

Now, that's a banana...

By MARIANNE ACKERMAN
Journal Reporter

Les Campbell took home the big banana Saturday. But it cost him \$475.

Mr. Campbell was the highest bidder on an elegant, bronzed sculpture of a banana, mounted on a wooden stand. No ordinary fruit, it is said to be an exact replica of the one which began a long-standing joke with former Conservative leader Robert Stanfield.

An enormous sum for a mere banana, but Mr. Campbell was making a contribution to the St. Brigid's children's camp, by participating in the church's first celebrity auction held Saturday.

Mr. Stanfield was on hand to present the trophy to the proud customer. "I've probably doubled the sale of bananas and never got a cent for it," he quipped.

The banana was the highest-priced novelty item donated by celebrities. The auction brought in \$7,000 for the parish children's camp at Low, Quebec.

Gene Marsen, a local construction businessman, paid a visit to the auction with one purchase in mind — snapping up an offer from Margaret Trudeau to photograph his children. He calmly outbid the other takers at \$325 and left the gymnasium satisfied it was a good deal.

Provincial tourism minister Claude Bennett went home with an engraving of St. Brigid's school which cost him \$250. But the bidding was somewhat unusual. Mayor Lorry Greenberg, after literally paying \$100 for a song sung by Jack McPartland and Don Wayburn, took over proceedings from the profes-

sional auctioneers.

Refreshed and rested after sleeping through the opening ceremonies of Metres for Millions earlier Saturday morning, the mayor didn't waste time waiting for the audience to bid.

He simply singled out his friends in the audience and assigned them a bid, the last and most agreeable being Mr. Bennett.

It was an afternoon given over to laughter and frivolous purchases. Transport Minister Otto Lang splurged a little, spending \$350 for a bow-tie worn by the late Lester Pearson.

Controller Garry Guzzo went home with a huge "Irish donkey" teddy bear, which he by the St. Brigid's Parent-Teacher's Association and principal Sister Eleanor Hennessey to finance the camp for children of Lower Town and area.

said reminded him of other members of the council.

A seance with MP Flora Macdonald in a Kingston cemetery to raise Sir John A. Macdonald's spirit from the grave, was bought for \$90.

The auction was organized

At one point a scantily-clad belly dancer gave a lengthy demonstration of the exotic dance she would teach the highest bidder. The audience was divided between some who nervously looked the other way and others who watched the swirling dancer attentively.

Said the parish priest Father Ken Keeler, "Remember, it's an art." The lessons went for \$75.

Fr. Keeler said the auction was so successful, the parish will likely consider holding it next year for the same cause.