

LUROT BRAND

www.lurotbrand.co.uk



MEWS NEWS

LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN



2007 has been a frantic year for us. We started the rebranding process which thanks to Bacchus PR has been a great success. We applied for Planning Permission for change of use on the premises which we took in Marylebone with the warning from our Planning Consultant that it was “a

long shot” and likely to involve at least one Appeal and would take most of the year. We got the permission within 5 weeks thanks to Brian Waters of BWPC Architects but we were totally unprepared. This necessitated an immediate start to the modernisation works which we completed in September and then we opened the shop on the 28th September. During this time, Peggy Lurot took on the enormous task of incorporating the rebranding into our website and then updating the site into a more user-friendly and attractive version.

So, we have rebranded, modernised/opened a new shop and

created a wonderful new website and all the while our negotiators have been successfully selling and letting your properties. In fact, in the middle of 2007, we achieved what our records show to be the highest for a mews house of £2,500 per square foot.

We think the market will soon recover – it always does. We, here at Lurot Brand, are positive about 2008 – the properties with which we deal in prime Central London – historically hold their own even when the media are determined to make the property market stall. What I find amusing is that journalists and property journalists probably own their own houses and it must go against the grain to trumpet the fall in prices which affects them as much as anyone else. But the bonus is that our lettings business is exceptionally busy as we start the new year.

I hope you all had a wonderful Christmas and that our optimism for 2008 is good for everyone.

- Antoine Lurot



MEWS STYLE by Sebastian Deckker

When I came up with the idea of reprinting the book by Sebastian Deckker called MEWS STYLE under the Lurot Brand banner, our Financial Director threw his arms up in the air as he calculated the cost of this exercise.

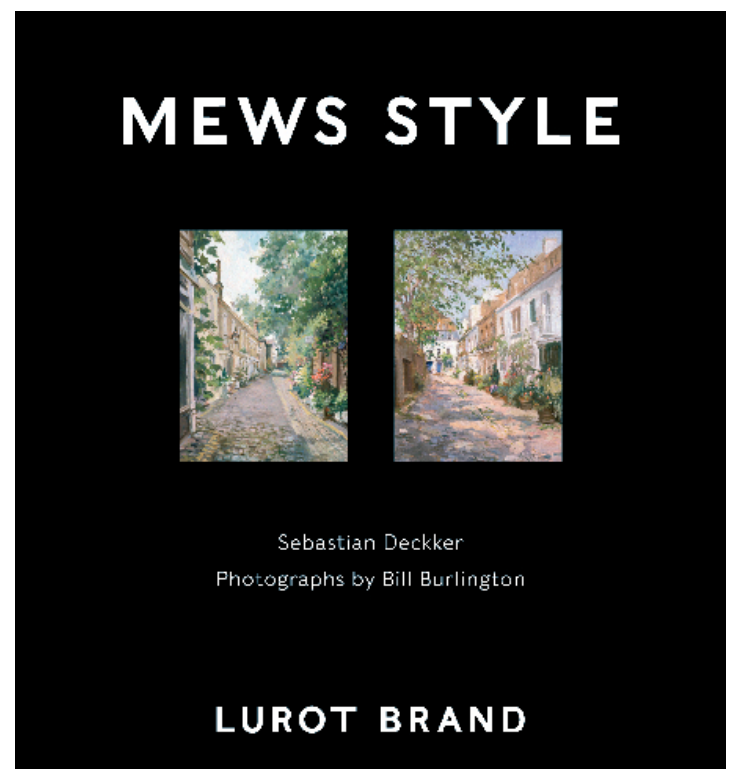
I won and by now a large proportion of the Central London Mews will have received their copies.

They have been such a success that we have now ordered a second run to ensure that no mews house owner goes without.

We have received a stream of letters, e-mails and telephone calls thanking us for the book, but quite a few people who love the book have been disappointed that their Mews does not feature.

As neither Mr or Mrs. Mews play golf, when they retire, I intend to keep them very busy writing the definitive book on Mews – to include them all.

- Oliver Lurot



MEWS RADAR



LEXHAM MEWS W8

In the March 2006 issue of Mews News, we reported the destruction of the Arch at the entrance of Lexham Mews in Kensington by a building supplies lorry. The arch has finally been repaired/rebuilt and we show above before the accident, the devastated archway and the new archway. Bravo to those who had it repaired.



AND...

The photograph below was taken between Christmas and New Year when the scaffolding on a house in Hyde Park Gardens Mews, W2 collapsed in the middle of the night with a very large bang!

MORE MEWS STYLE ARRIVE



Following on from the excellent response we got from people who received our Lurot Brand Limited Edition reprint of Sebastian Deckkers book "Mews Style", we can confirm that the next batch of over 3000 copies was delivered early in January. The shippers were clearly instructed to deliver the books (almost 3 tons in weight) in a lorry with a tail lift, but guess what, it arrived with no tail lift!. Various members of Lurot Brand were conscripted in to shift all 157 boxes!

All that aside, over the next couple of months we will be delivering to all the mews in London that did not get a copy from the first batch. We hope you enjoy it.



A CHARMING TALE

A LITTLE BIT OF HISTORY:

About 12 years ago, we sold a house in Petersham Place, SW7. After exchange of contracts, the vendor's wife decided she would really like to take the Lions Head door knocker, but when the request was made to the purchaser an emphatic "NO" was the reply.

Move on 11 years and we are asked to act on behalf of the next door neighbour who wants to acquire the house in order to double the size of their own. This we successfully do, and following completion of the purchase we asked if, when the house is demolished, we could have the door knocker. Our client is happy to do this and the door knocker was duly delivered to our office.

Amazingly, the owners of 12 years ago are still in the house they purchased after Petersham Place, and even more astonishingly the phone number is not ex-directory!

Sadly though, the vendor's wife died four years ago, but the vendor remembers his wife being most upset at not taking the knocker and having to buy a "cheap and lightweight imitation" to go on the new front door.

We polished it up and recently reunited our old client with his wife's door knocker.

- Simon Powley



FAMOUS MEWS DWELLERS

When Queen Elizabeth II's cousin, The Honourable Gerald Lascelles, married Angela Lascelles in 1952, they set up home in Albion Mews W2. One of their neighbours was Lucie Rie, the potter, to whom we paid homage in the March 2006 issue of Mews News.

Last October, following her death, Christie's, South Kensington, held a sale "Property from the Collection of the Late The Honorable Mrs. Angela Lascelles" and the catalogue listed a Lucie Rie "Glazed stoneware vase circa 1950" (it sold for £1,750).

We know which house Lucie Rie lived in but we are hoping that someone might be able to tell us which one The Honourable Mrs. Lascelles lived in. Failing this, we will send someone to Westminster City Hall to trawl the archives and let you know in the next edition of Mews News.

TRIVIA

**From the 11th Century poet
Su Dong-PO**

Families, when a child is born,
Want it to be intelligent.

I, through intelligence,

Having wrecked my whole life,

Only hope the baby will prove

Ignorant and stupid.

Then he will crown a tranquil life

By becoming a Cabinet Minister

MEWS NEWS 1998

The following article featured in the Sunday Times on the 2nd August 1998. The wonderful columnist, Godfrey Smith, who has since become a good friend and who lives in a mews, happened to telephone us just as an advertisement we placed for a new negotiator was condemned in the House of Commons. Read on

MUSING OVER THE CLASS DIVIDE

When the young Cyril Connolly and his wife lived in France before the war, they used to get Country Life sent out and drool over the photographs of stately homes. My own version of this nostalgia game while in France was to mull through the lush pages of a blue brochure that had come through the door of my London pad advertising mews properties for sale.

There are 600 in London, originally built for servants – the coachmen and grooms, and all the tack for servicing the horses in the great houses as the city sprawled westward. They looked romantic but were pools of pestilence. Since nobody wanted them much, many became small workshops or ateliers, thus re-inforcing their unhygienic charm. Then as taxes began to bite, the notion of the tarted-up, deloused mews as a pied-a-terre for the well-to-do began to take shape.

Now the original inhabitants have gone and instead the mews are showcases of bourgeois chic. In 1860 they were selling for between £87 and £147. The blue brochure suggests that today you are lucky to find one much under £350,000; and half a million is commonplace.

The man behind the brochure is an Anglophile Frenchman and cousin of John Betjeman called Antoine Lurot. Back in 1971 he noticed how many inquiries were coming into his estate agency for mews properties. Their attractions are obvious: the chance to own a freehold, cobbled streets, little or no passing traffic and their sense of slightly raffish fun. So he set out on his motorbike, visited every mews in London, recorded details on tape or film and established a niche business. He was in the news the other day after an advertisement he placed in this paper seeking a senior negotiator “likely to be someone already known in the profession, public-school educated” was condemned in a Commons motion as “a crude attempt

to perpetuate class division in society”.

Signed by 70 new Labour noodles, it even said the ad discriminated against women, ethnic minorities and “the majority of the population who have not had the dubious benefit of private education”. I should have thought that pretty rich coming from the party which, by the wanton destruction of our grammar schools, created the biggest bonanza for private education in history. No doubt Antoine will survive their gormless stricture. So will the mews he has made his life’s work, providing as they do a warren of secret escapes and helping to make London still the most civilised city in the world.

With my thanks to Godfrey Smith for allowing us to reproduce this article.

- Antoine Lurot

LUROT BRAND MARYLEBONE



Almost on schedule, and by the skin of our teeth our announced opening in Marylebone in September actually happened on the 28th.

The agony of months of refurbishment works has certainly paid off.

Lots of locals have popped in to welcome us and to a man, they have complimented us on the appearance of the shop (it had been empty and run down for many years).

Some of the style details of the shop are shown here.



Burton Mews

DID YOU KNOW THAT...

On a recent edition of The Antiques Road Show, they featured some letters from Sir Noel Coward which a beady-eyed and alert member of our staff noticed were on headed paper from No. 1 Burton Mews, South Eaton Place, London SW1: Telephone Number SLOANE 2965: Cable address "Cavalcade Knights London".

No. 1 Burton Mews was at the back and joined to the main residence – 17 Gerald Road and the combined unit was sold just last year – with its Blue Plaque – for £3,800,000 on a 34 year lease.

A FEW OF OUR MEWS TO LET



Connaught Close, W2 £700 pw Unfurnished/Furnished



Brook's Mews, W1 £900 pw Furnished



Abercorn Close, NW8 £950 pw Furnished



Cornwall Mews South, SW7 £1,200 pw Unfurnished



Clabon Mews, SW1 £1,600 pw Unfurnished



Bourdon Street, W1 £2,200 pw Fully Furnished

LUROT BRAND

5 Kynance Place, SW7 4QS
020 7590 9955

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

57A Weymouth Street, WIG 8NW
020 7479 1900

www.lurotbrand.co.uk

Extra copies of Mews News are available on request; email: info@lurotbrand.co.uk

