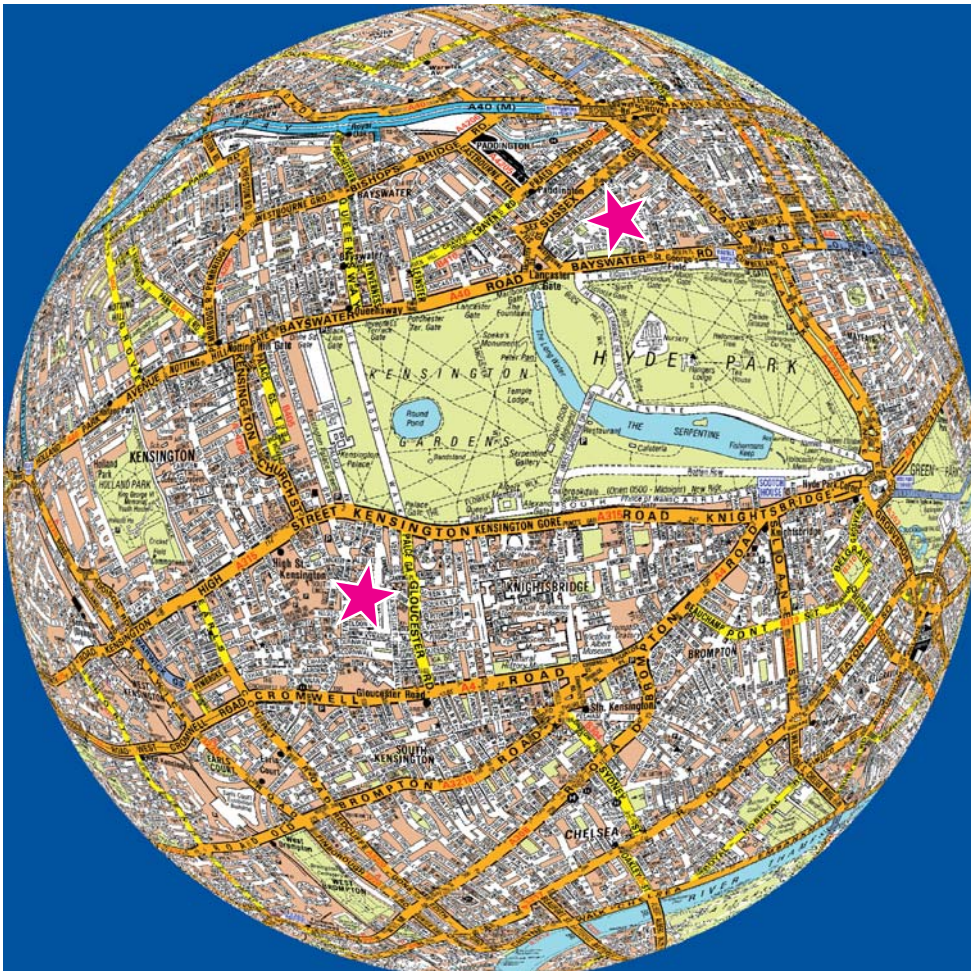


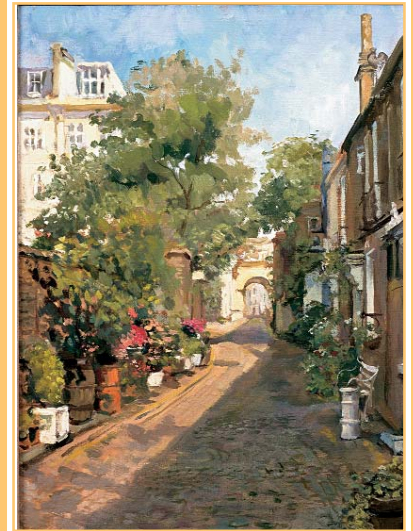
Mews News

No.1 Oct 2002

News of the mews from Lurot Brand - The London Mews Company.
The only estate agency specialising in the sale and rental of mews properties.



Artistry in the Mews



This painting of Kynance Place SW7 is one of several originals that hang in our offices - the work of Doris Lurot Betjeman, Antoine Lurot's mother and cousin of the late poet-laureate, John Betjeman.

Doris Betjeman was born in Paris in 1915. In 1931 she attended the Art School in Dusseldorf for one year before returning to Paris to study at the École Nationale des Beaux-Arts. She held her first one-man exhibition at the Galerie Charpentier, Paris in 1937; exhibited at the Salon des Artistes Français in the Grand Palais in 1939; and in the same year was awarded a Médaille d'Or by the Société Lorraine des Beaux-Arts.

In 1949 Doris Betjeman exhibited at the Salon for the second time and won the 'Prix de la Savoie' for a portrait she had executed. The prize enabled her to immediately become a Sociétaire of the Salon, where normally she would have had to have been 'hung' five times.

In 1960 she moved to London and has held many exhibitions in the Capital and provinces. She has undertaken many portrait commissions and her work is to be found in private collections in France, England, India, South Africa and the U.S.A..

Now in her 80's she is still actively painting.

At the Centre of the Mews Universe

We are publishing this newsletter on a quarterly basis to keep our offices to the north and south of Hyde Park in touch with everyone who owns, lives in or loves the mews of London.

But this publication goes well beyond being a simple advertisement for our company.

The mews of London contribute so much to the rich architectural and historical heritage of the Capital. They are sought-after as desirable, neighbourly streets in which to live and are admired by all who visit them. The mews have stories to tell and sights to see.

So, far beyond the fact that we shall be encouraging you to buy, sell or rent a mews house through our firm, we shall also be including a large measure of anything we think you might find entertaining, interesting, practical, whimsical or humorous.

We hope that you will enjoy reading Mews News.

MEWS TO BUY



Hyde Park Gardens Mews W2

This spacious house, in one of the best mews north of the Park, is on a corner and has windows on two sides - so there is a lot of natural light.

Reception room opens to dining room with open-plan kitchen. 3 good-sized double bedrooms each with an en-suite bath or shower room. Garage. See article on page 2.

Freehold £1.1 million

The first Earl of Craven displayed great courage (or extreme foolishness!) by staying in London during the Great Plague. Craven Hill Mews W2 is named after him.

Keep in Touch

Keeping in touch with the properties we have for sale and rental is easy.

If you have internet access all our properties can be found at www.lurotbrand.co.uk. The site is updated daily. We are also able to email the list, update and our full colour details in .pdf (Acrobat) format.

Our printed Mews List is updated regularly and is supplemented by our Mews Update - both can be posted to you on request.

We advertise widely. Each week there is an advertisement in the property pages of the Sunday Times. This is often the first advertisement for a new property on the market.

Monthly and periodically we have full colour advertising in the pages of: The London Magazine; London Agents; London Property News; Ici Londres; Belgravia; Marylebone Journal; The Portman.

Preparation Pays Off

Successful home selling is all about teamwork between you and your agent. In the first of two articles, Sarah Rosser, from our sales team, passes on some sound advice about how to build that teamwork and tempt a buyer to make a bid.

We live in a society increasingly preoccupied with appearance. Therefore it goes without saying that a beautifully presented house is more likely to fire the imagination of the potential purchaser. A well prepared and organised approach to selling your home will minimise delays and complications once the sale has been agreed.

We are always willing to advise a client on how to show the property in the best light and what should be done before marketing starts. A little effort and forethought can make all the difference to how much money you will make from the sale.

Where to start...

We suggest that all our clients appoint a solicitor from the outset, that is from the moment they place their property on the market. If you do not have a solicitor, we can recommend a number of efficient and effective firms with

whom we have worked in the past.

Once you have appointed your solicitor, you should ensure that they are holding all the relevant documents relating to your property. These should include:

- Your Title Deeds. These will either be in your possession or with your bank or building society if your property is mortgaged.
- A copy of your lease if applicable and any related licences. If the property is a flat you will need to have copies of the last three years service charge accounts.
- Details of running costs, insurance and Council Tax.
- A Land Registry Plan accompanied by a local authority search. Although the search is usually instigated by the purchaser's solicitors, we have found that having it done in advance can dramatically speed up a transaction.
- Details of any Planning Permission, particularly for roof terraces, change of use and other major works. Especially important with leaseholds is any Landlord's Consent for works carried out in the past.
- Signing-Off Letters from the District Surveyor if any work has been done recently. This is not the same as Planning Permission.

• Any other documents relating to the property, even old sales particulars.

You will also need to complete any questionnaire that your solicitor may send to you. This will ask for general information on the sale as well as those fixtures, fittings and appliances to be included or excluded from the sale price.

It's all in the presentation...

We understand that maintaining a very high standard of presentation over a period of time can be a trying experience. Unlike some rather fanciful TV programmes we do not advocate a complete redesign or redecoration, just an attention to detail and tidiness that can make all the difference in another person's eyes. Try some of these:

- The difference flowers make to a home is well known. Conversely, a wilting bunch dead of flowers in a vase of murky water is downbeat and depressing - and emits a most unpleasant smell.
- Many an article in magazines have been dedicated to the uplifting, holistic qualities of pleasant scents. Fresh coffee, vanilla and - believe it or not - fresh paint are all welcoming, positive smells that can do wonders to excite prospective buyers. More realistic than repainting your house each week and brewing fresh coffee before each viewing, the use of room sprays can make all the difference - but not something from the local supermarket!
- Obvious as it may sound, sellers' untidiness can quickly put paid to a successful viewing. An effort in this department will doubtless pay dividends as a well

Catch the Pigeon

Somewhere, on a building visible from Trafalgar Square sits a pigeon that has defied the efforts of Ken Livingstone to rid the square of its feathered vermin cousins (or as some think, delightful inhabitants).

We do not know where it is, only that it exists.

The bird is a life-size model of a pigeon and was included when one of the buildings in the Square was renovated.

If you know its exact location we would love to know too.



The word 'Mews' comes from the time when the royal hawks were 'mewed' or moulting in the Royal Mews at Charing Cross.

They became stables in the reign of Henry VIII.

Caption Competition

Hard at work at the riding stables in Bathurst Mews W2 the farrier plies his trade.

Send us a caption for this picture. A bottle of champagne to the winning entrant - which we will publish in the next issue.

Entries close December 25th 2002.

Address details on back page or email to: caption@lurotbrand.co.uk



550% Rise in Value

A fascinating insight into the history of the value of prime London homes is provided by a house we are currently offering for sale for the fifth time in 18 years.

Number 31 Hyde Park Gardens mews began life as a stable for one of the great stucco-fronted houses fronting the Bayswater Road in Hyde Park Gardens. In 1919 the Church Commissioners sold a lease of the mews house to a Mrs Shoppee for a term of seventy four and a quarter years at an annual rent of £185.

Owners came and went until in the Christmas 1960 issue of Homes & Gardens the mews house was featured as being modernised by Miss Joan Gilbert, a notable television personality of her day.

Lurot Brand first sold the house in 1984 - for £200,000.

When they sold it again in 1988 for £389,000 the end of the property boom was just round the corner and the economy was set to plunge into recession.

The crash reflected in the price when Lurot Brand sold the house for the third time, in 1992. At £375,000 the house was worth £14,000 less than it had been four years earlier.

In 1995, with the market in recovery, the price leapt up to £525,000 as the house was purchased through Lurot Brand for the fourth time.

Now in 2002 it is on the market again. This time the asking price is £1,100,000.

In 18 years the value of this prime mews house has increased by 550%.

The house is featured on the front cover.

From the Archives

"The magnetic paradox of (his) position was that this chairman and chief executive of Columbia Pictures is a north London lad whose diction still bears the flash accents and glottal stops of the White Hart Lane wit, and who has lived and worked in the same set of Knightsbridge mews houses since first he made big money out of his British home-made movies (That'll be the Day, Stardust) in the early Seventies."

Neil Lyndon on David (now Lord) Puttnam. The Times 1986.

Portobello Mews W11 derives its name from the 'Port Bello Farmhouse' that stood on the site and was itself named to celebrate the capture of Porto Bello from the Spanish in 1739.

MEWS TO BUY



Coleherne Mews SW10

An elegant, three storey house in a popular, quiet, cobbled mews, just to the west of Redcliffe Square.

Reception room, dining room, kitchen, 3 bedrooms, bathroom, shower room. Garage.

Freehold £775,000

MEWS TO RENT



Eaton Mews South SW1

Spacious family house in a private mews in the heart of Belgravia.

Double reception room with wood floor, fully-fitted kitchen, 4 bedrooms, bathroom, 2 shower rooms, 2 garage and private mews parking.

£1,700 per week
Unfurnished.

presented house goes a long way towards 'selling the dream' to prospective purchasers.

- Beds should always be made up, dirty linen hidden in a linen basket, all washing up done and put away, waste paper baskets emptied, etc. And take away the take-away.

- Clutter can create a very negative impression. Overflowing cupboards and shelves suggest that storage space is inadequate for one's needs. This in itself might be enough to put some people off. A ruthless clear out is advisable, if not disposing of things then perhaps investing in some storage units in which to put the 'clutter'. You'll have to clear up when you move anyway! If all else fails, rent some short term storage.

- Windows should be cleaned as often as possible - few things are less appealing than sun light streaming through dusty, streaked windows. The same applies to mirrors. De-limescaling sinks and showers and removing mildew from tile grouting is also a must.

- If the house is unoccupied, it is useful to pop in once a week and clear away the waterfall of junk mail and flyers that inevitably cascade through front doors. This is also an opportunity to cast a scrutinising eye over the property and perhaps to open all the windows and give it a blast of fresh air.

- One of the most common - and very often unjustified - complaints we hear, is that mews houses are dark. It is therefore imperative that all light bulbs are working. Phillips have a range of 'natural light' light bulbs in a range of hues that we highly recommend.

If possible, in the evening, lights should be left on and

curtains drawn, particularly during the dark winter months. We understand that hanging net curtains is often a security measure, but as thieves of natural light they are almost as bad as those stylish, wooden slatted blinds!

We do give our clients as much notice as possible of forthcoming viewings. However, even if you pop out when we arrive to show people around, observing some of the our suggestions creates the greater chance of a sale and makes for a much warmer, more welcoming feeling. It can be quite unsettling when, on arrival with a possible buyer we have to run around, switching off alarms, turning on lights and opening blinds. Please help us to preserve an air of calm efficiency!

- If a purchaser falls for the outside of a property, we are half way to selling it. Ideally exterior walls should look clean and fresh and the outside as pretty and inviting as possible. Window boxes and tubs, and smartly painted front doors with polished knobs and knockers all make an enormous difference. Outside lights should be switched on when necessary, particularly on dark winter afternoons.

- Jet-washing patio floors and applying a fresh coat of paint to outside walls is advisable. Well tended plants and flowers provide colour that will brighten up even the smallest of outside spaces. If necessary, hire some!

We cannot guarantee setting up an early sale but if you follow our advice we can guarantee the eventual sale will get off to a flying start.

Next issue: How to work with your agent - and how not to lose £10,000 on a sale.

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In 1860, houses in Holland Park Mews W11 are recorded as having sold for between £87 and £147. Today's prices are somewhat higher.

Go on - Fall in Love



Many of you in the mews will be familiar with our monthly postcards that have become something of a collector's item. For general houses and flats we have different series. One of the current batch caused a lot of favourable comment and we reprint it above for our mews lovers' enjoyment.

This is not a posed picture. Our photographer, John Pike, happened to be in Palace Gardens Terrace W8 one afternoon last spring and chanced upon this couple celebrating their wedding. It is a true snapshot and we think it conveys a wonderful sense of joy and happiness.

If anyone knows who the couple are we would be very pleased to hear from them.

Prince's Gate Mews 1944.

Rockets, a painting and £6 a week rent.

Sirs -

In the July edition of The London Magazine I noticed your advertisement for a mews flat in Prince's Gate Mews (SW7).

In 1942, as a member of the R.C.A.F. (*Royal Canadian Air Force*) I was posted overseas to London. Unlike the army and navy, the airforce didn't provide barracks and we were on our own to find accommodation. My first place was a lovely house on Lawrence Street, Chelsea.

Our unit occupied part of the third floor of Harrods so, when a vacancy came up, my room-mate and I moved to No 7, Prince's Gate Mews.

We were there for the V1 and V2 attacks and my photos show 'the morning after' of July 3rd and 4th 1944 and then two months later. My room-mate's wedding reception was held from there.

Many years later, the not-so-young bridegroom was visiting a business counterpart in Japan. He remarked on a painting by his hostess - surely it was Prince's Gate Mews, even allowing for some artistic licence! She wasn't anxious to sell, it was her favourite memento of their London stay, but, if she she did sell he would have first refusal.



Demolished by the blast. Prince's Gate Mews in ruins.

Nearly ten years later, prior to his retirement, he made a farewell trip to Japan and was presented with the painting. He was thrilled, his wife was overjoyed, and I am envious.

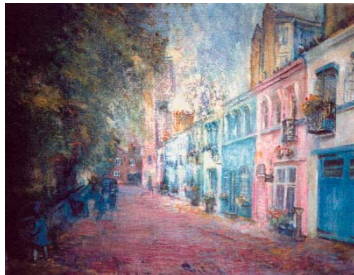
Our rent was £6.6s.0d. (£6.30p) weekly and could be broken if we were posted away. There didn't seem to be any compensation for the times we lived in the air-raid shelter which was a reinforced garage further down the mews.

I thought your office might be interested in some of the history of Prince's Gate Mews. Those were happy years, sad years, but I wouldn't have traded my three years overseas - and I was still 21 years old when I returned home!

Sincerely, Florence M. Dickson. Burlington, Ontario. November 12th 1996.



After the rockets fell, Prince's Gate Mews shattered by a flying bomb.



The painting of Prince's Gate Mews given to Mrs Dickson's wartime flat-mate.

Gardiner's Notebook

No it's not a misprint. Ian Gardiner, from our lettings team is a very keen gardener - and here are some of his tips for keeping your mews looking good in winter.

Hyde Park is already welcoming the beautiful reds, oranges and yellows of autumn as the trees and plants prepare for their winter break. Now is the time to plant spring bedding plants and bulbs,

Give priority to daffodils, crocuses, hyacinths, fritillarias, erythroniums and irises. Tulips can be planted later in the month and even in November. This minimises the risk of attack from fungal disease.

If gardening space is limited, then container and patio gardening might be for you. The containers and plant combinations are endless. Growing plants in containers is very different from growing plants in the ground. The soil type chosen for container growing must be well drained to prevent problems with excess moisture, poor aeration and root problems.

Sweet peas can be sown in pots now but should be kept in a sheltered position for the winter. Autumn raised plants will produce blooms earlier than those sown during spring. Autumn is an ideal time to plant new shrubs and perennials and relocate established conifers and evergreen shrubs if need be. Late flowering pot-grown chrysanthemums should now be brought under cover to continue developing and start blooming. Prune rambler roses and other flowering stems and tie in any new shoots to the support.

Finally, as the barbecue is packed away and the ice-cream truck music fades into the sunset, many of us will turn out attention to inside activities as cooler, shorter days make it harder to keep in touch with neighbours. Don't forget - Your Garden Needs You!

KYNANCE MEWS SW7 won the 2002 'Mews in Bloom' gardening competition organised by the Chelsea Gardens Guild and sponsored by Lurot Brand. Full details of the 2003 competition will be published in the next edition of Mews News.

We were delighted to receive Mrs Dickson's letter which is treasured in our archives and would be very pleased to receive any similar contributions that paint a picture of life in the mews in days gone by. Original material can be copied and returned.

Whilst we will of course take the greatest care of items we cannot accept any liability for loss of damage.

The Fastest Mews Mover...



1971 ITALIAN GRAND PRIX - MONZA
The fastest Grand Prix ever run, and the closest finish ever fought in history, with Peter Gethin taking the chequered flag on the Vanwall BRM F101 from Ronnie Peterson's March 711. Peterson's Lotus 72C was second and Gethin's BRM 373 was third.
The winners average top speed was 170.77 mph, and the winning margin 1/1000th of a second.
From an original painting by Michael Turner.
A limited edition of 500 signed and numbered prints.

It's 1971, the Italian Grand Prix at Monza, and (at the time this painting was executed) Peter Gethin has just won the race by the narrowest margin in Grand Prix history. Gethin, Ronnie Peterson, François Cevert and Mike Hailwood were separated across the line by just 1/500th of a second after racing at an average speed of 150.75 mph.

This print of the original painting by artist Michael Turner was given to Antoine Lurot with the inscription: "To Antoine - The Fastest Mews-Mover in the West, Peter Gethin."

On their bikes...



In the 1980's Antoine Lurot (left) became a well known sight as he travelled round the mews of London on a little Honda 'monkey-bike'.

Time passed. Lurot Brand grew larger and Antoine's son, Oliver grew up.

Nowadays Oliver (right) is a member of the mews house sale team and is to be seen (and heard) travelling the mews of London on his Harley-Davidson Sportster bike.

Following in Dad's tyre tracks came easily to Oliver who has grown up 'in the family firm'. When very young a friend asked what his father did for a living. "Oh," replied Oliver, confidently, "he sells For Sale boards!"



P.S. We are off to find out where the missing 'S' has gone from the name board over the arch.

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MEWS TO BUY

Prince's Gate Mews SW7



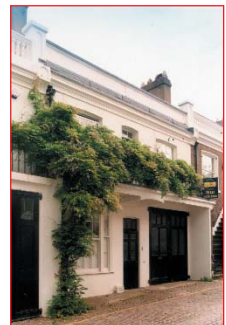
This is an absolutely stunning, newly renovated house with a level of quality and thoughtfulness of design, rarely seen.

Nearly 1,600 square feet of living space over three floors plus a 95 square feet roof terrace. Excellent fixtures and fittings including a very high spec multi-room hi fi and home cinema system.

Freehold £1.5 million

MEWS TO RENT

Holland Park Mews W11



A lovely house in a super mews close to Holland Park.

Double reception room, fully-fitted kitchen, 2 double bedrooms with en-suite bathrooms. Utility room, balcony. Garage.

£850 per week Unfurnished.

HOUSE TO BUY

Lombardy Place W2



Three storey house of just over 1,500 square feet, remodernised in 1997.

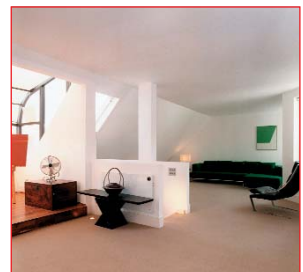
Reception room, dining room, fitted kitchen, 3 first floor bedrooms, bathroom. Large attic bedroom with bathroom and kitchenette.

Patio garden to the rear with street entrance.

Separate garage.

Freehold £1.15 million

FLAT TO RENT



Inner Court, Old Church Street SW3

Unusual, contemporary-style flat, tucked away in a private development off the King's Road. Large reception room, terrace, fitted kitchen/dining room, 2 double bedrooms, shower room, en-suite bathroom. Parking.

£850 per week. Partly furnished.

The early use of the mews for stabling is reflected in the name of the now extinct, 'Dunghill Mews'.