



Manitoba Auctioneers Association

Winter 2019

2019 AGM and Convention

Monday February 25, 2019 Portage la Prairie

Our AGM and Convention will be held this year on February 25, 2019, at the CanadInn in Portage.

Our speakers have been confirmed and below you will find a brief outline of the presentations we will see.

In addition, as our guest for the evening portion, Honourable Ralph Eichler, MLA for Lakeside and Manitoba Minister of Agriculture will be in attendance. Mr. Eichler along with his wife Gail are owners of Ray 's Auction in Teulon, Manitoba.

FarmFemmes: Finding Balance - Using technology to tip the scale in your favour

This lighthearted presentation will talk through the challenges that we all face as we work to find balance in our lives. Recognizing that there is no one-size-fits-all approach, attendees will leave with practical ideas and technology suggestions to help them navigate work and family life.

Speaker Bio

FarmFemmes was co-founded by sisters Karen Hildebrand and Teresa Vallotton, as a way to connect with a broader audience to showcase what it means to be an advocate, ag-extender and modern farm woman. Karen and Teresa grew up on a farm south of Morden, MB and Teresa currently farms with her husband near Stockton, MB. To learn more, read their complete bios and blog at FarmFemmes.com and search @FarmFemmes on YouTube, Facebook and Instagram.

Gordon Goldsborough—Author of Abandoned Manitoba and More Abandoned Manitoba

Goldsborough is the head researcher, webmaster, and a past president of the Manitoba Historical Society. He is also a member of the department of biological sciences at the University of Manitoba as a water quality specialist concerned with the impacts of humans on wetlands and lakes.

His series “Abandoned Manitoba” on the CBC weekend morning show has been running since mid-2015.



MAA Board of Directors

Morris Olafson—President
204-822-3742
olafson.m@hotmail.com

Dave Nickel—Vice President
204 637-3393
nickelauctions@mymts.net

Wayne Kauenhofen—
Past President
204-324-8685
conniekeauen@gmail.com

Nicole Smallwood—
Sec Treas
1-888-394-9824
nmssmall@gmail.com

District Directors:

Dave Nickel—Northwest
204 637-3393
nickelauctions@mymts.net

Ross Taylor—Southwest
204-522-3996
srtaylor@mts.net

Ed Gulay—Winnipeg
204-960-7552
ed@mcdougallauction.com

Jack Kowalchuk—NorthEast
204-268-6650
jackkowalchuk@gmail.com

Bill Klassen—Southeast
204-325-4433
Bill@billklassenauction.com

Looks like we have a great lineup of speakers for our convention day. Having our Minister of Agriculture as our guest for our evening fun auction should be interesting and fun.

Come on out for the day and bring a friend, the more the merrier. Looking forward to seeing you all at convention.

Morris Olafson—MAA President

Notice:

The following elections will take place on February 25, 2019, at the annual general meeting of the Manitoba Auctioneers Association.

District Director—Northwest Region
District Director—Southwest Region

Nominations may be made in person at the AGM on February 25, 2019, or in writing prior to the AGM.

Bill Klassen Auctions Celebrates 50 Years



Bill Klassen knew from an early age exactly what he wanted to do. As he reflected on a celebration of 50 years as Bill Klassen Auctions with a night of reminiscing in Winkler Nov. 30, he recalled his start, and how the auction world has changed.

Klassen grew up on a small farm south of Winkler, and said his love for the auction business began because of one small radio program.

“We had a big cabinet model radio and he turned it on at noon and we listened to the Fargo, North Dakota stockyard market,” he said. “An auctioneers chant came up, then the market, then the chant and it was over.”

Klassen said his father did that two or three days a week.

“One day, I’m about 12 or 13 and I said ‘when I grow up, I’m going to be an auctioneer’,” he said. “I can still see my

mom and dad just smile.”

His first chance came around the ages of 17-19, when he and some friends decided to raise money for the ice rink at Blumenfeld School. “We needed money for goalie equipment and hockey nets and what have you,” he explained.

They decided to do a pie social, where girls bake a pie, it gets auctioned off to a guy who then gets to enjoy it with the girl who baked it.

“We thought it will be fun, romantic and will bring in some money,” he said.

But when his friends started talking about asking someone who had recently gone to auction school, Klassen had another idea.

“I said ‘No’,” he said. “I’m selling the pies.”

Because of that Klassen was invited to do auctions for local sewing circles, where they raised money for Red Cross, missions or community needs.

“It was amazing how that mushroomed,” he said. “Before you know it, it was actually my job.”

Klassen’s first big break came July 23, 1968 when he did his first farm auction for the Albert Worms family.

But earning the right to do that wasn’t easy. Klassen said he visited Mr. Worms, who was a friend of the family, and made a pitch. “I said I want \$10 and the advertising. He said, ‘at least I can’t complain about the price’.”

That auction led to a dairy cattle auction and then Klassen headed off to Auction School.

His first auction after school was the day after he arrived home on a trip that was delayed thanks to iced up airplanes. “By the time I got to Winnipeg it was past midnight,” he said. “The next day I had the Letkeman auction.”

But getting into the business wasn’t easy. Klassen said he tried hard to get sales, but wasn’t always successful.

“I always got some, but it was difficult,” he said. “The Kehler brothers were here. They were very good, they were well received and they were respectable people so it was tough to get into business.

Klassen said it took between 10 and 15 years to build up a decent number of annual auctions.

He also had a contingency plan. Klassen bought a quarter section when he was 21, and along with his father

who also owned land, he farmed when he wasn't doing auctions.

And those early days weren't exactly filled with riches. In fact, Klassen said his auction business didn't even earn him enough to pay taxes.

"I always said, if I ever have to pay income tax I will do it with a smile," he explained.

Klassen still remembers when that day came.

"I remember coming out of the accountants' office, so I went to the bakery and I bought a big box of donuts and I went to the coffee shop and I opened it up," he said.

His confused coffee mates first thought it was his birthday. "We ate donuts and they guessed. Finally I said, it's a celebration... I had to pay income tax today."

"They thought of course I was absolutely nuts," he added with a laugh.

Klassen said he has always enjoyed his work in the auction world, mainly because of the people he gets to meet.

"I love to work with people because each person seems to be a little bit unique and different," he said.

"That's a nice challenge, to figure out, how do I please this guy?"

Working with sellers can be challenging.

Klassen said often farmers have a certain item they think will fetch a lot of money, because it's important to them.

"Usually their expectations are too high," he said. "But there is something else that they don't expect that much on that brings more, so we have a good average."



Bill Klassen marked the occasion with a party he hosted in November in Winkler, inviting the community, customers, staff family and members of the Manitoba Auctioneers Association.

"You may not get what you want for every item, but at the end of the day you have more than you expected."

The demographics of auction attendees is changing as well. Klassen said it's hard to get 15 to 25-year-olds out to auctions. Town people are also harder to attract, as are city dwellers.

"As you get closer to the city it is more difficult to get a good crowd out," he said. "You rely on a wider base of people drawing into the action, it's not just the neighbourhood. Nowadays we need to draw from a bigger geographic area than we did in the '60s."

Klassen said they want people to enjoy themselves at an auction sale. "Some come to visit, some come to buy and some are opportunists," he said. "They want to be part of the fun. It should be a good event. At the same time we try to create an urgency, that this has to be done now."

Klassen said a seminar he attended helped shape his style. It was called "Talk Slow, Sell Fast." He said if you talk a little slower people don't need to hear the number repeated five times, and at the same time it builds urgency that the item will sell now.

Being an auctioneer also means being a victim of the weather, and knowing when to go ahead is important. Klassen said after an April blizzard they had a Portage area auction. They started one hour late, and things didn't look good early on.

....Bill Klassen...continued from page 4

“We started with about a dozen people standing around the rack, but it was cheaper stuff and we sold slowly and meanwhile they were coming,” he said. “By the time I got to the big machinery where the money was, we had a nice crowd.”

What sells well also changes with the times.

“Pianos are terrible. We can hardly get a bid on a piano,” Klassen said. “It used to be we’d sell pianos for \$800 to \$1,000.”

Televisions also no longer sell. “People buy new TVs. An old TV is junk, it’s e-trash even when it works perfect,” he said.

Used cars are also hard to sell. “You used to have a car that was 10 years old, it was worth some money,” he said. “Nowadays they’re throwaways.”

Bill Klassen Auctions is also on hand for many charity auctions for which they don’t charge for their services.

Klassen said that’s always been important to him. “If it’s a charity auction and it’s a good cause that I believe we need in our community, I will always donate my services,” he said.

Over the years the area covered has grown. Klassen said every town at one time had their own auction service. When he started auctioneers could be found in Carman, Pilot Mound, Morden, Altona, Morris and many more.

By embracing new technology, Bill Klassen Auctions has continued to grow.

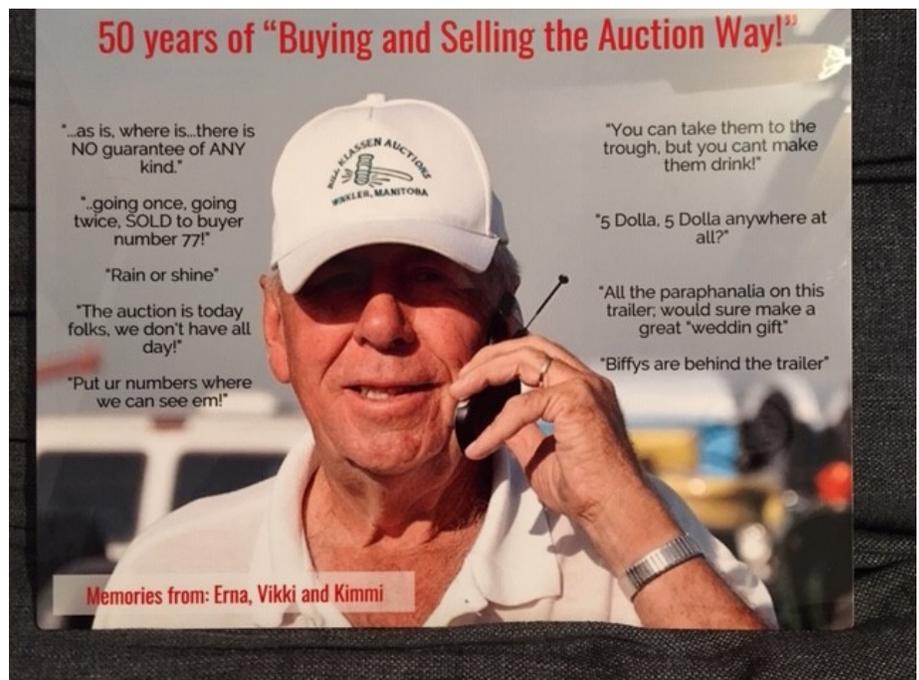
They were the first to use colour posters (printed in Winkler), the first to have permanent bidding numbers for frequent attendees, and the first to join the Global Auction website.

There’s no retirement in his schedule yet, and Klassen said they already have auctions scheduled for next year. “I’d like to thank the public for their support,” he said.

Re-printed with permission from The Winkler Times, written by Greg Vandermeulen

This is plaque I received from my cashier ERNA who was our cashier for 28 years. She gave me this for my 50 years in the auction business.

Both her daughters Vikki and Kimmi worked for me as well. Kimmi was just three weeks old when she attended her first yard auction while her mom cashiered the whole auction. Mom and baby went home as happy as when they arrived, simply amazing.



Manitoba Auctioneers Association
Annual General Meeting and Convention

Monday, February 25, 2019
CanadInn Portage la Prairie

- Sunday, February 24, 2019 - Hospitality Meet and Greet
Sponsored by Global Auction Guide
- Monday, February 25, 2019 - AGM and Elections
- Guest Speakers - FarmFemmes: Finding Balance - Using technology to tip
the scale in your favour
Presented by Karen Hildebrand and Teresa Vallotton
- Stories from Abandoned Manitoba
Presented by Author Gord Goldsborough
- Banquet - Aaltos Dining Room
- Public Fundraising Auction - 2nd Level CanadInn
Special Guest—Honourable Ralph Eichler
MLA Lakeside and Minister of Agriculture
Owner of Ray 's Auction

Sponsorship opportunities are available for breaks, lunch and dinner. Please contact Nicole Smallwood for more information nmssmall@gmail.com.

Please register in advance with Nicole.

Meals and sessions \$100 plus items to sell at the auction. Guests \$50.

