

Fairport-East Rochester Post

Diane Prince Furniture a 'well-kept' secret in Fairport village

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Fairport, N.Y. — Last month, Diane Prince celebrated her 26th year operating a unique furniture and gift store at 23 Lift Bridge Lane East in Fairport. The business itself has been around over three decades, with roots in Webster.

The owner of Diane Prince Furniture and Gifts said she found her niche as an interior designer at a young age.

At 12, she made a habit of rearranging the furniture in her bedroom and soon developed a love for antiques. Prince even painted her own walls, and her room went through a number of color transformations — from navy blue to brown to all white. Even the woodwork.

Now 72, she hasn't lost her creative eye.

"I like meeting people and figuring out their dilemmas," she said. "It gives me pleasure to help them find the right thing for their room."

Prince first opened Habersham Country Furniture and Gifts in Webster in 1980, where she shared the store space with another patron for five years. When her business needed more space to grow, it moved to its current location. About 10 years ago the name of the store was changed to Diane Prince Furniture, and the owner said that only the name has changed.

Tucked away in the heart of the village, the store is what she calls "a well kept secret."

Customers can now browse 5,500 square feet of bedding, furniture, fabrics and other country gifts, including an entire room devoted to hand-crafted wood dolls.

Prince admits folk art isn't what it used to be, as more artists are having their work reproduced cheaply overseas. Now that the original artists cannot pay people enough to paint in the country, fewer original pieces are made for retailers like her to sell.

"We just don't get as many fine quality reproductions as we'd like," said Prince.

As a result, one of her chief goals is selling American-made goods to consumers.

"We don't want to have the same old thing. We want to have something different," she said.

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