planning Office.

Now, I have no objection to objections. Everyone has a right to object to whatever they like. However, some of the objections were laughable. One house which was some 40 feet away objected because of loss of light. I know that the planners reject many objections on the grounds that they are not valid.

It fascinates me that at present I have a spectacularly ugly flat roof with an equally ugly water tank housing for people to look down on. Not a pretty sight. How much prettier to have a beautifully planted terrace (I love plants). And, as far as overlooking from my terrace, there are dozens of methods of screening (trellis, opaque glass screens, tall bamboos etc) and guess what, I am not interested in looking into peoples windows (I can't speak for Mr. Mews here).

One of my neighbours has recently put decking and glass and steel railings around a small flat roof on the back addition of their house. When they sit out there, they look straight into my bedroom. I think what they have done (without permission) is charming and much prettier to look at so I have no intention of doing anything about it. I just wish people would live and let live. It's bad enough having to battle with the Council without having to overcome narrow minded objections (Mr. Mews would be more flowery and verbose about this last statement).

Now, about my planning application .....

I have been given permission to add the mansard roof extension (which is very exciting) but, and to quote the permission, "You must not use the roof for sitting out or for any other purpose unless we have given you our written approval beforehand". (So, when built, I will have a 16' x 8' flat roof area off the new room that I can do nothing with!) Now, this is very interesting – are they inviting me to ask for their permission in writing – I guess so. More in the next issue.



Current Interior



Previous Interior



Exterior 2006



Exterior 2002

CROSS KEYS CLOSE TODAY.



# Crime in the Mews

CROSS-KEY'S MEWS, MARY-LE-BONE 9TH SEPTEMBER 1772

On the 9th September 1772, (M.) RICHARD ROBERTS was indicted for stealing a pair of silver shoe-buckles, value 10s. a muslin neckcloth, value 6d. and a linen handkerchief, value 2s. the property of John Hobbs, on August 29th.

John Hobbs: "I am a coachman; I was driving a job for a man that is ill. I lost a pair of shoe-buckles, a neckcloth and an handkerchief out

of a stable in Cross-key's Mews at Mary-le-bone; the prisoner passed me whilst I was wiping the coach; I did not mistrust him; after I had done with the coach I went into the stable and missed the things mentioned in the indictment. I went immediately and gave notice to the pawnbrokers to stop them if they should be offered to pawn; about half an hour after I had given notice, a pawnbroker came and informed

me he had stopped my buckles. I searched the prisoner and found my neckcloth and handkerchief in his pocket."

The prisoner in his defence said he had the things of another boy.

He was found guilty!

Horror of horrors.....if only life were so simple today!



Lancaster Mews W2 Freehold £1,200,000

## SEE HOW THEY GROW...

We have been specialising in the sale of mews houses for so long now that obviously we have sold and resold many houses over the years. In this regular column, we will select a property each quarter to show how they grew in value:

Queens Gate Mews SW7  
(the same house sold as follows)

September 1979	£108,500
November 1981	£127,500
August 1985	£225,000
June 1987	£295,000
January 1995	£385,000
July 2005	£1,060,000

## KEEP IN TOUCH

The properties in Mews News are a tiny taster of what we have on offer. Keeping in touch with the properties we have for sale and rental is easy. If you have internet access *most* of our properties can be found on our website:

[www.lurotbrand.co.uk](http://www.lurotbrand.co.uk)

The site is updated daily.

Our printed Mews List is updated regularly and is supplemented by our Mews Update - both can be posted to you on request and contain details of *all* our properties. The mews list is also downloadable from our website and we can email the Mews Update and our full colour details in .pdf (Acrobat) format. Of course, if you prefer, just call us.

## The State of THE MEWS SALES MARKET

As ever, the basic rules of supply and demand will dictate the behaviour of the housing market. The supply is restricted because there is relatively little new house building in Central London and, of course, there are even fewer new Mews houses. As we reported in September there are relatively few Mews properties coming on to the market, yet demand continues unabated. In fact, the number of properties coming on to the market has been reducing year on year for some time.

The availability of money on the one hand and the shortage of suitable property is ensuring quick sales, often negotiated with buyers in competition and agreed prices above the asking price. The supply of money is also key in this. HBOS is reported as offering mortgages of up to 125% of the value of a property at the entry level and The Abbey is now reported as being willing to lend up to 5 times joint income, and a third of lenders will grant mortgages of 40 years or more. (Tesco's allows up to 52 years to pay off its home loans!). And then of course there are those City bonuses.

(Actually we don't think they fuel the market very much, though they must have some effect). While the lower part of the market does not directly affect us, the ripple effect is being felt throughout the market.

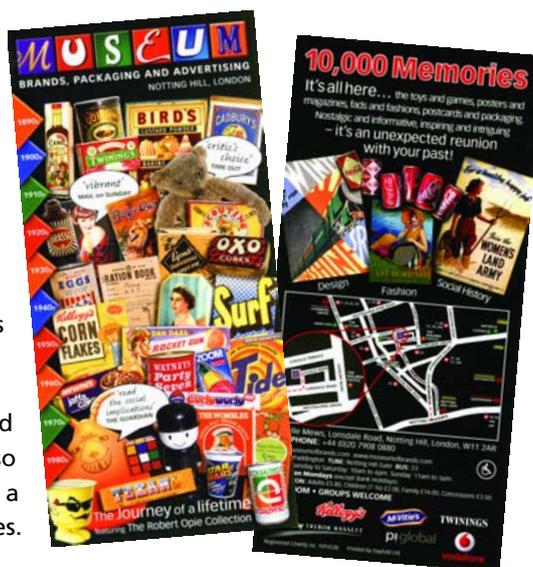
So, with more money fuelling demand and the same or fewer properties the prices must go up - despite external interference. The Bank of England (which has the job of controlling inflation) thinks that putting up interest rates will act as a disincentive, and it has certainly had an adverse effect on High Street spending, but it seems to have had little effect on the property market in London. It is reported in the press that the UK market is now split in two :- London and the rest. In the third quarter of the year London House prices rose at an annualised rate of 11 per cent while the rest of the country has stagnated (actually the market in Wales is reported to have risen at an annualised rate of 4.5% while prices have fallen in the North East and in the Midlands). Meanwhile, in our corner of the market prices continue their upward trend. So should you sell now, or hang on? When asked how he had become so rich, the first Lord Rothschild is attributed with saying "by always selling too soon"

## Museum in a Mews

There was a time when I was tempted to buy an "original" mews house in Queensberry Mews West, South Kensington, with the original stalls, herringbone floor etc, and turn it into a Museum of Mews - sadly it never happened and the house in question is now fully modernised to today's standards.

What Robert Opie has done at **The Museum of Brands, Packaging and Advertising** is on a far grander scale than anything I could have done and totally enthralling. It is located in Colville Mews, Notting Hill and covers an area of some 4,000 square feet.

I visited the museum recently and after spending only 20 minutes or so walking round, I found myself with a lump in my throat and tears in my eyes. As the museum leaflet says:



In the museum you will find the origins of our consumer society, represented through the everyday items that we all take for granted - from motor cars, telephones, music, radios, television, holidays, entertainment and all manner of branded groceries, sweets and household goods. Walking through the Museum's time tunnel from Victoriana right through to the 2000s, you will wallow in nostalgia. Young visitors will explore the story of their parents and grandparents and the older generation will remember tales from the past to enchant their children and grandchildren.

I can't recommend the museum enough - do go - I am certainly going back with my children. KL

you'll laugh, you'll cry,  
you'll remember when

The Museum of Brands, Packaging and advertising  
2 Colville Mews, London W2 2AR  
020 7908 0880

OPEN: Tuesday to Saturday 10am to 6pm,  
Sunday 11am to 4pm

**When is a garage  
a dining room**

**- OR -**

**When is a dining  
room a garage**

This enchanting dining room is actually a garage. When the garage doors are closed, there is beautiful panelling all around the room and most importantly, there is a step down from the hallway and the double doors into the area are fire-proof (mandatory for an integral garage). Move the dining table and chairs to the kitchen behind the garage and drive your car in. The lovely rug in the picture should probably also be removed or it might act as an oil drip tray!!!



Artists impression

Hesper Mews W2 Freehold £2,250,000

## DID YOU KNOW...

- Michael Grade lived in Clarendon Close W2
- Nicholas Witchall also lived in Clarendon Close W2
- John Cleese lived in Boyne Terrace Mews W11
- Dame Margot Fonteyn lived in Rutland Gardens Mews SW7
- George Michael owned a property in Elgin Mews North W9
- Dame Thora Hird lived in Leinster Mews W2
- Jason Donovan lived in Pembridge Mews W11
- Guy Ritchie lived in Queens Gate Mews SW7
- Lord and Lady Puttnam lived and worked in Queens Gate Place Mews SW7

### Collinge Hinges

Collinge Hinges, those beautiful old hinges used on mews house garage doors, is in liquidation. We consider this to be a disaster as they are the only hinges to have on garage doors of any mews house.



5 Kynance Place, SW7

## We are the specialists...

Nobody can claim to know the mews properties as well as we do. With more than 30 years of knowledge we are still the only specialists in the field. Please contact Lurot Brand if you are looking to sell, let or buy a mews property.

**Contact us on 020 7590 9955**



# Congestion Zone, Chelsea Tractors, Garages, Parking...

## Thank goodness for **MEWS HOUSES.**

### FACT:

Our Mayor has completely ignored the opinions of the majority of local residents within the Extended Congestion Zone and on the 19th February 2007 it starts!

### FACT:

Mews houses are becoming ever more popular because of the garage or parking they provide. One newspaper article recently suggested that having a garage added £80,000 to the value of a typical £400,000 (Greater London) house. We have always known this and when valuing any mews house with a garage, we have given the garage exactly the same value as the residential element.



### FACT:

If you live within the congestion zones and drive a high emission vehicle (4x4 or otherwise) our Mayor intends (end of 2008 / early 2009) to take away residents' concessions and charge these vehicles £25 per day or £7,000 per annum for these cars rather than £220 per annum for other cars.

### FACT:

Kensington and Chelsea are threatening to follow in the footsteps of Richmond by declaring war on 4x4s.

From November 2007 drivers of 4x4s may have to pay 130% more for their annual residents parking permits than residents with more eco-friendly cars who will in turn be charged less.



Sherlock Mews W1 Freehold £1,050,000

#### Sample of High Emission Cars (excluding 4x4's)

BMW	All 7 series Majority of 6 series Some of 5 series
Jaguar	All V6's
Lexus	The majority
Mercedes	E class several models Most CLS All S Class
Rolls Royce	Don't even think about it
Bentley	Even worse than RR

Be green – yes. Retain our freedom – yes.

Have a Mayor who totally ignores the opinions of Londoners – no.

*As mews house owners we would be very interested in your views and would be happy to publish any interesting letters in our next issue.*

## The State of THE LETTINGS MARKET

Demand continues to outstrip supply in all sectors of the market right across Central London. As a result, asking prices are rarely discounted and there are significant increases in rental values. Typically a property in South Kensington, which was let last year for £1,150 per week, was recently let within a few days of the old tenancy coming to an end at the full asking price of £1,350. Rentals at the full asking price are now the norm. Surprisingly, the increase in demand is being led by a sharp increase in the number of "company lets" particularly to tenants in the finance and energy industries. However, the rate of growth of rents has not matched the rate of growth of property capital values, and annual rents being achieved are now in the range of 3.5% to 4.5% of the value of the property. Modernised properties continue to be very popular and those having neutral colour schemes and an uncluttered feel are still more appealing to tenants.

## STRANGE MEWS SIGHTINGS



## Mews to Let



Conduit Passage, W2 £415 pw Furnished



Cranley Mews, SW7 £575 pw Unfurnished



Osten Mews, SW7 £750 pw Semi/furnished



Bryanston Mews East, W1 £795 pw Furnished (short let)



Craven Hill Mews, W2 £900 pw Un/furnished



Stanhope Mews East, SW7 £1500 pw Un/furnished

EXTRA COPIES OF MEWS NEWS ARE AVAILABLE ON REQUEST.

**LUROT BRAND**  
estate agents and  
mews specialists

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37-41 Sussex Place London W2 2TH  
020 7479 1999

Mews sales department  
5 Kynance Place London SW7 4QS  
020 7590 9955

Our clients properties now benefit from  
extensive web advertising on -  
**Primelocation, Propertyfinder,  
Rightmove, Fish4homes**



Member Firm



Founder Member



Member Firm



Member Firm



Sponsors of the  
London French Rugby  
Football Club

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