

Mews News

No.7 September 2004

smart people come to Lurot Brand...



FOR SALE

Shrewsbury Mews W2	£ 345,000
Shirland Mews W9	£ 350,000
Golborne Mews W10	£ 449,000
Eagle House Mews SW4	£ 485,000
Wavel Mews NW6	£ 499,000
Quex Mews NW6	£ 499,950
Northwick Close NW8	£ 550,000
London Mews W2	£ 595,000
Russell Gardens Mews W14	£ 625,000
Bridstow Place W2	£ 635,000
Denbigh Close W11	£ 650,000
Gloucester Mews W2	£ 650,000
Russell Gardens Mews W14	£ 650,000
Celbridge Mews W2	£ 695,000
Hazlitt Mews W14	£ 695,000
Hazlitt Mews W14	£ 695,000
Connaught Close W2	£ 735,000
Queen's Mews W2	£ 849,000
Ledbury Mews West W11	£ 850,000
Wallgrave Road SW5	£ 865,000
Lexham Gardens Mews W8	£ 895,000
Wyndham Mews W1	£ 895,000
Caroline Place Mews W2	£ 899,000
Conduit Mews W2	£ 945,000
Ennismore Mews SW7	£ 950,000
Lexham Gardens Mews W8	£ 995,000
Pindock Mews W9	£ 1,095,000
Holland Park Mews W11	£ 1,100,000
De Vere Cottages W8	£ 1,250,000
Hyde Park Gardens Mews W2	£ 1,250,000
Queen's Gate Place Mews SW7	£ 1,250,000
Albion Close, W2	£ 1,300,000
Kynance Mews	£ 1,375,000
Roland Way SW7	£ 1,400,000
Hyde Park Gardens Mews W2	£ 1,450,000
Prince's Gate Mews SW7	£ 1,495,000
Petersham Place SW7	£ 1,555,000
Ennismore Gardens Mews SW7	£ 1,700,000
Hallam Mews W1	£ 2,050,000
Clarendon Close W2	£ 2,950,000

These are only some of our direct instructions. We have many more mews houses to offer when you call.

MEWS TO RENT



SPEAR MEWS SW5

Refurbished and spacious family house with 4 bedrooms, a patio, terrace and garage.

£1,350 per week unfurnished

020 7590 2524



MEWS IN BLOOM THE 2004 WINNERS

See inside.



THE STATE OF THE MARKET

If we asked: "How confident are you feeling about the immediate prospects for the property market?" you might feel moved to answer: "What do you mean 'how confident are YOU feeling?' You're an estate agent, you tell me!"

In that simple exchange lies the complexity of a problem that is exercising the minds of buyers, sellers, agents and bankers. For while agents and bankers can have some influence on the thinking of buyers and sellers, the factors that lead houses prices to soar or dive are too numerous and subtle to define or control.

Daily we are saturated by the newspapers, television, radio and the internet with comment, opinion, discussion, statement, and news. Our political masters play games with our trust and court our votes with rhetoric and spin. We live in a world where oil prices can jump overnight to record levels on the whim of traders spooked by shadows of disasters that have not yet happened - nor ever may. Never mind the emotional or practical factors that affect a move. Media inputs are exceptionally powerful influences on our thinking, our confidence and our level of optimism about the future. The decision to buy or sell a property will, at least in part, be guided by them. That is why perhaps we, the estate agents, should ask you, the potential buyer or seller, what the market will do in the short term rather than vice versa. After all, its fate is partly in your own hands.

We know from experience how long term trends will resolve themselves but where we are all - agents, buyers and sellers - least comfortable is when the property market is in a state of change. We hear seemingly wise voices telling us that the rise in house prices cannot be sustained. Their view is countered by those who tell us that buying power is at an all time high and that property has never been so affordable. Who do you listen to?

Here, in the midst of the summer holidays is how we judge the situation. Through 2004 we have seen fewer properties coming up for sale; a healthy but limited number of committed buyers who are in a position to sign on the dotted line; the rate of price increases moderating; most sellers accepting that their asking price must be reasonable rather than optimistic. What we are not seeing is falling values. Interest rates are rising but remain comparatively low when set against the 15% rate of the early 1990's. It is a fact that there are more people wanting to live in the South-East than there are properties to live in. So long as employment levels are sustained property prices are unlikely to fall significantly. London remains at the heart of the market and prime properties in prime locations will always be at a premium. The supply is limited, the demand constant - so long as pricing is realistic.

We expect sales activity to bounce up again in the autumn when the return to school is over and would be surprised if mews house prices do anything other than continue to edge up gently over time.

www.lurotbrand.co.uk

The only estate agency specialising in the sale and rental of mews properties.



A LIFE IN THE MEWS

Sydney Creamer, chairman of Creamer Jaguar and a resident of Drayson Mews for well over 70 years, died earlier this year. In 1996 he wrote two articles about his childhood in Kensington and the history of the mews he knew so well. This is a combined and abridged version.

KENSINGTON SCHOOLDAYS

I cannot say exactly when I first attended St Mary Abbots, Kensington. It was either 1932 or 1933. Ernest Wade, known unofficially as 'Boozer' because of his florid complexion was headmaster at the time. He had four masters with him Mr Ore; Mr Brawn; Mr Gauld (who had his class recite the 2 to 12 times tables every morning); and Mr Hughes.



St Mary Abbot's School

Mr Hughes realised that my initial were S.C. and he latched on to calling me 'Screamer'. I hated it and him for it. Years later I came upon the word screamer described in the dictionary as "a fine example of anything". If only I had known that then.

School always started at ten to nine and the bell was rung at nine, by a boy chosen for the job. It was a good job because you were excused prayers. These consisted of a hymn, prayers and a sermon from Boozer. Music was encouraged and St Mary Abbots was a member of the London Schools Choir. I recall a concert at Alexandra Palace where Boozer conducted a choir of over 2,000 children. It was an exciting day for me because my aunt who taught in the Royal College of Music was playing the orchestra. Some of us joined the choir where we could get special dispensation to attend weddings and funerals. What was special was not the fact that we were excused school but that we were paid one shilling (5p) per service and a shilling was a lot of money in those days.

Tuesday mornings, after prayers, we walked up in a line to the Fox School in Notting Hill Gate, a large gas-lit building at the top of Kensington Church Street. Here we had woodwork lessons taught by a man whose name, by chance, was Mr Wood.

Wednesday afternoon was for sports when we went up to Coalbrookdalegate Field just past the Albert Memorial to play either cricket or football. We had an annual Sports Day at Perks Field above Kensington Palace and were allowed to walk through the Palace without any interruption from the authorities. I managed to win the sack race one year and again at the London School Sports at White City. My father was disgusted with me for excelling in such an unattractive event.

Thursday we walked up through Holland Walk to the Lancaster Road Baths for swimming. I recall Boozer cheering me when I managed to swim a width.

There was a degree of corporal punishment in the school. Usually a slap on the knuckles was the immediate punishment response to a paltry offence. If the offence was serious enough then there was the cane. Only once to my knowledge was it directed on to the boy's bottom. Invariably you had it on the hand, and did it sting! I had it once and when I came home and told my father I got another good hiding for misbehaving at school.

1935 was the Jubilee of King George V and Queen Mary. The following year the King died and in 1937 George VI was crowned. On each of these occasions the school was given tickets in stands lining the routes of the processions. The monarchy was held in high esteem and it was coupled very closely with loyalty to the country.

Closely associated with the school was Church Walk. There were two sweet shops in the Walk. Stebbings, which was a newsagent as well as, importantly, The Tuck Shop, run by Mr Pollard and his wife. In those days milk was the only food either allowed or available in the school. It cost half an old penny for a half pint. It was a tradition that the more senior pupils would meet there after school and drink lemonade. This cherished activity was not to be taken lightly. I had a job delivering the papers and one morning I was stopped by an Inspector for delivering before 7 a.m. Poor Mr Stebbings was fined for that. At the bottom of the Walk, on the corner, was a small shop run by H.M. Davies who sold Russian artifacts.

We took an exam at eleven years of age. If we passed we were sent to Secondary School. If we failed we stayed at the Abbots until we were fourteen and then left to take up employment. Pupils were encouraged to take apprenticeships which meant working for one employer and attending evening classes for seven years. I personally went to Regent Street Polytechnic Craft School in 1938. My studies ceased at the outbreak of war in 1939 and I got a job in a drawing office in Barnes under three very bright men who had been hounded out of Europe by the Nazis.

The war changed many things at the school. Most if not all children were evacuated to Box in Wiltshire. They assembled, labelled with their names, at Kensington High Street, complete with suitcase, and a cardboard box round their neck containing a gas mask to a, then unknown, destination. They were accompanied by Miss Jones and Miss Rodway and I was told that some pupils made lasting relationships with the kind people of Box.

I am very thankful for what the school did for me. It is so satisfying to walk past now and see the building with its two figures on the north side, looking just the same as it did in 1932 with the exception that there were wrought iron railings in the church grounds. They were taken away in the war.

LIFE & WORK DRAYSON MEWS.

I am given to understand that the title DRAYSON came from the name of a speculative builder from the Earls Court area. The ground was owned, up to the disposal of the leases starting in 1953, by the Metropolitan Railway Surplus Lands Company Ltd, now part of MEPC. The land came from the surplus soil after the District Line tube was built. The tunnel was open cast dug by shovel and barrow, and the earth filled in above it. It says something for Mr Drayson, who built the mews which has to date withstood the vibration of the railway and impact of considerable bombing during the war.

Before the war all the ground floor premises of the mews were occupied either by the Borough Council, the Post Office, or other private concerns. It also provided accommodation for chauffeurs, their families, and for the cars of the households. Chauffeurs were required to keep the cars cleaned and repaired.

My father was chauffeur to Mrs Wallace Bruce, who lived in Gloucester Lodge, a large house demolished by bombs in WW2. It stood at the corner of Gloucester Walk and Hornton Street where there is now a block of flats. Mrs Bruce purchased a lease of 12 Drayson Mews for my father to live in and commence a night motor repair business.



Gloucester Walk

In my youth all the upper parts of the properties in Drayson Mews had what was known as a 'loft gate', a full length door on the front of the first floor with a wooden sliding grill panel to prevent occupants from falling out. It is said they were there to enable the loading of hay for the horses. Most loft gates were bricked up just after the war and the space behind turned into a bathroom.

Sydney Creamer went on to describe the occupiers and pre-war usage of each property in the mews. He began with the eastern side of the mews.

No 1 - The only fully private property in the mews. It was called the "Rat Hole" and was occupied by Mrs Bosenquet, said to be the mother of a famous cricket commentator. The whole place was painted black. No 3 - Occupied by Mr Mitchell who ran a private car hire business which subsequently failed. No 5 - Occupied by a chauffeur, Mr Kendal.

No 7 - Occupied by another chauffeur, Mr Hunt who lived there with his two sons. His employer was a Harley Street physician and the roll up shutters of the garage were painted in mock wood fashion, like the doors of No 5.

No 9 - Lived in by Captain Murdock who owned the Yellow Cat tea room in Kensington Church Street. Murdock diligently scrubbed the garage floor, which was covered in attractive yellow tiles, every week after washing his car. An air raid shelter was built in the garage during the war. No 11 -

Occupied by Frank Brown a builder in Holland Street and used to keep his building materials and car in. No 13 - Mr Reginald Pearson operated a private car hire business here. The garage had swing doors that took up half the mews when open. There were considerable arguments and bad favour experienced over this type of door.

No 15 - Two young gentlemen who called themselves V & T Motors occupied this building. They wore white overalls and made a lot of noise - apart from using the back office for various nefarious activities usually connected with young ladies. In the flat above I inherited a tenant called Harry Rose and discovered he had no means of heating, no bathroom, no electricity, only gas. I suggested we made some improvements but he would have none of it. He did agree to redecoration and when I asked what colour he wanted he replied, "Do it all brown". He was a lovely man.

No 17 - Elliot & Company operated a motor repair business. In the upper flat Miss Walker taught piano and gave singing lessons. Among her pupils was Sybil Thorndyke. No 19 - Occupied by Frank Gardiner, the best engineer in the mews, who lived at No 24. In the garage Gardiner designed and built one of the first turbine jet engines. I recall him trying to start it and how it would run momentarily, then stop.



Drayson Mews.

No 21 - A depot for the street cleaners of The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea. The foreman was Mr Ham, succeeded by Mr Marsh. No 23 - Owned by a lady from Phillimore Gardens. She kept the last horse and carriage in the mews. Her chauffeur was Mr Dowding and part of the garage was let to the flower seller outside Kensington High Street station.

No 25 - Occupied by Mr Hayden, a chauffeur. No 27 - Occupied by Elliott and Company. Nos 29, 30, 31 - Occupied by Daniel Neal and used as a shoe repair factory.

Meanwhile, on the western side of the mews an equally colourful cast of characters were in occupation.

No 2 - Used as a builder's yard and the rear as a carpenter's shop by Weeden & Shrimpton. The dung pit in front was used to store rubbish pending collection when it was shovelled out, much to the consternation of the chauffeurs, especially as housewives were forbidden to shake mats outside in the mews after 9 a.m.

No 2A - Lived in by a jobbing gardener, Mr Dancaester, who committed suicide in the flat. No 4 - The upper part was lived in by Mr Isaacs, a chimney sweep, his wife and children. The garage was occupied by G.C. Hatt & Son, funeral directors and the rear of the garage was used for making coffins. No 6 - Wedge & Turner, motor engineers, later P & A (Parker & Ayres). The firm was later taken on by my father. No 8 - L. Eldridge - Daimler cars for hire. No 10 - Mr Hodgetts, a chauffeur.

No 12 - Occupied by my father. The sliding doors of the garage were blown out into the mews when a land mine fell on the Town Hall site. (When the mine dropped every roof in the mews was blown off. Considerable interest arose as to why so much damage was done when the houses in Hornton Street suffered only the loss of their window frames. One theory was that Hornton Street provided a barrier and the damage to the mews was not caused by blast but by suction pulling the roofs off.)

No 14 - Occupied by Mr Taylor, chauffeur to Mr Hunter of Phillimore Gardens. No 16 - The chauffeur who lived here was sacked on the spot because he only cleaned half the car - the side his boss got in. He regularly picked the man up at the newspaper seller outside High Street Kensington station and on this particular day the boss was waiting on the other side of the road for him. No 18 - Mr Parrish, a chauffeur. No 20 - Used by Nicholls Stores and Taylors Ltd, large grocers in Kensington Church Street., to garage their vans. No 22 - Occupied by Elliott & Co. The very large fly leaf doors on this building gave considerable trouble to others in the mews.

Nos 24 and 26 - Frank Gardiner Motor Engineers. Mr Gardiner was also a very clever radio technician and made a powerful short wave radio in the attic, screwing most of the components to the ceiling joists. When war started the Post Office came along and confiscated the lot as he could have used it for transmitting.

No 28 - Lived in by Mr Utting, a retired chauffeur, who scraped a living garaging and cleaning cars. No 32 - Mr Laing, a chauffeur.

There can be few people who, 40 years on, could give such a comprehensive account of the occupiers of a single mews - but if you are one of them do get in touch with us and we will consider publishing your story.

Where in the Mews?



In the last Mews News we asked if you could tell us from which mews this picture of the Post Office tower was taken.

The answer is Cleveland Mews W1 and the winner is Mrs S. Racher from Grosvenor Crescent Mews SW1. Our congratulations and a bottle of fine wine are on the way to her. Thanks to all who entered.

FLAT TO BUY



GLoucester Square W2

2,342 square feet on the ground and lower ground floors (with high ceilings!) of a fine, stucco-fronted conversion.

LEASEHOLD

£1.5 million Subject to Contract

020 7479 1977

MEWS TO RENT



HORBURY MEWS W1

A lovely 4 bedroom house in this prime Notting Hill location - and with the use of Ladbrooke Square Gardens.

£1,200 per week unfurnished 020 7479 1988

CAPTION COMPETITION >

In the picture on the right two policemen stroll down Ennismore Gardens Mews. What might they be saying?

Send us your witty captions by post (address on back page) or email: mewsworld@lurotbrand.co.uk

The one that best tickles our sense of humour will receive an exceedingly useful Lurot Brand - London Mews Company home tool kit.

Entries close 31st October 2004

TURNPIKE TALES

The trustees [of the turnpike roads] were at the mercy of their army of gate keepers who actually collected the tolls. The top job in the profession was that of collector at Hyde Park Corner turnpike, where by 1825 the rate had become 10 shillings [50p] per day but elsewhere as little as 5 shillings per week was known. But there was great competition for even this small reward, the opportunities for fiddling being so great. In the Tyburn [modern day Marble Arch] toll-house, as elsewhere, it was not unknown for the collector to sell spirits without a licence, and collector Samuel Green had a regular stall for the sale of horseflesh, and acted as a tip-off man to smugglers whenever Excise Officers were known to be watching the gate."

The road from Tyburn was turnpiked in 1714. At that time the road was separated from Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens by a high brick wall, which hindered wind and the sun from drying out the muddy surface and also provided cover for the 'evil

disposed persons' especially around Lancaster Gate where trees in Kensington Gardens overhung the wall.

At 6 o'clock one morning in 1764, one Mr Herbert of Wardour Street, going to Oxfordshire, was stopped by a single highwayman, mounted on a black horse, between Bayswater and Kensington Gravel Pits [modern day Notting Hill Gate], and robbed of two guineas and some silver. Another newspaper report of 1774 says that: 'About 7 o'clock on Friday evening Mr Jollerton, carrier in Tottenham Court Road, was stopped by a single highwayman near Kensington Gravel Pits, who demanded his money, which the former refused. The villain discharged a pistol at him, the ball of which went through his right shoulder; and just as the highwayman was taking his money, a gentleman's servant came up, upon which he rode off at full speed. Mr Jollerton now lies without hopes of recovery.'

From a hand typed paper by Arthur C. Jones (Turnpike Roads in and around Paddington) read to the Paddington Society in April 1961. Discovered in July 2004 tucked away in a second-hand bookshop in Letchworth, Hertfordshire.

HOT HEALEY



On a rainy day in late May a deep rumble echoed down the street outside our Sussex Place office and in to view hove a rally prepared, red and white, Austin Healey. The number plate, URX 727 identified the car as the one in which the legendary Pat Moss won the 1960 Liege-Rome-Liege rally.

This wonderful, historic vehicle parked in the mews next door and we took the opportunity to snap some pictures. We discovered from the driver that the car was on its way to Christies to be auctioned. The sale took place in June and URX 727 was knocked down for £175,750 including the buyer's premium. History certainly comes at a price.

TIP - OFF

"Dear Ed,
I think - while you are down our way - that you should look at our flowers, trees etc in Devonshire Close.

Thanks!

Barry Coker."

So we did - with the result that Barry's mews came runner-up in Mews in Bloom 2004.

MEWS TO RENT



HESPER MEWS SW5

A light and spacious 3 bedroom house with a roof terrace and a garage.

£1,450 per week unfurnished

020 7590 2524

Keep in Touch

The properties on these pages are a tiny taster of what we have on offer. 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.



MEWS IN BLOOM 2004 - THE WINNERS

Ennismore Gardens Mews SW7 (top) and Albion Mews W2 (right) are the joint winners of this year's Mews in Bloom competition and the runner up is Devonshire Close W1 (below left). The names of the winning mews will now be inscribed on the solid silver armada plate (below right) celebrating the winners of the past 8 years.

Mews in Bloom is judged on the extent to which residents have enhanced the

look of their street by the use of plants, flowers, shrubs and trees and this year's winners have made an exceptional effort for which they must be congratulated. Ennismore Gardens Mews and Albion Close are shining examples of how best to make an already pretty mews even more attractive.

Apart from making the quality of life in the mews so much more pleasant there is the added bonus that properties in mews so obviously cared for and cherished are of increased value. We find that adding the words 'Winners of Mews in Bloom' to our sales details creates a great deal of interest among mews buyers.



Devonshire Close was called Devonshire Mews East from 1899 to 1934 and before that the rather romantic sounding, Cape of Good Hope Mews.





Ennismore Gardens Mews gained a certain notoriety in April 1980 when a Libyan was shot down at the door of his office in what the newspapers called 'the secluded, cobbled mews'.

Albion Mews was called Albion Mews East until 1938 and, as logic would dictate, Albion Close, opposite, was called Albion Mews West.

Our winning mews were not always so attractive. These pictures are taken from our archives and show the streets in the mid 1980's. Clearly not every owner was making the sort of gardening efforts seen today...

We have pictures from 1985/87 of most central mews. Do get in touch if you would like to see your mews featured in a future issue.



MEWS TO BUY

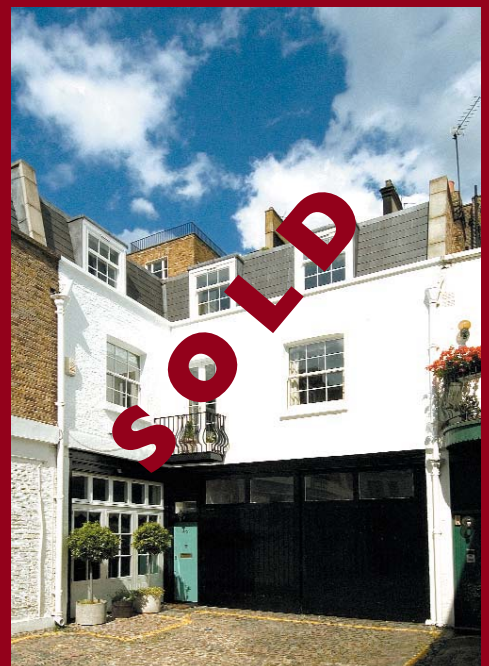


CLARENDON CLOSE W2

You believe the canard that mews are small and dark? Try this one. 3,500 sq ft with a 46' garden and a lock-up garage.

LEASEHOLD

£2.95 million Subject to Contract
020 7479 1999



QUEEN'S GATE PLACE MEWS SW7

£1.695 million Subject to Contract



PETERSHAM PLACE SW7

A beautifully appointed and presented mews house, completely refurbished following commencement of works in 2001. Well worth viewing.

FREEHOLD

£1.555 million Subject to Contract
020 7479 1999



MEWS TO BUY



HOLLAND PARK MEWS W11

We have seen many of the houses in this stunning mews and this is one of the finest. Grade II listed and beautifully modernised about five years ago.

FREEHOLD £1.1 million Subject to Contract
020 7479 1999

SEEN IN ALL THE RIGHT PLACES...



We are regular advertisers in the Conde Nast publications, showcasing properties in the pages of Vogue, Tatler, House & Garden, and GQ Magazine.

"If you wish to have a just notion of the magnitude of this city, you must not be satisfied with seeing its great streets and squares, but must survey the innumerable little lanes and courts. It is not in the showy evolutions of buildings, but in the multiplicity of human habitations which are crowded together, that the wonderful immensity of London consists."

Samuel Johnson 1709-1784

THE HORRIBLE H.I.P.

The Housing Bill will be debated in the House of Lords in mid-September and the highly controversial Home Information Pack (HIP) is likely to receive a hostile reception. Campaigners are seeking to persuade their Lordships to throw out the measure in its entirety, but in the event the government uses its overwhelming majority in the Commons to force the proposal through there will need to be many changes to make it practical. For sellers the biggest

inconvenience is likely to be the fact that a property will not be able to be marketed (and that includes an estate agent simply mentioning to a buyer that a particular property might be coming up for sale) unless a Pack is in place - and the delay whilst the Pack is prepared could run to 14 working days.

With a Pack likely to cost well over £1,000 in central London sellers may soon want to give their verdict on this ill-considered measure - through the ballot box.

MEWS TO BUY



DENBIGH CLOSE W11

Period mews house converted to create a fabulous studio-style reception room on the first floor with a pitched ceiling and exposed beams. Spectacular!

FREEHOLD

£650,000 Subject to Contract

020 7479 1999

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SOPHIE'S KITCHEN

Our Sophie Mauleverer offers a simple, cold pasta salad that everyone will love.

Smoked Salmon and Pasta Salad

Serves 6

Ingredients:

500g Fusilli pasta
200g Tiger prawns
350g Smoked salmon - or as much as you think you need
142ml Soured cream (a small tub)
200ml Creme fraiche
10g Fresh dill (a small handful)
300g Sugar snap peas
4 tbsp Capers
Lemon juice to taste
Plenty of freshly ground pepper

With scissors cut the smoked salmon into small pieces straight into a large bowl. Cut up the dill into the salmon. You can keep some salmon and dill back for garnish if you are serving in individual dishes.

Add the sour cream, creme fraiche and lemon juice to taste. Add the prawns and capers and freshly ground pepper. Stir all together. Do this before you cook the pasta so that the dill has as long as possible to infuse.

Cook the pasta until soft. Flash boil the sugar snap peas so that they are still crunchy. Allow both to cool then mix together all the ingredients.

Serve immediately or up to 12 hours later. If the pasta dries at all, moisten with lemon juice.

Bon Appetit!