

White House memorabilia auction set

9/20/90

By NANCY LUSE
News-Post Staff

BRUNSWICK — White House memorabilia, including a dried rose which reportedly was found in the back seat of the limousine John Kennedy rode in when he was assassinated, will be auctioned at a gallery here next month.

On Wednesday, Stanley Gunther, owner of Gunther's International Auction Gallery, opened a box of items mailed to him by a woman whose late father worked at the White House. She has asked the gallery to auction the items, Mr. Gunther said.

The sale has been set for noon Oct. 8 at the gallery at 24 S. Virginia Ave., Brunswick. A preview of the items will be at the gallery Oct. 6 and 7.

"This is just like Christmas," said Pieter Jager, public relations director for the gallery. Neither he nor Mr. Gunther knew what the box contained before it was opened, they said.

Tearing through brown wrapping paper, the two uncovered photos of Patricia Nixon, Lady Bird Johnson, Luci Johnson and Julie Nixon, signed with personal messages to Andrew Hutch.

Mr. Hutch's daughter, who wishes to remain unidentified, included a note with the items, explaining that her father worked as an officer with the White House Secret Service from 1951 to 1964. He later was a Secret Service agent from 1964 to 1978.

Regarding the rose, which was contained in an envelope, the woman wrote that it "was found by Dad in 1963 when he helped clean out the



Staff photo by Timothy Jacobsen

Pieter Jager holds a newspaper announcing the assassination of President Kennedy, one of the items to be auctioned at Gunther's International Auction Gallery. Gallery owner Stanley Gunther is at right.

back of Kennedy's limo after the assassination. When Dad found the rose you could still see blood stains on it from JFK."

Also included with the memorabilia was a framed picture of the limo, along with a key said to have belonged to it. "The key to that car was presented to Dad at a later time," her note read.

Items also will be sold from the Eisenhower days, said Mr. Gunther, including tally sheets from a bridge game, one of which has "Mamie" written at the top.

The sheets "were from their personal games at the White House. The Eisenhowers were very relaxed around Dad, I remember meeting them from time to time as a child," wrote the woman.

The collection also contains Christmas cards from various presidents, funeral cards from services conducted for presidents Kennedy and Harry Truman and Vice President Hubert Humphrey.

In addition to the White House items, Mr. Hutch's heir also is selling a signed portrait of Adolf Hitler and a swastika armband.

The woman wrote that these items were given to her father by her grandfather. "This picture was the headquarters picture of Hitler. My grandfather was with the group that first entered Hitler's office. The picture and armband were taken off his desk."

Mr. Jager said he has "no idea what these will bring," but will be "burning up the fax machine" publicizing the sale to collectors of historical items.

Last year the gallery sold a painting for \$20,000 that reportedly was a self-portrait by President Kennedy. Attempts by the gallery to authenticate the picture were unsuccessful.

"I don't believe we will have that problem" with these latest items, Mr. Gunther said.