



15 May 2008

### ***TWENTY YEARS AGO TODAY***

*All men dream, but not equally. For the Dreamers of the Night awaken to find it was merely their vanity. But the Dreamers of the Day are the dangerous ones, for they dream with their eyes open, and they make things happen” - Lieut-Colonel T.E. Lawrence DSO, CBE (Lawrence of Arabia)*

G’day there,

There is a great old saying that “time flies when you are having fun” and in my case, that is certainly true for today, 20 years ago, I arrived in Hunter Street Sydney from Chinchilla Queensland to kick off the auction operations for the then newly launched Ray White Real Estate Group, along with Bruce Ingrey and Ian Campbell, in Sydney and NSW.

Twenty years ago eh? In that time faxes weren’t able to be used to transmit legal documents - they had to be on paper, mobile phones were just emerging from the in built car phone and if you had a ”mobile”, it came with a house brick sized battery and the Internet had never been heard of, let alone contemplated.

In real estate, multi-list was entering its death throes, the big challenge was to be able to have a full page in the *Sydney Morning Herald* Saturday property edition and cappuccino’s and “beemers” were just starting to be the go.

Little was I to realise that day just what a ride that would be for me career wise in the intervening period:-

- I oversaw Ray White (as Chief Auctioneer) go from no auctions in May 1988 to where, by June 1990, they were market leaders in the Sydney real estate auction market and from an 8 office fledgling network to one of over 220 offices by 1996.
- They retained that number one spot from 1990 to 1996 when I resigned following heart surgery and headed off to sea cruising.
- I would return to the real estate fold following 4 years of cruising the Queensland coast in our yacht to become General Manager of Ray White Rural and then the owner of RWR Rockhampton and Ray White Stud Stock .
- I returned in January 2003 to take over the reins driving the Sydney and NSW auction business and I took them from number three position back to the market leaders by December 2004 and after which, in learning from people who retired when they were at the top of their game , I resigned to create and build our Fountain Auction Academy, a dream I had had for over 30 years.

- I would be closely involved in the creation and initial development of the Ray White franchises in Western Australia, New Zealand and Indonesia, the latter where I had the honour of conducting the first ever real estate auction in that country.
- I would travel to the New Zealand, Indonesia and the USA in the capacity of a Keynote Speaker speaking on auctioneering and/or motivational themes
- I would have the opportunity to work with, and/or observe some of the best ( and the worst) real estate practitioners in three countries as they went about practicing their craft and in the process, learn from them.

I am a great believer that things happen for a reason and whilst doubtless some will say I am looking at it through rose coloured glasses, what the above experiences, all of which were “hands on” with no “airy-fairy” theory about them, have allowed me to do is develop our FAA Auction Marketing Skills and Auctioneering Courses as ones that do indeed take us on our way to “producing practical professionals” and our students on their way to being that.

In the past two decades our industry has undergone massive changes, mainly due to the development of the Internet and technology and whilst this development will continue at a pace unabated, the industry will always have at its core that fact that it is all about one thing - people.

To be successful no matter how many “you beaut” gizmo’s you have, you must be able to relate to people for, after having conducted over 28,000 real estate auctions in this period, I have never yet had a chimney or tree buy a house- it has always been a human being.

We ignore the “human factor” at our peril for as an older, retired agent I spoke to many years ago (and for who’s ability I had immense respect) told me “ we are the spies of real estate. We spy out who wants to sell and spy out who wants to buy, bring them together and get a thing called commission”.

It is as simple as that.

The point I try and make regularly (much to your surprise no doubt!!) is that the quickest way (and the only chance at a premium) to do that is to utilise the auction system *properly!*

To those who are reading this and with whom I have worked with at any time in those 20 years, I offer a very big “thank you”. It has been an amazing ride which, hopefully, will see a lot more miles go under the tyres yet before I head off on the last “Big Adventure”.

I look forward to seeing you at one of our auction marketing skills or auctioneering skills courses, both of which will have anecdotes from this period - some funny, some serious but all based on actual happenings.

Carpe diem

Tony

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