

LUROT 1971 - 2011 40 BRAND



MEWS NEWS

WINTER 2011/2012



CYCLING CHALLENGE

I recently completed the Land's End to John O'Groats cycling challenge or Le Jog 2011 as it is more colloquially known and, apart from the vivid memories I have of the challenge itself, the only physiological symptoms I have as I write this are sore calves! The ride itself was tough which is what I signed up for and was the adjective used by the organisers, Discover Adventure, in their promotional material. Tough is certainly an accurate word although the challenge was well within my own comfort zone (all right, maybe not well within but certainly within!). All participants, and there were 37, managed to complete the challenge, with the youngest being aged 22 and the oldest aged 75. There was even a gentleman aged 69 on a trike who managed it! It certainly has inspired me to keep challenging myself into later life.

When I entered this challenge over three months ago I did not take it very seriously in that it was purely for fun. I did no specific training and it was only in the final month that I decided to invest in a road bike and other essential equipment. I am a naturally confident person so I was only too pleased to find that I completed the challenge without suffering any injuries. Some weeks after entering the challenge I realised that many of the participants were riding for charities and it occurred to me that I may as well do the same. I decided to nominate Leukaemia & Lymphoma Research and set myself a modest target of £999, being one pound per mile. I am only too pleased to see that I have exceeded this target somewhat and would like to pay a special thanks to Lurot Brand and to all those people who have chosen to donate to this cause. I realised during the ride that the participants were supporting their own favourite charities and we all no doubt chose to support those which are closest to our own hearts. I know I did!

Neil Cheney | Keen cyclist &



HARVEST FESTIVAL IN KENSINGTON GARDENS

On Sunday 18th September this year, I discovered that The Allotment in Kensington Gardens (just to the west of the Serpentine Road near the lake) was holding a Harvest Festival event. This was an accidental discovery whilst walking my dog! The Allotment itself, which I have visited many times, is not only charming but informative for all age groups.

On the day in question, I had watched the 44th Annual Horseman's Sunday which is held at St. John's Church on the Hyde Park Estate. This annual event is always well attended and well publicised.

The Harvest Festival, however, was quite different. There was a selection of animals in pens, many of which could be handled by adults and children alike, from rabbits, chickens and goats to the fattest pig I have ever seen and a pair of Shire horses

with their beautifully polished tack laid out on plastic sheeting. There were some stalls offering such things as Mr. Potato Head for the children and displays of the fruit and vegetables grown in the Allotment.

There were not very many people there and I chatted with the organisers about Lurot Brand perhaps helping next year with some form of sponsorship. Hopefully, they will be in touch before the next event and we will be able to publicise it in the Spring issue of Mews News.

This is an event which will enchant all age groups and hopefully will become an annual and popular event.
Kati Lurot

COMPETITION UNUSUAL SIGHTS IN MEWS

In which streets can these unusual sights be found? A few are quite obvious but others not so. If you are able to name them all please send us your answers and contact details by email to: mewsnews@lurotbrand.co.uk or by post to: Lurot Brand, Mews News Competition, 5 Kynance Mews SW7 4QS before the 31st January 2012. The first correct entry out of the hat will receive a bottle of champagne.

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the fine squares of London, an arch was constructed to make the entrance more in keeping with the grand street scape and also to partially hide the mundane side of life in the Mews. Together with the arch, EGM still has one of the original horse troughs, a rare find today. Both the arch and trough are protected by preservation orders.

A major contribution to the unique atmosphere of Ennismore Gardens Mews is that the entire south side faces onto the gardens of the Holy Trinity Brompton. The church building was completed before the mews in 1829. Prior to the church being erected the site was the burial ground of St George's Hospital, the building of which is now the Lanesborough Hotel at Hyde Park Corner. It is rare to have

Ennismore Gardens Mews, often described as one of the prettiest mews in London, has a colourful history to match those colourful facades.

The L shaped Mews (south and west sides) was planned and built by the Thorn brothers between 1869 and 1874, a relatively long period for completion of "simple stables, coach houses and harness rooms". The completion of the west side was partly delayed by financial difficulties the Thorns were experiencing over their just completed, slightly larger job, the new Blackfriars

Bridge!

The name Ennismore (a small town in County Kerry, Ireland) comes from William Hare, the man who bought the large estate of "meadows and fields" in 1813. Hare's titles were Earl of Listowel and Baron Ennismore. He bought it from the Duke of Kingston whose family mansion, Kingston House, stood nearby. It was demolished in 1929 to make way for the present flats of the same name.

As was the case with the stabling and coach houses built for many of

a mews not comprising of a narrow street with houses facing each other, even rarer to have one facing a park. It is worth checking out the small statue of St Francis of Assisi close to the main west door of the church. It was used frequently as a dead letter box by Russian spies during the Cold War.

The 1901 Census clearly shows the residents of Ennismore Gardens Mews' "stables and rooms" were the servants of the big houses in Ennismore Gardens. The main occupations reflected were unmarried domestic





servants, coachmen, grooms and stable helps. By the early 1920s however electoral registers begin to reflect the changing use of the buildings

serials, movies and adverts. EGM appears to have been a firm favourite in the 1970s for detective stories. The Mews was featured on many occasions in the TV serials *Special Branch*, *The Sweeney* and *The Professionals*. In 1972 Alfred Hitchcock famously used No 31 as the home

of Brenda Blaney in the iconic *Frenzy*. In 2010 the movie *Foster* (starring Toni Collette) was filmed 'over the wall' in

and remembered commercials ever made in the UK.

Ennismore Gardens Mews has also been associated with many personalities over the years. Michael Caine famously had his 'one bed flat' in the Mews in the early 1960s. That other Academy Award nominee, Terence Stamp, has also been a resident. Sir Alec Guinness regularly tended his roses at No 35 (a house sold by Lurot Brand a few years ago). Living around the corner for 22 years until her death in 1990, Ava Gardner frequently walked her corgis in the Mews.

What an imposing and rich history those well-worn cobbles have been witness to!

Colm McCarthy, Home Owner in Ennismore Gardens Mews

THE NAME ENNISMORE (A SMALL TOWN IN COUNTY KERRY, IRELAND) COMES FROM WILLIAM HARE, THE MAN WHO BOUGHT THE LARGE ESTATE OF "MEADOWS AND FIELDS" IN 1813

and their occupants. New descriptions appear such as "stables and house", "stabling, garage and premises", "small dwellings" with retired soldier, tailor and carter as occupants. By 1925 a few small businesses were using some of the buildings as "trading premises" and by the 1930s it is clear that most stables had been converted substantially into homes. By the 1960s the desirability of EGM as a unique, well located and charming residential enclave was firmly established.

The charms of Ennismore Gardens Mews have been frequently used as a backdrop for TV

the grounds of Holy Trinity Brompton. Of course the iconic 1987 VW Golf TV advert directed by David Bailey featuring Paula Hamilton leaving No 23 remains one of the most celebrated



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MEALS IN THE MEWS

The Greenhouse, Hay's Mews



Whilst there are not too many restaurants in the mews of London, it turns out that three of them are in the top 100 restaurants of the Sunday Times Food List 2012.

For this edition, my wife and I visited The Greenhouse in Hay's Mews, Mayfair that was recently placed at 31st in the Sunday Times Food List and I can rarely remember returning from an evening out with such a feeling of contentment.

THE RESTAURANT

Hidden behind a verdant garden at the end of Hay's Mews, just walking down the beautifully lit pathway to the front door is an event. As would be expected of a restaurant with a Michelin star, the welcome was suitably attentive and the room itself was a perfect mixture of warm minimalism and nature and, as the name implies, whichever way you look, you see greenery.

THE SERVICE

We were initially looked after by the assistant restaurant manager, Agnieszka, who was a lovely balance of friendliness combined with amazing efficiency without ever being intrusive. While my wife and I had plenty of time to talk without interruption, she came back to visit us from time to time to share some interesting snippet of information about the restaurant, the food and various other topics – a consummate professional, who turned a meal out into so much more.



THE WINE

We were told that the wine cellar at The Greenhouse is amongst the most prestigious in the UK with approximately 3000 different bins. The wine list is the size of a telephone directory with prices ranging from the reasonable to the unbelievable. We were lucky to have been looked after by the head sommelier, Marc, who not only selected both a white and a red Burgundy that gave my wife obvious pleasure, but also took us for a tour of the amazing cellar underneath the pavements of Hill Street. I have never seen so many bottles of Romanée-Conti, Chateau Petrus and all the other great wines and Champagnes of the world in one place. Quite a treat.



THE FOOD

We both selected the "Tasting Menu" which should have been a seven course feast of discovery but this was added to when I noticed sweetbreads on the 'à la carte' menu and asked if there was any way they could be incorporated into my tasting menu. The highlights of the meal that we both agreed on were the hand-cut beef tartare with daikon, the baby artichoke barigoule with soft boiled egg and truffle and the Anjou pigeon breast with turnip puree and pancetta jus.

Other dishes worth mentioning were the sweetbreads in a black garlic caramel and the apple cider marinated mackerel with horseradish snow.

For dessert came two more wonders. A pineapple sorbet with coconut mousse was the perfect palate cleanser followed by their signature "Snix" which is a playful yet delicious deconstruction of the tastes of Snickers and Twix bars served with a salted caramel ice cream, a perfect finale to a wonderful meal. On top of all the above, the meal was interspersed with various delightful amuse bouche and petit fours.

PLUS...

It is also worth a big mention that with effortless efficiency and only very minor tweaks, the kitchen were able to make all the dishes gluten free for my wife. They even had homemade gluten free bread on hand.

To finish the evening, Agnieszka took us on a tour of the kitchen and introduced us to Sous Chef, Daniel, who was in charge in the absence of Head Chef, Antonin Bonnet, and we got to see the team in action.

All in all, a wonderful evening that we are very happy to recommend.

Oliver Lurot

THE GREENHOUSE
27A Hay's Mews
Mayfair, London W1J 5NY
Tel: +44 (0)20 7499 3331
www.greenhouserestaurant.co.uk



OF A MEWS AGENT

Oliver Lurot



Most estate agents who have been around for a few years have many a tale to tell but we feel that the very eclectic nature of mews houses (from the spectacular quasi mansion hidden behind a modest façade to the chocolate box cottage at the end of a verdant lane) means that we possibly have more than most.

For your entertainment, we will occasionally be running a "diary" with contributions from different members of staff.

MONDAY

I was called in to advise a client on the refurbishment of his three storey mews house in Knightsbridge. For one reason or another, I didn't notice a part of the floor that was covered in corrugated plastic and was not warned to avoid it. While chatting with the owner I walked onto it and promptly fell through the floor! The only thing that stopped me plummeting 12 feet to the ground feet was the wooden beam on which I fell astride. I pretended to be fine and continued talking to the owner. I'm not sure the advice I gave him was particularly good as I just wanted to get back in my car and cry!

TUESDAY

We recently took on a house in a green courtyard in Holland Park. I had forewarned the owner that I would be showing the house at 11am so both the prospective buyers and I were surprised to find the owner relieving herself behind the dustbin to the side of the house. It later turned out that she didn't want to use the loo in the house moments before we arrived. Sometimes, people should stick to the obvious choice!

WEDNESDAY

Sometimes life is just too complicated. I have been talking to the various representatives of a very famous American pop star about showing her a wonderful mews house in South Kensington owned by a well known British film director. I'm sure you can imagine the layers of helpers and runners that need to be reassured that no paparazzi will be waiting for their client at the end of the mews! Finally, the day came for the viewing and the lady in question was absolutely charming but decided that the house was a little small for her and her entourage.

THURSDAY

We have just completed the sale of an unmodernised hovel (with great potential) near Hyde Park. The vendor was a hoarder but had promised that the tons of junk would be cleared out of the garage. On the morning of completion, we inspected the house to find that he hadn't done a thing. With the vendors agreement, we called in a waste disposal company who quoted £5,000 to remove everything. Why so expensive? Well, they needed to do the job wearing Hazmat suits as they found some rather unpleasant things amongst the piles of rubbish. The house was cleared in a day and completion took place only a day late.

FRIDAY

A pleasant end to the week. After many years of courtship, we have been instructed as sole agents on a huge mews house with a swimming pool in Belgravia's most prestigious mews. Those of you living in a mews know that the preconception of mews houses being small and dark is complete rubbish. Over the years we have seen mews houses of every shape and size and whilst it true that some of them are a little short on light, in most cases this has been addressed by creative owners who have transferred these previously unimportant "stables" into some of London's most wonderful properties.

LUROT BRAND

SALES | LETTINGS | COMMERCIAL | MANAGEMENT

5 Kynance Place, SW7 4QS
020 7590 9955

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

57A Weymouth Street, W1G 8NW
020 7479 1900

www.lurotbrand.co.uk

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