

# For Paul Martin, auctioneering is a way of life

**By KENDACE BERRY**  
**NEW HOLLAND** — Paul Z. Martin, auctioneer, may have retired from owning his own sales stables near Intercourse, but that doesn't mean he won't still be active in the auction business.

His business is now owned by Martin Auctioneers, Inc., which means that his sons, Larry, and Paul Martin, Jr. are in a corporation at the Sales Stables with their office in New Holland. And his daughter, Shirley, acts as secretary for the group. Also, Paul Martin, Sr., is quick to point out, his oldest son, Vernon, is also an auctioneer, although not affiliated with this group.

Which all just proves that with the Martins, auctioneering runs in the family.

For Paul Martin, Sr., it started some 51 years ago, when he was associated with his father who was a horse dealer. They held horse

sales, and he was involved with his first sale when he was 18 years old.

He went to auctioneer school in 1947 and since 1962, has worked as an instructor at a school teaching the auctioneering skills. He tells the students about horse auctions and bid spotting.

Today, Martin, related, he still works about 100 days each year doing horse sales, both auctioneering and bid spotting. These sales are located all over the U.S. and Canada.

He told that he just "likes being an auctioneer, especially in the horse end". The three most common breeds that he works with are the American Saddlebreds, the Standardbreds, and the Thoroughbreds.

"A horse auctioneer has to know horses," he commented. "both their type and quality. And also their pedigree is important."

He said that horse sales have changed over the past 50 years, with the big sales much bigger and prices much higher.

In 1977, he told of a sale he was involved in, in Kentucky, where a Thoroughbred yearling sold for 1½ million dollars. The horse will start on the race track this year. That, he stated, was the most expensive horse, he ever helped to sell.

For one sales company in Lexington, Kentucky, he noted, he helped sell 121 million dollars worth of horseflesh in 1978. The horses, Thoroughbreds, were sold in 17 days in intervals throughout the year.

Right now, the Martins are busy getting ready for their eighth annual carriage sale on May 17, 18, and 19.

Martin told that 300 to 350 carriages and horse related wagons and other items will be sold throughout the sale. And on Friday and Saturday

of the sale, they will be selling in two tents, a first for the carriage sale.

One of the items that will be sold is a Royal Hanover Coach, from the House of Hanover, the one time property of King George V. It was in use approximately from 1837 to 1866.

Martin stated that these carriage sales, which take place twice yearly, are the only ones of their size and calibre.

Why do people buy carriages?

"People collect them," Martin commented. "Carriages are like the antique market, they're getting scarce, and the supply of good vehicles just isn't around."

"A lot of the carriages purchased will be used," he continued. "For instance, there is a marathon (show) held at the same time of the Devon Horse Show, and people parade their carriages in that."

The auctioneer business is "booming" according to Martin, with him telling that the auction profession is getting more professional all the time.

A good auctioneer has the right attitude, is friendly, and, above all, desires to be an auctioneer, he commented. "It's a good business to get into, there is money in all fields."

He added that besides the usual sales he is involved in, that both he and his sons also do charity auctions.

He noted that Martin Auctioneers is licensed in every state that has licenses and belongs to Pa. and the National Auctioneers Association.

"The auction business is growing in leaps and bounds" he summed it up. "Just look in Lancaster

Farming, and see all the sales. There has to be auctioneers for each one of them."



This Royal Hanover Coach, once owned by King George V, will be one of the items auctioned at the Martin's eighth annual carriage auction to be held in May.



Paul Z. Martin, standing at the entrance of Martin Auctioneers, Inc., on Main Street in New Holland, demonstrates his classic form as he checks for last bids before declaring "Sold."

## Horse club taking members

The second meeting for the Lancaster County Horse Production Club was held April 17 at the Farrington's. The 4-H club members would like to send a special thanks to Terry Helter from the York County Production club for his advice and helpful suggestions.

It was announced that June 1 is the deadline for the members selection of project horse or horses.

The club members voted that there will be dues of \$2 to cover postage expenses.

The next meeting will be on May 15 at 7:30 p.m. and

will be held at the Spahn's (Hobo Acres) in Strasburg. If directions are needed call Jean Spahn at 717-687-8858. It is not too late to join. Anyone interested in joining should call Rose Fellenbaum (569-3068) or Jean Spahn for more information.

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