

LUROT BRAND



MEWS NEWS

SUMMER 2010



SHARING THE MEWS PASSION



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Here at Lurot Brand, we really love Mews and after nearly forty years of specialisation we remain amazed by their seasonal beauty. We are always on the lookout for a new story or anecdote and our latest quest has been to discover mews streets in other parts of the world!

Over the years, we have had the chance to meet many mews lovers but many people have yet to discover these hidden gems!

We are now sharing our passion on Twitter & Facebook. Please find us, follow us and suggest us to friends for Mews properties, news, stories and amazing photos!

Join one of the free guided walks and talks in and around Paddington. This is a great opportunity to learn about the area's rich history, discover hidden treasures and appreciate Paddington in a new way! You can also hear fascinating tales about its famous residents of today and days gone by whilst you marvel at the mix of architecture and see how the area has transformed in recent years.

Among the 16 topics, they offer a "*musings the mews*" walk which highlights the historic mews of Paddington.

All walks and talks are free and are brought to you by Paddington Waterside Partnership and Paddington BID.

To book a place, call 020 3145 1200, email walks@inpaddington.com or go online at www.inpaddington.com

SCHEDULE 7th July at 12.30pm;
6th October at 12.30pm;
20th October at 12.30pm

MEETING POINT Brunel Statue,
Platform 1, Paddington Station



MEWS ARCHIVES

We have recently found in our archives an interesting newspaper cutting from *The Times* (August 1957) that we hope you will enjoy.

MEWS PROPERTY CONVERSIONS

L.C.C. TO REFUSE APPLICATIONS

The conversion of mews properties—former stables attached to big London houses, many of which in recent years have been used as garages—into maisonnettes and cottage dwellings will generally not be allowed in future in central London, according to a statement made at a public inquiry at Kensington yesterday by Mr. K. G. Blythe, senior assistant planning officer of the London County Council. This is because outside parking is likely to lead to further traffic congestion.

The well-kept mews was an essential feature of a well-to-do district of Dickensian London. After the First World War, when housing was difficult, many of the stables attached to big houses were converted into pleasing dwellings. The day of the horse and carriage was over and there were then comparatively few cars to cause congestion in West End streets. Typical examples of such conversions were found in Belgravia and Shepherd Market, Mayfair. Others, in some areas, degenerated into slums.

PRACTICE SPREADING

The L.C.C., Mr. Blythe said, are becoming increasingly alarmed by the number of applications for permission to convert mews property into living accommodation. Whereas until recently such applications were confined to fashionable areas, the practice was now spreading to almost every mews in central London.

A West End estate agent, commenting on the statement of the L.C.C. planning officer, told *The Times* that a great number of the conversions referred to had been carried out so as to leave the garage accommodation unaffected; where that was to be done refusal of applications in future would seem to be unjustified. An applicant would either want to use the space available below the converted upper part of the stables to garage his own car, or to let it out as a lock-up garage.

TRAFFIC CONGESTION

A spokesman for the L.C.C. explained that the present practice is to refuse an application for conversion into flats or maisonnettes where a mews is already in use as a lock-up garage. Most of the mews, he emphasized, were *culs-de-sac* and additional resultant outside parking must lead to more traffic congestion.

The new policy did not mean, however, that all applications would be refused in future. Each application would be considered on its merits and in a mews where several properties had already been converted into flats or maisonnettes a new application would stand a good chance of being successful.



Lurot Brand is pleased to sponsor the London's Green Corners Awards, Individual category: Mews Green Corners.

The Conservation Foundation has launched its Green Corners Awards inviting all Londoners to join the campaign to make London one of the world's greenest capital cities.

The search is now on and this is a gardening competition you don't need to have a garden to enter! Pavement side patch or postage stamp size plot. Colourful roof terrace, balcony or simple window sill. Alleyway or serene sacred space away from the urban rush. Community area cared for by many or playground green corner for children's flowers and vegetables. Pretty mews transformed by green fingered neighbours or flashes of floral colour at bus stops and stations which brighten our journey round town.

The awards run over a full year, showing London's hidden green gems, which come into their own at different times through the seasons.

Monthly winners will be chosen for each category and will receive a certificate and local publicity and go forward to the final for judging at the beginning of 2011.

Winners will receive a special Green Corners prize and the nominators will be given a bottle of champagne. The overall winner of London's Green Corners will be presented with The Conservation Foundation's 25th Anniversary Trophy.

Individual categories are:

- Mews Green Corners made colourful by green fingered neighbours (sponsored and judged by Lurot Brand)

Judging criteria:

- Green corners in mews created for the benefit of people living in and passing through.
- Cared for by groups of neighbours for the community of the mews.



- Community Green Corners - urban green spaces cared for and shared by people living nearby (supported and judged by Archant London).
- Edible Green Corners where herbs, fruit and vegetables thrive (supported and judged by Capital Growth's campaign for 2012 new food growing spaces).
- Green Corners for Health and Wellbeing - in offices and public buildings, as well as shops, hotels and restaurants which boost physical and mental wellbeing
- On The Move - green corners on boats, bikes, buses, trains, tubes, taxis or at stations and bus stops and visible from

them as you pass.

- No Man's Land - unloved and uncared for strips of land, alleyways or cut throughs.
- Pavement Green Corners - pavement patches and tree wells (in association with Guerrilla Gardening's Pimp Your Pavement).
- Roof terraces, balconies and window sills with bird and insect loving plants (sponsored and judged by Capital Gardens).
- Sacred Spaces - peaceful places for quiet reflection (sponsored and judged by Natural England).
- School Green Corners where pupils and teachers get together to turn grey spaces green (in association with Tools Shed).
- Water-wise Green Corners planted to flourish whatever the weather (sponsored and judged by Thames Water).
- Young Londoners - green corners created by young people under 25.

The Judging Panel includes Christopher Woodward, Director of the Garden Museum, botanist David Bellamy and actress and keen gardener Susan Hampshire.

For more information on London's Green Corners Awards, prizes and details of how to enter, visit: www.conservationfoundation.co.uk





We all know that mews houses used to be for horses, carriages and grooms and not surprisingly, were not built with any form of outside space which is so coveted by mews house owners today.

In recent years, the Central London Planners have done everything they can to obstruct the erection of terraces quoting such phrases as “we want to retain the integrity of the roof lines” even in mews where over 50% of the houses have either terraces or roof extensions and there is no integrity.

I personally have experience of this. When I was granted permission to add a second floor to my house the extra accommodation left a flat roof area of some 16’ x 8’ which is a nice size for a table, chairs and sunlounger. The consent stated that I could not sit out on the flat roof area (which is totally enclosed

so you can’t fall off it) without prior written permission from the Council. I have not yet tested what this actually means.

Throughout Central London, before Planning became such a problem, hundreds of mews house owners created enchanting roof gardens. If you were to go to St. Lukes Mews W11 there are many houses with terraces and we at Lurot Brand have yet to visit one that had Planning Permission. They have now been there for so long that they have



“established use”. One of the houses in St Lukes Mews went through an enforcement notice for “alleged breach of Planning Control – without permission the installation of a raised wooden decking on the flat roof area” and had to appeal before winning their case as follows “enforcement order quashed and appeal allowed”. This was in 2007. There are many such cases.

There are very few mews houses with proper gardens. I can think of a couple in the cul-



de-sac section of Adam and Eve Mews in Kensington, one with a huge garden in Leinster Mews W2 and a couple in Pembridge Mews (now built over as conservatories) in Notting Hill Gate. In my own mews there are 2 houses with proper gardens, in Roland Way, South Kensington the modern houses have gardens (not the original ones which were stables) and on the Grosvenor Estate in Belgravia we have certainly visited some houses with gardens.

The beauty of mews is that although a lot of them are cul-de-sacs, even those which are not are generally very quiet with little traffic. On a sunny weekend, visit Bathurst Mews W2 (where there are 2 riding schools) to see what use is made of the cobbled street. Tables and benches, barbecues and people sunning themselves.

Kati Lurot



THE MEWS PUBS OF BELGRAVIA



With 2010 finally warming up, we thought it would be an excellent (and naturally entirely selfless exercise on our part) idea to visit the mews pubs of Belgravia and enjoy the ambience all in the name of research for the summer edition of Mews News.

So it came to pass, on Saturday 5th June that a few game Lurot Brand staff met at, arguably, the most famous mews hostelry in SW1 – The Grenadier. Having come up with this idea in the first place, on foot, I managed to miss my turning and the lovely doorman Dominic at The Lanesborough set me straight so I was soon enjoying Pimms with the team in this pretty and peaceful cobbled mews. Well it would have been peaceful if a Police helicopter did not hover above us for much of the time. It was originally used as the mess of The Duke of Wellington's Grenadier Guards – as much of the military memorabilia will testify. In fact, the great man himself is said to have played cards here and there is even talk of the ghost of another man who apparently made the fateful error of cheating at cards!

Several Pimms later (this is a tough job I hear you cry!) we headed off to the west in the direction of Kinnerton Street – having elected against travelling east towards the Horse & Groom in Groom Place. We dismissed the Wilton Arms in favour of the lively Nag's Head – with a rather strange thigh high bar. The



most welcoming Landlord greeted us and amidst a good friendly crowd of locals and tourists alike we settled in to enjoy the local bonhomie. And more Pimms...

The heat of the day was taking its toll as we set off towards The Star in Belgrave Mews West where, possibly thanks to the stringent licensing laws that the Grosvenor Estate impose, one could neither sit outside nor drink outside. We were going to move on but found ourselves captivated by a lovely gentleman called Clive. He told us that he had first frequented The Star way back in 1954. Although not a mews dweller himself, he clearly had fallen for the colourful charms of this particular public house and told us some outrageous tales (some unprintable!) about gangsters and actors and - famous in their era – supermodels. It is the only pub in West London with a genuine working coal fire so worth remembering when the cold nights draw in once more.

Sadly, Clive's fascinating stories were not quite enough to tempt us inside for a drink so we moved onwards – many thanks to my colleague Sue H. for her exemplary map-reading skills – further into Belgravia passed the Motcombs Wine Bar in Motcomb Street and then stopping for photos outside every



local estate agent's favourite local, The Antelope next to Grosvenor Cottages. This pub was originally built for the staff of the grand houses designed by Thomas Cubitt at the time. It was our one stop that day in Kensington & Chelsea, just time for quick photos as once again we could not sit or drink outside. Our feet were thoroughly aching and the heat of the day had gone to our heads. Sustenance was called for and after a glowing report we saw the Duke of Wellington (known locally as The Boots) shining like a beacon in the distance. How heavenly in the early evening sun to rest our feet and indulge in a long overdue bite to eat. Again a fond display to the Iron Duke's victories are found here. Although not strictly in a mews it is close enough to Minera Mews we feel to qualify!

So 6 or 7 pubs covered and with the sun well over the yard arm, we decided that it was a time to call our festivities a night. Sadly this meant we did not manage to visit all the planned mews pubs but we certainly enjoyed meeting so many nice and interesting people. It certainly confirmed what we already knew – that mews are very friendly communities tucked away in the heart of London.

We are already looking to organising another similar sortie so if you know of a mews with a public house, please do drop us a line: mewsnews@lurotbrand.co.uk.

Lajla Turner, Lettings Manager



HUMPDEN GURNEY SCHOOL SUMMER FAIR

Lurot Brand was very pleased to sponsor the Hampden Gurney Summer Fair on the 22nd May 2010.

The school was founded by the Reverend John Hampden Gurney and was built in Hampden Gurney Street in 1863 and transferred to the present site in Nutford Place in 1967. Oliver Lurot also discovered to his surprise that John Betjeman, to whom he is related, had the honour of opening the previous incarnation of the school on the 27th September 1967.

The Fair was organised by the PTA, which is a vital part of the school and brings parents, teachers and pupils together in the joint cause of making the school an even better place.

This year's fair saw a big turnout and under magnificent sunshine, we managed to distribute almost 500 Lurot Brand gift bags!

It was not only about hard work, we also had a great time with our



children painting plates, jumping on the bouncy assault course, face painting, eating delicious sausage rolls...and the star of the day for the big and small Lurot Brand boys was the giant six lane grand prix Scalextric. During a group race, my youngest son Milo ended up in tears when he lost to his father!

Another winner was Duncan from our sales team, who proudly wore his medal after winning the Tug of War competition. His daughter was very impressed.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Helen Wilson of the Victoria Pub, who is one of the many dedicated mothers who made this fair a great success, for giving us this opportunity to help our community. I would also like to thank the marketing team for the great work, my sons for distributing the gifts bags and all the participating members of Lurot Brand for their great spirit!

Peggy Lurot



COMMUNITY SPIRIT

Photographic evidence of a very good party for the 7.30pm England v USA World Cup game, under the olive trees of Bathurst Mews. Nobody wanted to own up to who had put two dustbins across the entrance of Mews; no matter, no one came down.

Antoine Lurot



LUROT BRAND

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