

# NOVEMBER 11, 12 & 13, 2005

## SEMIANNUAL AUCTION OF ANTIQUES & AMERICANA

Jeffrey S. Evans of Green Valley Auctions in Mt. Crawford, Virginia led the firm's semiannual auction of Antiques and Americana, which was held over three days on November 11, 12 and 13, 2005 and included both catalogued and uncatalogued sessions. Normally a two-day sale for Evans and staff, the additional day was required to sell the nearly 4,000 lots that had been assembled for this massive auction. All three galleries were packed full for the event which grossed just under \$925,000. The 793 registered bidders represented 34 states, the United Kingdom and Canada.

The sale featured property of noted collector Dr. J. F. Wine of Harrisonburg, VA; the 30+ year collection of the Franklin family of Charlottesville, VA; property of two Virginia museums; along with many other collections from VA, MD, PA and NY. Evans noted that the quantity and strong diversity of the merchandise offered generated over 1,700 absentee bids and more than 100 phone bids.

The auction commenced on Friday with two uncatalogued sessions. Session #1 began at 10:00 a.m. with the Wine and Franklin libraries along with another large library of Lincoln and other Americana titles which were sold by box, multiple and individual lots. Bidders scoured over the 200 box lots offered with most boxes selling between \$11 and \$121 (all prices include the 10% buyer's premium). Individual lots were led by an 1885 edition of Lake's "Rockingham County, Va. Atlas" which sold for \$385.

Session #1 was just concluding as the second session kicked off at 1:00 p.m. in Gallery #3, which spilled outside into the parking lot due to the 1,400+ lots. Offered here were hundreds of box and tray lots, attic and basement contents, numerous eclectic collections from the Franklin estate ranging from sporting trophies to painted shoeshine boxes, along with row after row of as-found furniture. Highlights included a rare Stanley #9 cabinetmaker's plane which brought \$522.50; a paint decorated blanket chest at \$687.50; and an unusual country Windsor-style dentist's chair which drew much interest before selling for \$495.

Friday's catalogued Session #3 began at 5:00 p.m. with the Franklin collection of kitchen and household collectibles, much of which had been featured in numerous reference volumes written by Ms. Franklin. Hand forged iron hearth implements drew the most interest among the 100+ lots offered. Next to the block was a fine collection of antique firearms, the majority of which were from the Wine collection. The auction staff had fielded more inquires about these than any other category in Session #3, which foreshadowed the spirited bidding that ultimately ensued. The top lot was a rare Shenandoah Valley long rifle signed "G F" and attributed to George Washington Fisher (1780-1869) of Shenandoah County which featured an engraved brass patch box, German silver inlays and relief carving on the stock. This rifle from the first quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was in excellent overall condition and had been deaccessioned by a Virginia museum which no doubt contributed to it making \$6,600 against an estimate of \$2,000-\$3,000. The next lot up was a Harper's Ferry U.S. Model 1819 Hall breach-loading flintlock rifle in very good condition which also surpassed its estimate of \$800-\$1,200, finally selling for \$2,970. Winchester rifles always draw considerable interest and the ten early examples offered here proved to be no exception. A Model 1866 fourth model 44 cal. carbine with brass frame and iron butt plate dated to 1889, sold for a strong \$2,310 (\$500-\$800 estimate) despite being in only fair to good condition. Other Winchester

highlights included a Model 1876 third model 45-60 cal. rifle circa 1883 at \$1,870 and a Model 1873 third model 44 cal. musket, also circa 1883, which reached \$1,430. Colt handguns were also in high demand and included a circa 1887 Single Action Army 44 cal. revolver in very good condition and with what appeared to be the original holster and belt which blew past its \$300-\$500 estimate, ultimately selling for \$2,860. Other revolvers included a circa 1876 Smith & Wesson second model Schofield single action 45 cal. in fine condition which brought a strong \$2,750.

The firm's Americana auctions always offer good Civil War items although Evans noted that "the supply of fresh 'out-of-the-attic' material is getting very thin." This sale included a group of twenty-seven letters written between 1861 and 1865 from James Patterson to his future wife of Wytheville, VA which seemed to be a reasonable buy at \$2,640.

Many other categories were sold on Friday evening including a signed Gustav Stickley #332 oak Morris chair with original but faded finish and lacking its original cushions, which sold to the phone for \$3,520. A collection of American historical flasks included a yellow olive green McKearin GXIII-16 sailor/banjo player half pint which fetched \$522.50. A collection of Bennington and Rockingham pottery was highlighted by two flint-glazed candlesticks standing 6 1/2" and 7" high which were in excellent condition and sold strongly at \$1,485.

The doors opened at 8:00 a.m. Saturday morning for Session #4 and by the 9:30 a.m. starting time, the gallery was standing room only. Jeff Evans is well known for offering great Shenandoah Valley folk pottery and many of those in attendance had arrived early for the more than 150 lots that kicked off this session. After Evans made his pre-auction announcements, the sale was off to a rousing start with lot #1, an important five gallon stoneware churn that was strongly attributed to Emanuel Suter's New Erection Pottery of Rockingham County, Virginia and featured a free-hand bright cobalt blue chicken on one side. The churn, which had descended in a local family, was featured in the 2004 Rockingham Co. pottery exhibit, "A Great Deal of Stone & Earthen Ware" and illustrated in the exhibit catalogue that was co-authored by Evans and Scott Suter. Estimated at \$15,000 to \$20,000, this fine example quickly sold to a serious local collector for \$25,300, a record auction price for a piece of Rockingham Co. pottery. Numerous pieces of Anthony W. Bacher earthenware from the Winchester area were offered including a signed and dated 1877 copper-glazed pitcher and an unsigned polychrome-glazed figure of a bird, both of which flew to \$7,150. Bell family pottery continues to be among the most popular and this sale included many examples. The top John Bell example was a fine signed lead and manganese-glazed cream jug which stood 4 3/4" high and brought \$4,620. An impressed "S. Bell & Son / Strasburg" polychrome-glazed 7" high oversized mug which showed some glaze restoration still managed to reach \$4,510.

The pottery was followed by over 150 lots of textiles including 120 quilts from the collection of Dr. Charles Rand Penney of Lockport, NY. This is one of many varied collections assembled by Dr. Penney that Green Valley has sold over the past four years. Many different styles of quilts were represented including applique and Amish with conditions ranging from fair to excellent. Overall prices seemed to be fairly soft with numerous examples selling below estimate. The top lot was a fine Coxcomb and Tulip applique from the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century in excellent condition which sold for \$1,650. Evans was somewhat disappointed but not entirely surprised by the less than stellar prices. "The market for average quilts has been thin at best over the last several years," he observed. "Dr. Penney's quilts received a lot of interest and generated many in-house and phone bids, and most examples in excellent condition brought solid prices; on the other hand, those that had condition issues drew very little interest and low bids," Evans commented.

A good selection of Virginia baskets was offered including a fine Page County white oak splint low round example with two handles and outstanding dry worn paint which reached \$2,970. A signed and dated 1905 tooled leather key basket in excellent condition sold to the phone for \$2,860. Many interesting examples of folk and outsider art were offered from the Franklin collection with most examples selling in the \$110 to \$935 range. Children's and miniature furniture was well represented including a fine Virginia inlaid walnut miniature three-drawer blanket chest, late 18<sup>th</sup> or early 19<sup>th</sup> century and in excellent original condition which brought \$5,500. Four tall-case clocks were sold, led by an unsigned Federal period inlaid cherry case example attributed to Pennsylvania featuring an eight-day brass movement which more than doubled its high estimate when it was knocked down at \$13,200.

Evans assembled another fine selection of Virginia furniture for this sale with a Rockingham County walnut sideboard/pie safe drawing the most interest. This very rare form rested on four tall turned legs and featured an applied dovetailed gallery and four drawers above four doors which were each fitted with two hand-punched tins. Evans indicated that this was one of four or five recorded examples from the same cabinet shop near Edom, VA. This example which measured 75" long and was in excellent refinished condition soared above its \$8,000-\$12,000 estimate eventually selling for a record \$31,900. Other Virginia furniture highlights included a Southside cherry sugar chest on frame with two lower drawers and minor repairs which reached \$7,150 and a Chippendale mahogany side chair with voluted ears and cut-out heart in the splat which drew much attention and despite "numerous honest old repairs" sold for \$4,290 to a phone bidder. Many good pieces of Pennsylvania furniture were also offered including a Chippendale inlaid walnut high chest featuring three over two over four graduated drawers, fluted quarter columns and original bold ogee bracket feet; in a warm old cracked finish, it more than doubled its high estimate selling for \$9,075. A nice selection of Victorian furniture included a walnut Wooten Patent secretary with burl panels and accents which brought \$7,425 and a most unusual walnut marble-top 12" square flower stand with a carved dog beside a dog house that quadrupled its high estimate selling for \$3,300.

After the furniture, a large collection of over 500 pieces of Staffordshire transferware was offered with most selling in good-size lots. Platters included a 15" x 18 1/2" dark blue example with a fox hunting scene which was chased to \$990. Many groups of plates and cups and saucers were sold, ranging in price from \$55 to \$550.

Part 2 of Session #4 began at 6:00 p.m. with a selection of silver and jewelry including a lady's 14k yellow gold pendant necklace set with six diamonds ranging from .50 ct to 1.70 ct in weight which found a new home for \$6,600. An extremely interesting collection of Mourning and Memorial items was next to the block and consisted of jewelry, miniatures, textiles, and shadowbox framed wreaths. The top selling lot was a late 18<sup>th</sup> century gold memorial ring with a miniature painting on porcelain inscribed and dated 1786 which brought \$2,090.

Sunday's Session #5, which began at 10:00 a.m., was made up of over 400 lots of glass of all types. A collection of Wave Crest drew tremendous interest and included three rare wall plaques, two of which were scenic examples and sold for \$4,675 each and the third having floral decoration and selling for \$3,190. English Cameo made a good showing with an unsigned English globular cologne bottle with white to red floral design and London silver mounts selling for \$1,980. American art glass proved very popular led by a pair of 8" lily vases in an extremely rare and possibly experimental bright fuchsia to yellow opalescent color, which were battled to \$5,500 against a \$1,000-\$1,500 estimate. Other hotly contested examples included a fine Mt. Washington Burmese bride's basket with beaded floral decoration which sold for \$2,420 and a signed Tiffany blue Favrite rib-optic compote measuring 6" in height and diameter which reached \$1,485. Glass department head Karen Reed commented that a collection of

primarily contemporary paperweights received an unexpectedly large amount of pre-sale inquires. But the star turned out to be a fine signed and dated 1848 Baccarat scattered millefiori example containing eight animal canes which galloped off at \$2,310. A large collection of American cut glass finished out the session with a flurry of excitement. Reed observed that the collection had been placed at the end of the sale because "the cut glass market has been extremely flat of late and we didn't want it to dampen the excitement of the rest of the sale." Little did Reed know that between three strong phone bidders and numerous absentee and in-house bidders, the cut glass would prove to be the most fiercely battled segment of the session. The first sign of this was a 12" h, stepped neck vase cut with hobstars and canes which quickly passed its \$300-\$400 estimate selling for \$990. Several lots later a signed Sinclair 9 3/4" x 12 1/2" tray with cut with hobstars and intaglio thistles demolished its \$150-\$250 estimate in a fierce battle between the phones finally selling for \$2,420. Another big surprise proved to be a 9 1/2" plate featuring an intricate pattern of hobstars, strawberry diamonds and feathers which brought ten times its estimate, again selling to the phone for \$1,155.

After the auction Jeff Evans and his staff were exhausted, but very pleased with the sale's results. "Other than the quilts, I thought the auction was very strong across the board. Several segments of the market, especially the cut glass and transferware which had been somewhat soft, performed extremely well." Evans commented. "A big part of our success is that collectors and dealers alike can come here and see a tremendous amount of fresh merchandise sell totally unreserved and very quickly without annoying chit-chat" he added. The average selling pace over the three-day sale was 120 lots per hour, proving yet again the old adage, "If you snooze, you lose."

The next Antiques & Americana auction will take place on June 23 & 24, 2006 and will include several fine collections, featuring a major collection of Staffordshire transferware.

## AUCTION HIGHLIGHTS

- Lot 1101 - Shenandoah Valley Long Rifle attributed to George Washington Fisher, **\$6,600**
- Lot 1120 - Colt Single Action Army revolver, 44 cal., circa 1887, **\$2,860**
- Lot 1 - Five gallon stoneware churn attributed to Emanuel Suter, Rockingham Co., VA, **\$25,300** (a record price for an example of Rockingham Co. pottery).
- Lot 7 - Polychrome-glazed earthenware figure of a bird attributed to Anthony Bacher, Winchester, VA, **\$7,150**
- Lot 156 - Coxcomb and Tulip applique quilt, 77" square, mid 19<sup>th</sup> century, **\$1,650**
- Lot 343 - Page Co., VA blue painted white oak splint basket, 9 3/8" diameter, early 20<sup>th</sup> century, **\$2,970**
- Lot 510 - Rare Rockingham Co., VA walnut sideboard/pie safe, 75" long, mid 19<sup>th</sup> century, **\$31,900**
- Lot 519 - Pennsylvania Chippendale inlaid walnut high chest, late 18<sup>th</sup> century, **\$9,075**
- Lot 568 - Victorian walnut marble-top stand with a carved dog and dog house, fourth quarter 19<sup>th</sup> century, **\$3,300**
- Lot 3001 - Wave Crest scenic wall plaque, **\$4,675**
- Lot 3123 - Pair of 8" lily vases in an extremely rare and possibly experimental bright fuchsia to yellow opalescent color, **\$5,500**
- Lot 3313 - Signed Sinclair 9 3/4" x 12 1/2" cut glass tray, **\$2,420**