

## **Auctioneering - A Talent Bordering On Theatre**

*By Lorna Foreman - The Glengarry News*

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I recently attended my first auction and found out just how much fun they are...and I didn't even try bidding on anything. Apparently I was just joining the many who have attended auctions for years and years throughout history.

Did you know that in 47 A.D. the Roman Empire was auctioned off?

The art of an auctioneer has many facets and Theresa Taylor of Theresa E. Taylor & Associates, South Lancaster, has honed them to just that - an art.



What makes a good auctioneer? From my observation it requires a bit of theatre, lots of energy, strong business know-how but most of all it requires a sensitivity to people and their attachment to their possessions.

"I've been an auctioneer for four years," Theresa told me. "Until recently I worked as controller for Cornwall Mazda and the 28 years I worked for companies has helped me enormously."

"I attended World Wide College of Auctioneering," Theresa explained. "It was an incredible experience - much like boot camp. For ten days we worked from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. and had to learn a lot of verbal drills like repeating limericks and tongue twisters."

"Every auction is so unique," Theresa said. "Every day is different and you never know what the next call will bring. It takes me out and about to meet new people and see new places and, of course find objects that I have never seen before. If I don't know anything about the object, I research it and call in experts."

There is excitement in the air at an auction. Of course successful auctions don't just happen. Not only does an auction require buyers, it needs to have merchandise. Theresa is her own best marketing expert.

Community minded, she is a member of the Cornwall Rotary Club, Cornwall Chamber of Commerce, Cornwall and Seaway Valley Tourism, Cornwall and Area Business Association and Women's Entrepreneurs as well as others. But it is her people talent that speaks for itself.

I loved listening to Theresa on the podium when an object came up for bidding. Her humour and personality make the moment and it won her the "First Runner-Up in the Novice Division" at the Canadian Auctioneers' Competition in her second year. She understands her audience and that makes the event doubly enjoyable. Not only can you walk away with something precious but with a smile on your face as well.

"We recently held a huge auction at the Civic Complex, Cornwall," Theresa said. "We were one of several auctioneering companies to make a bid but we got it. Apparently some of the reasons were that we were the only ones who understood the emotions attached to the items and cared about the owner's possessions but also told the consignor the truth; that you can't sell sentiment. You have to feel for the people and do the business arrangements after.

"I have rural roots," Theresa explained. "I have always gone to auctions even as a child. At one auction I remember saying to myself,...I can do a better job than that and so I checked it out. There is a lot of blood, sweat and tears though. It's taxing but I love it. I guess I am a people person. I can feel the character of the person and develop an image of them through their possessions. A relationship must be developed with the commodity to really be able to auction it."

Theresa has become known for her collectible and antiques auctions. She keeps abreast of trends and told me that trends can be set overnight. If Martha Stewart suddenly uses some unusual object, guaranteed they will achieve a higher bid.

Because Theresa's company markets well: internet sites, flyers, print, etc., bids come in from everywhere including the United States. In fact she just shipped something out to Calgary.

"The world is our market," Theresa said with a smile. "It's like the old Matchmakers. I'm seeking as many suitors as possible."

It is not only people who want cash for possessions. Obsolete stock, overstock and downsizing contribute products that find their way onto the auction table.

Theresa just returned from the Royal Winter Fair in Toronto where she was Ambassador for a Day on behalf of the Auctioneers Association of Ontario.

She also assists local charities through auctions.

Theresa believes that the most important auction that she can ever do is the one she does for you.

Theresa's web site is [theresataylor.com](http://theresataylor.com) and she can be reached at 347-7672.