

# PAA President Says Auctioneering Is In His Blood

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WAYNESBURG (Greene Co.) — The head of the Pennsylvania Auctioneers Association never attended auctioneering school, but he can call bids with the best of them. At one time, Clayton placed second in a state bidding competition, and also in the top 10 for several years.

Clayton said of his auctioneer start, "Pennsylvania did not require auctioneering school at that time; instead, I was required to take a test."

He was also required to serve as an apprentice for two years. It's no easy feat to acquire an apprenticeship, but Clayton said he was in the right place at the right time.

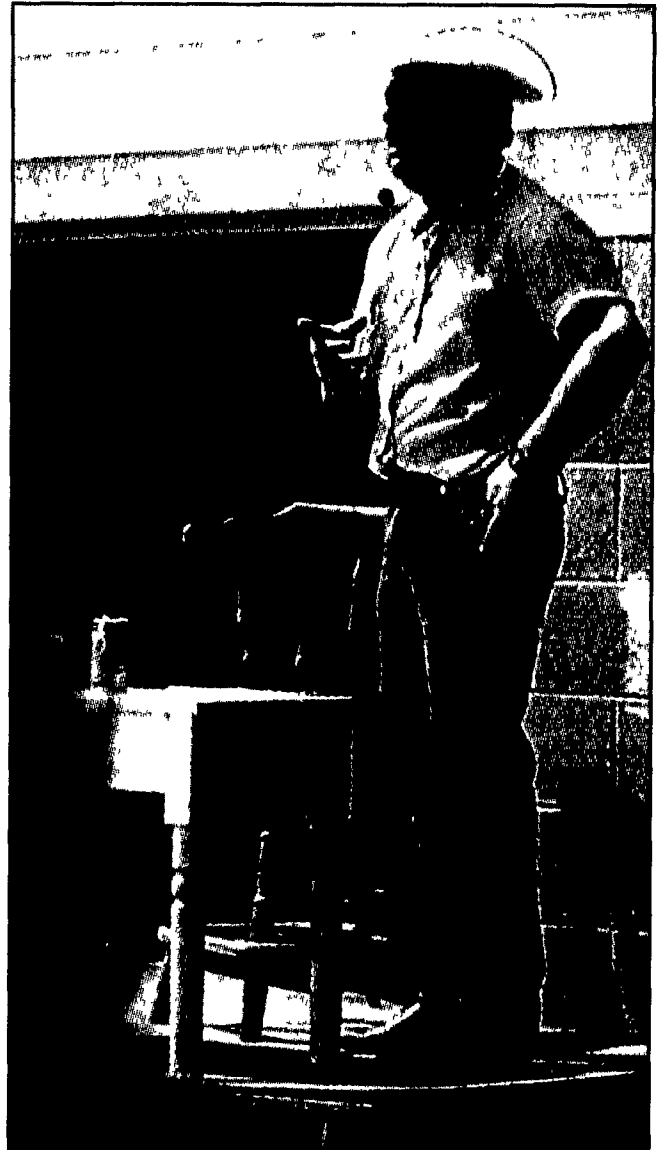
In 1965, he was sitting on a porch listening to an auctioneer calling bids. The auctioneer had a coughing spasm. Clayton offered to call for him while the auctioneer rested his voice, and ended up working for him 10 years. In 1967, Clayton received his auctioneer license.

Growing up, Clayton attended lots of auctions with his father and grandfather. As a teen-ager, Clayton took a test that revealed he has an aptitude for auctioneering. That clinched it. Clayton never looked back.

He said, "In Greene County, real estate auctions are not as popular as in Lancaster County. Antiques are big."

Clayton said, "I had the good fortune to sell a Boughner crock that was late 1800s. I expected it would go between \$5,000-\$8,000. It sold for \$18,000. I got a reputation for selling."

But having surprises like those "are harder to come by today," Clayton said. Families today are



**James Clayton believes people considering an auctioneering career should have an outgoing personality, pleasant demeanor, high, honest integrity, good ethics, and good common sense.**

better educated about what is valuable. They tend to keep valuable pieces rather than sell.

Over the years, Clayton has watched the antiques market change. He said, "People want 1940-1950s chrome dinette sets. They didn't used to get a bid, but today people try to buy back their childhoods. People buy what they remember. A set of chairs that sold for 35 cents a few years ago now bring \$150 a piece."

Although many items are commanding higher dollar amounts, Clayton believes things need to be



**Supply and demand determine how high bids go at auctions.**

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