

# Creating Memories One Brick, One Guest at a Time



Previous page: The fountain (lower right) is in the “secret garden” created in her sister’s memory. Many of the items Diane has used to decorate or build with came from family or friends — and new friends she has made along the way. Above: In memory of her little brother, Diane also created a little garden area. The trike pictured below represents the one picture Diane knows of her and her brother together.

Nestled in the quiet little town of Hartington, Neb., there’s a 111-year old home that now serves as the Bow St. B&B.

Started in 2002 by Diane (Noecker-Anderson) Bruning, the Bed & Breakfast has become a popular destination for many visitors and wedding parties. Diane is married to Chuck Bruning.

Diane and her family purchased the home in the early 1990s.

After moving in Diane said she began doing research into the history of the old home. One reason was because she noticed marks on walls and floors that seemed like there was something else there at the time. It was during this time that Diane discovered that her grandfather’s uncle had helped build the home in 1900, and years later bought the home to raise his family for eight years.

“It was kind of neat to know there was some family history to this house.”

To find out more about the house Diane started doing some investigating. She was curious as to the original layout of the house. So she turned to her mom when she found out who had previously owned the house. Come to find out one of her grandfather’s uncle’s daughters was still alive and living in Crofton.

“So one Sunday afternoon I called her up. She was 93 years old. She didn’t know who I was and I didn’t know who she was, but I told her where I was living. She told me how the house used to be. I have tried to put it back the best I could.”

Diane started the remodeling in 1997 following her divorce.

“This was the greatest therapy I could ask for.” Her motivation was her kids — Ben, Nick,

Emily and Andria. She says the girls had friends that wouldn’t come over because it was a scary house. So she wanted to make it a place everyone would want to visit.

She got a lot of help from her kids and family in the remodeling project — which she says still isn’t done.

Outside, much of the landscaping is dedicated to her family. Each of the kids has their own tree, as well as a blue spruce she planted in memory of her dad.

One of the most popular spots in the back yard is a small garden dedicated to her sister, who passed away from cancer.

“I had asked her ‘is there something I can do for you after you’re gone.’ And she said make me a rock garden, and that’s what I did.”

So Diane created this beautiful little ‘secret garden’ in memory of her sister.”

“A lot of guests will come out here just to relax, some will read. It’s just a nice little spot.”

It has also been a popular spot for wedding photos.

The majority of the bricks you see in Diane’s yard are reclaimed from one place or another. The bricks in her “secret garden” are from the chimney that she took down. Others come from an old sidewalk that needed to be removed across the street.

“When I was a little girl, my aunt lived across the street. We would ride the tricycle on this old sidewalk of bricks.”

Years later, after she moved into the house, the city passed a sidewalk ordinance. As the people

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