

Mews News

No.4 September 2003

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

MEWS IN BLOOM 2003



Winner - Sussex Mews East W2



Albion Mews W2



Kynance Mews SW7

RESULTS

The winning entrant in this year's Mews in Bloom competition was Sussex Mews East W2.

Runners up were Albion Mews W2 and Kynance Mews SW7.

Both Kynance Mews and Sussex Mews East are previous winners of the competition which is sponsored by Lurot Brand -The London Mews Company.

Details of the 2004 competition will announced in the next issue of Mews News - due out after Christmas.

EPSTEIN CONNECTION

Here is a tantalising glimpse of the interior of the stunning, 2,456 sq ft (228.2 sq m) three bedroom house in Queen's Gate Mews SW7 that stands on the site of sculptor Jacob Epstein's former studio.

This superb three storey house has been totally modernised to the highest standard and is notable not only for its quality but also its generously proportioned rooms. The owner could have squeezed in three bedrooms on the top floor, sensibly he chose to create just two and that means the magnificent master bedroom runs the full 26ft 7 inches (8.1 metres) of the building's width. A similar sized reception room is on the floor below. There are two further bedrooms.

The fittings list is extensive and you would need to see the full details to appreciate its breadth. It includes: a hand made silver maple kitchen; Persian Limestone flooring in the dining room, kitchen and two bathrooms; black slate walk-in shower; Cat 5 cabling; wiring for home entertainment system; secure garage with automatic door.

The freehold is for sale at £1.85 million and we are the joint Sole Agents.



FROM THE ARCHIVES

"In the end we found what we were looking for in a charming small house in Clabon Mews, just off Cadogan Square. It consisted of a drawing room-cum-dining room and garage on the ground floor and three small bedrooms above...

We were married on 25th February 1950 in the Chapel Royal of Hampton Court Palace... In the evening we flew to Paris for a night at the St. Regis Hotel and next evening caught the Barcelona Express to Perpignan where, in the morning, we changed into a local train for Vernet-les-Bains in the foothills of the Pyrenees... we went for walks up Mont Canigou and drank Cinzano in the town's cafes and began to know each other a little better...

And then suddenly it was over and it was home to Clabon Mews and *Sleeping Beauty* and *Nelson's Band of Brothers* and whatever else the slumbering future might bring."

Extract from: *Ludovic Kennedy's biography, 'On my way to the Club' (William Collins 1989).*

INTERNET NEWS

The internet is a hugely important tool in our marketing armoury and now takes precedence over traditional media as a method of getting information to potential buyers. We were one of the first estate agencies to have their own website and we are committed to keeping up with the rapid development of the internet.

Our website has recently undergone a 'make-over' which should be on-line by the time you receive this Mews News. We have maintained the fundamental principle of keeping the presentation clean, functional, and simple to use. We hope you like it.

DON'T SAY WE DIDN'T TELL YOU...

"Buy now - or risk losing out." we said in our market comment in the last issue. Our words proved to be true. The general central London market may have been in the doldrums but the market for mews houses picked up substantially in July and was followed by the busiest August for many years. Buyers who held back because they expected a price crash saw properly priced properties being sold away from them.

Throughout the year there has been a steady increase in the supply of mews property coming up for sale and most sellers have now adjusted to the market conditions. It is now rare to have an owner insisting on an asking price that we consider too high.

Our rentals department has also had a very busy quarter and in common with Sales achieved a near record August.

You might think "this is just an estate agent talking up the market" but the fact is we never shy from reporting the market conditions as we experience them. If it's bad we say so. If it's good we say so. Right now, it's good.

Sellers can achieve sales in a reasonable period of time. Buyers have a reasonable choice of properties. Prices are relatively stable.

The Autumn market is likely to continue 'steady as she goes' and that should suit everyone - even estate agents.

LEGENDS IN THE MEWS

Regular readers will have gathered that our passion for matters automotive is second only to our passion for all things 'mews'. The two interests often coincide as of course the mews' horsey heritage gave way to the horseless carriage. Not only do the mews now play host to many working garages and classic car dealers, classic car owners have long valued mews homes for their built in garages. It is not unknown for us to open the doors to find a vehicle worth more than the house itself!

We were recently intrigued to spot a letter in Classic & Sportscar magazine because the mews connection was so clear. We made contact with the magazine who kindly forwarded our interest to the author and as a result we have had the pleasure of meeting William Glyn who told us this story:



" In 1971 my father, John, was living in Prince's Gate Mews. One morning he was awoken in the early hours by a commotion outside and on looking out found a full photo crew and a dapper Jackie Stewart posing outside his house. (Stewart was driving for Tyrell Ford at the time).

With them was what turned out to be a Ford GT70 prototype - yet to be released to the public. Dad asked for a selection of the photographs to be sent to him, which they duly were. He is sure that the mews was used because of it's relative privacy and secrecy, which may also have explained the early start of the shoot!"

Footnote: The mid-engined GT70 prototype had a 2983 cc V6 driving the rear wheels through a 5 speed gearbox. Today the 128 brake horsepower sounds very modest but the vehicle only weighed 1680 lbs and that ensured that 60 mph was arrived at in 6.5 seconds (very fast for the early 1970's). Top speed was 155 mph. Sadly the car never made it into production. The appalling industrial relations in the car industry of the period meant Ford's profits had suffered so badly that the project had to be scrapped.

Jackie Stewart won the Formula One world championship three times - in 1969, 1971 and 1973.

PEACE OF MIND

The Ombudsman for Estate Agents (OEA) became effective in 1998 and offers an independent service for dealing with disputes between member agencies and consumers who are actual or potential buyers or sellers of residential property in the U.K.

The Ombudsman provides a free, fair and impartial review of complaints falling within his terms of reference. Complaints may be made to the OEA if you believe a member agency had infringed your legal rights or not complied with the OEA code of practice; treated you unfairly, or been guilty of maladministration.

This firm is a member of the OEA.

The National Association of Estate Agents (NAEA) is the country's leading professional body on residential estate agency. Established in 1962 it actively campaigns on behalf of the industry, home buyers and sellers. It has a rigorous code of conduct that ensures the highest standards of service to consumers by its members who must also meet stringent criteria for the protection of client monies.

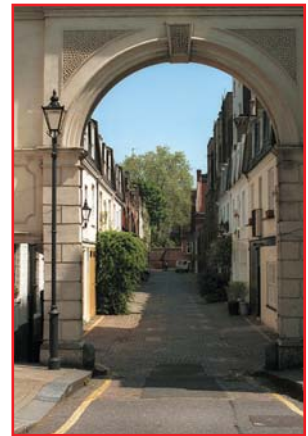
This firm is a member of the NAEA.

The Association of Residential Lettings Agents (ARLA) is the only professional organisation to be solely concerned with the rental market and requires of members that ARLA qualifications are held to demonstrate the firm has a detailed grasp of the complexities of letting and property management. There are also requirements for levels of Professional Indemnity Insurance to be carried; independent auditing of client accounts and compulsory bonding of these monies. This safeguards landlord rents and tenant deposits.

This firm is a bonded member of ARLA

Whenever and wherever you deal with an estate or letting agent in the U.K. we strongly urge you, for your own peace of mind, to look for their membership of the above organisations.

MEWS TO BUY



COLBECK MEWS SW7

A bright, ground floor studio flat with a raised sleeping area, shower room and kitchen area presently used as an office.

**LONG LEASEHOLD WITH SHARE OF FREEHOLD
£225,000**

020 7479 1999

TAKE UP OUR OFFER...

We receive enquiries from all over the world from people wanting to buy or rent a mews house in London but unlike most estate agents who deal only in the immediate area round their offices, we cover all of central London.

If your mews house is in the north, south, east or west of the Capital we want to help you, so to start the process we will provide you with a pre-sale or pre-renting opinion of the possible sale price or rental value of your property.

To take up our offer - and there is no obligation to ultimately use our services - just call 020 7479 1999 and mention Mews News.

HOUSE FOR SALE



LOGAN PLACE W8

An immaculate family house, renovated and with great living and entertaining space.

Reception room, eat-in kitchen, playroom, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, terrace, garden, off-street parking and a garage currently used as a second reception room.

**Freehold £825,000 Subject to Contract
Call 020 7579 9955**

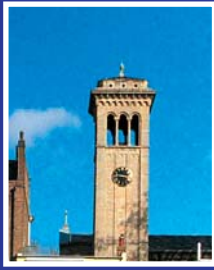
Keep in Touch

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 at www.lurotbrand.co.uk. The site is updated daily. We are also able to email the Mews 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 and contain details of ALL our properties.

Where in the Mews?



Can you identify the mews from which this picture of a landmark clock tower is taken?

The first correct entry out of the hat will receive a bottle of champagne.

Entries by post or email:
mewsworld@lurotbrand.co.uk

Clue: "You can't have more if you haven't had any" - Alice in Wonderland.

The winner of the last issue's 'Where in the Mews' is Lucy Hornberger who correctly identified the location as Deans Mews W1.



The sculpture, by Jacob Epstein, is of the Madonna and Child. Miss Hornberger recalls that as a convent girl in the 1950's her mother gave 6d (2.5p) to the fund that commissioned the work.

POSTSCRIPT: It is a rather nice coincidence that after the last Mews News was published we have been instructed in the sale of the property in Queen's Gate Mews SW7 that is on the site of the former working studio of Jacob Epstein.

PARTY TIME

Alright, we admit it. It is not all work at The London Mews Company. Just occasionally we do like to let our collective hair down and to this end we recently spent a delightful day at the home of one of our staff.

In July, Bruce Glover who runs our flats and houses department, and his wife, Emma, kindly entertained us all to lunch in the garden of their home in Gloucestershire. As it was the weekend of the Royal International Air Tattoo and the Glover's house is about half a mile from R.A.F Fairford' runway we were able to sit in the garden, enjoy the barbecue and be entertained by the aircraft performing their manoeuvres right over our heads. Thrilling stuff and very, very noisy!

Thanks again to Bruce and Emma for a memorable and hugely enjoyable day out.



During lunch Bruce received a small memento of his exploits as a crash test dummy. See story above.

JUST PASSING THROUGH...

Snapped during the afternoon - a U.S.A.F. Stealth bomber cunningly disguised as a television aerial passed right over the house. It had flown across the Atlantic directly from its base in the United States, did one pass along the runway at Fairford, and flew straight back home. It repeated the journey the next day.

Apparently the Americans are unwilling to allow their 'invisible' plane to stay on U.K. soil overnight.



CRASH TEST DUMMY

Our super-smart Smart Coupe, the first out of the showroom in France and the first imported into the U.K. achieved the unenviable accolade of 'First to be Crashed' when it was involved in an accident at the beginning of July.

Luckily no-one was hurt but sadly it appears likely that the car is a write-off. The safety systems performed faultlessly and despite the very heavy frontal impact it was still possible to open the doors. Well done Smart for designing such an inherently safe vehicle.

Inevitably the driver (you know who you are, Bruce) is now known in the firm as the Crash Test Dummy.

Nine feet up the wall of a house in Adrian Mews SW10 there is a narrow lintel with a bricked up doorway beneath. The local lamplighter once lived here and this special, high door enabled him to walk through carrying his taper on the end of a long pole to reach the gas lamps of the area.

MEWS TO BUY



RADNOR MEWS W2

An immaculately presented, three storey house in a cobbled mews near Hyde Park and the Heathrow Express.

Reception room, kit/breakfast room, study/utility room, cloakroom, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, garage.

Approx 91 year lease £925,000
Subject to Contract

COMMERCIAL



POTTERY LANE W11

A freehold office building with an internal area of about 652 sq ft (60.6 sq m). Large open plan office space on ground floor. First floor office/meeting room.

Freehold £385,000 STC or to rent on flexible terms from £490 per week.

THE END OF THE PACK?

One of our directors, Nick Salmon, is a leading member of the campaign to deter the government from bringing in the so-called Sellers' Pack (now the Home Information Pack). The SPLINTA campaign argues that the Pack will not deliver on its promise to make the home buying process more certain and less stressful for consumers and that other less costly and more beneficial changes are already under way, most notably the move towards e-conveyancing.

A Select Committee of M.P.'s recently published a report on the draft Housing Bill that contains the proposals and their verdict may finally bring about the demise of the ill-fated Home Information Pack.

The Committee acknowledged many of the serious criticisms of the proposals raised in the past two years by SPLINTA and noted that the Pack has not been adequately trialled. They said: "much work needs to be done [on the Pack] before the Bill even gets a Second Reading."

Most damningly the Committee said that "it is not clear whether the Home Information Pack will actually speed up the [home buying] process and what its impact will be on the number of houses coming onto the market."

SPLINTA contends that with the Committee unconvinced on those two key issues the ODPM has demonstrably failed to make the case for the Pack and should scrap it immediately.

Although the Committee says a Pack would create a "better informed housing market" it went on to say: "it is unclear to what extent the Pack will serve the Government's objective of speeding up the process of residential property sales, and of reducing the proportion of sales falling through. It is also unclear what effect the Pack would have on the supply and hence prices in the housing market. We recommend that the Pack should be introduced nationally only when further research and extensive pilot-testing has been carried out in different parts of the country. It is essential to establish the extent to which the Pack may have adverse effects in different types of markets. At this stage, we cannot recommend that Home Information Packs are made compulsory."

SPLINTA believes that the problems acknowledged by the Committee make it impossible for the Home Information Pack proposals to be included in the final Housing Bill. To retain the proposals in the face of the recommendations of the Committee would be perverse and would leave the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister open to censure if the proposals were pushed through and proved as damaging as many believe they would be.

You can find out more about the Home Information Pack and the SPLINTA campaign by looking at the website:

www.lurotbrand.co.uk/splinta/home.htm

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Consult a member here.



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MEWS TO RENT



ROLAND WAY SW7

A lovely house in a charming, private, South Kensington mews.

Double reception room, kitchen, utility, 3 bedrooms, en-suite shower room, bathroom, 2 attic rooms, terrace and private parking.

£1,050 per week unfurnished.

A sign at the entrance to Cheyne Mews SW3 ordered that, "All drivers of vehicles are directed to walk their horses while passing under this Archway".

CHEAP AS CHIPS!

THURLOE SQUARE SW7 2 bed flat **£49,000**

WESTBOURNE TERRACE W2 1 bed flat **£32,500**

CORNWALL GARDENS SW7 1 bed flat **£75,000**

ALBION CLOSE W2 4 bed mews house **£295,000**

HYDE PARK GARDENS W2 studio **£45,000**

ENNISMORE GARDENS SW7 3 bed house to rent **£350 per week**

OAKLEY STREET SW3 4 bedroom house to rent **£400 per week.**

Don't all rush for the telephone. These are taken from an old Lurot Brand property newspaper. The date? November 1983.

Catherine's Cookery

Catherine Holmes is our Lettings Manager and in her spare time, a very keen cook. She begins her series of recipes with the suggestion of a delicious dish for the Autumn evenings.

Catherine's Sticky Chicken

(Serves 6)

This has to be the easiest and tastiest dish ever (even my mother is a sworn fan).

6 chicken breasts
1 tbsp of mango chutney
1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
1 tbsp lemon juice
1 tbsp of apricot jam
2 tbsp of mayonnaise
1 tbsp of grainy mustard

Place the chicken breasts in an oven-proof dish. Combine all the sauce ingredients and pour over the chicken.

Cover in foil and leave to marinade for a few hours (or overnight if possible).

Preheat oven to 180C.

Put the covered dish in the oven and cook the chicken in its marinade for 40 minutes.

Serve with rice, pasta or salad.