



Angela Dunne (left) and Susan Koenig are justifiably proud of their new expansion building in Little Bohemia on South 13th Street.
– Photos by Lorraine Boyd

Koenig|Dunne Doubles Their 13th Street Presence

By Lorraine Boyd
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Sixteen years ago, attorney Susan Koenig bought the old Emil Cermak drugstore at 1266 S. 13th Street. She turned the main floor into law offices for Koenig|Dunne Divorce Law. She remodeled the upstairs for her home. She retained what she could of the century-old building, such as original woodwork, parquet floors and tin ceilings. Fifteen years later, the firm’s managing partner, Angela Dunne, purchased the antique store next door at 1262 to expand their offices and provide a home for her and her two daughters.

At last, after a long year, renovation is (nearly) complete, and home and office have been moved into, so it is time for an open house. They are throwing their doors open to the public on Thursday, June 2, from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. David Brown, president and CEO of the Greater Omaha Chamber of Commerce, will attend a ribbon-cutting ceremony at 2:30 p.m. on Thursday.

Koenig said their firm is proud to be part of Little Bohemia and will celebrate with foods from local vendors and photographs of the project.”

Managing Partner Dunne said, “It is a privilege to contribute to the preservation and improvement of our historic neighborhood. We are thrilled to celebrate the firm’s growth and this beautiful space for serving our clients with our friends and neighbors.”

They plan to add a couple of lawyers to their firm in the future so they planned room for them, but said they are being “very picky” to get just the right fit.

The renovated building, built in 1893, is immediately north of the firm’s current offices at 1266 South 13th Street. While keeping the historical value of the building intact, the firm added multiple offices and a spacious conference room.

But it didn’t always look like it does today. In fact, nothing on South 13th Street looks the same. That’s because, nearly 100 years ago, the street was raised a full story, relegating first floors to basement status. The dirt used to add several feet to the street was trucked in from further north, where other streets were being lowered. It was all an effort to make Omaha’s hills less steep, especially after motorcars strained to climb the hills.

Dunne said that she and her building obviously had a connection. “Each day, the contractor gave me a task: pick out lights, choose a door. He directed me to a site online to specify every detail of the front door, picking panels, windows, hardware that the company would use to manufacture the door.” And so she did, and the door was made.

“Meanwhile, there was a lot of work being done in the basement, which used to be the main street-level floor.” The front door was found and is still leaning against a wall in the basement. The amazing, shocking thing about that ñ the old and new doors looked exactly alike. (Cue the Twilight Zone music.)

But it seems that coincidence – or ESP? – is rampant at Koenig|Dunne. When this writer arrived to talk to them, I complimented Koenig on her navy and white polka dot dress. She said she was going to wear a black dress, but for some reason chose this one (with red shoes!).

We walked next door to the new offices, and Dunne greeted us – in a navy pantsuit with a navy and white polka dot blouse. When I pointed out the similarities, they laughed but weren’t surprised. Then I pointed to their nearly identical large white pearl necklaces, and they burst out laughing. You can’t plan that.

So, the duo seems to be in perfect sync to begin a new chapter in their business, operating in side-by-side buildings. “We moved the reception area in Susan’s building, Dunne said, because we hope to put in a connecting passageway between the buildings someday and that would make it easier.”

Side by side, after the death of Susan Koenig’s husband and Angela Dunne’s divorce, the law partners are each building new lives while building a bigger, stronger law practice – all under one roof, metaphorically-speaking.

For a sneak peak into the firm’s new space, turn to page 3.