

All Things Auctioneering

With Cato Crane Valuers & Auctioneers and John Crane Fine Art

Change and innovation, I have found, has always been constant in business to a lesser or greater extent.

Nowadays some auctioneers have moved away from their traditional roots and moved into auctioning different types of merchandise, including fashion items.

Designer fashion handbag auctions are hugely popular at the moment, with the top price recently of £360,000 being achieved for a single bag – not a set! Please don't leave leaky ink pens in yours from now on! How long will this fashion last? Well, no one knows; I am not involved, as I generally keep clear of transient speculation.

Cato Crane was born 35 years ago and was named by my father after the c19th family business of Cato Miller and Company who built over 50 wood and iron sailing ships 100 yards from where our auction rooms are to this day. We soon inherited Talbot Wilson of West Kirby and Baker & Baker of Birkenhead, both of fine reputation.

Associated with Cato Crane are and operating through our office on The Mount in Heswall are The 5CountriesValuation-Company (5CVC.co.uk) and Bathurst St. James's in London for the finest objects and clients outside Wirral.

Marketing strategies have changed during the last three and a half decades. I still have printed thousands of good quality leaflets to distribute to prospective clients, which is extremely time-consuming. Most people know about Twitter, though not many of a certain generation seem to use it! A 'tweet' composed in a couple of

minutes together with photographs reaches thousands of Twitter users within seconds of being posted; it is an international message board and appears to be well regulated. For those readers who have not embraced Twitter technology, may I sincerely recommend that you do as soon as possible. You will be better informed about local, national and international business and social happenings and I have made good internet friends around the globe. Twitter will widen your horizons. So follow us on Twitter @CatoCrane and this publication @heswallmagazine – don't be a dinosaur – I was, but not now.



Now, do you have any friends or relations who were guests at a certain Royal Wedding recently? Please text them immediately! You should ask them: 'Did you eat the cake?' No, the mix of ingredients and the baking were absolutely fine and perfect, as was the decorative icing. But if you happen to be a collector of genuine Royal memorabilia, then wedding cake, I think, should be top of the list! In our recent auction we successfully sold a piece of wedding cake



from the wedding of their Highnesses the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge. The piece was in a small embossed tin box which also contained a printed card and the serial number of the piece of presentation cake. Tens of thousands were distributed to worthy persons, so a large number were sent out to people around the globe. Most would have been consumed within days of opening.

This particular piece was unopened and totally un nibbled and this, therefore, pushed the bidding up to £300. Crumbs! I thought a good price for a small slice of second-hand cake?

Royal wedding cakes have been at times enormously elaborate. One of Her Majesty Queen Victoria's daughters, Princess Louise, caused alarm by marrying a commoner, The Marquis of Lorne, but their wedding cake was a magnificent work of art and stood over five feet high (see below); maybe to prove a point and raise the Marquis's status

