

# City of Philadelphia



Council of the City of Philadelphia  
Office of the Chief Clerk  
Room 402, City Hall  
Philadelphia

(Resolution No. 051116)

## RESOLUTION

Honoring Samuel T. Freeman & Company auction house on its 200th anniversary of continued business operation and success in the City of Philadelphia.

WHEREAS, Samuel T. Freeman & Company, the oldest auction house in America, was established on November 26, 1805 and has a history replete with records that are interwoven in the fabric of the City of Philadelphia; and

WHEREAS, Samuel T. Freeman arrived in Philadelphia in 1795 and was primarily a real estate and industrial auctioneer, selling land and the contents of the ships that traded in Philadelphia; and

WHEREAS, In the early 1880's, Samuel T. Freeman & Co. achieved a record for selling the Philadelphia Post Office building for \$425,000; and

WHEREAS, During World War I, Freeman's was selected by the US government to sell over \$350 million of surplus wool remaining from World War I, making the company a national force, and in 1922 consummated the sale of the gunpowder industry of Nitro, West Virginia which was the largest in the company's history, and by War's end auctioned off four battleships in Philadelphia and Boston in 1924; and

WHEREAS, In 1923 after moving to 1808 Chestnut Street, Freeman's had the distinction of selling the 1682 Charter of Libertie from King Charles to William Penn which set out the liberties and laws that would govern the young Commonwealth of Pennsylvania; and

WHEREAS, During the 1940's, Freeman's helped disperse the collection of Edward T. Strokebury's Whitmarsh Hall, a 147 room home that French statesman Georges Clemmenceau described as the "Versailles of America."; and

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*RESOLUTION NO. 051116 continued*

WHEREAS, Throughout the 1960's and 1970's, Freeman's accomplished such noteworthy sales as a desk reputed to be Benjamin Franklins to Independence National Park, a John Dunlap print of the Declaration of Independence, and Thomas Affleck's chest-on chest to the Metropolitan Museum of Art; and

WHEREAS, In 1997, Freeman's achieved yet another record for selling a pair of Philadelphia porcelain urns made by William Ellis Tucker for \$291,000, and in 2004 "The Old Mill, Washington's Crossing" by Edward Willis Redfield was sold at a record \$625,000; and

WHEREAS, Throughout the past 200 years Samuel T. Freeman & Co. auction house has maintained remarkable success, achieving impressive prices for equally impressive objects of art and history; now therefore

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADLEPHIA, That Samuel T. Freeman & Company auction house be honored on its 200th anniversary of continued business operation and success in the City of Philadelphia.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to the owners and operators of Samuel T. Freeman's auction house.

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CERTIFICATION: This is a true and correct copy of the original Resolution, Adopted by the Council of the City of Philadelphia on the seventeenth of November, 2005.

Anna C. Verna  
PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL

Patricia Rafferty  
CHIEF CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Introduced by: Councilmember Clarke

Sponsored by: Councilmembers Clarke, Kelly, Rizzo, Tasco, O'Neill, DiCicco, Ramos, Goode, Reynolds Brown, Kenney and Miller