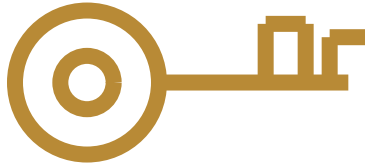


OUR LIL BOTECK



The Journey Behind Our Lil BoTeek

The fuller story of how years of generosity, upheaval and persistence
became a key to possibility.

**“Sometimes one little key opens something much bigger than
expected.”**

THE FULL JOURNEY • For anyone who wants to understand the heart, history and hope behind Our Lil BoTeek

ourlilboteek.ca • Brooks, Alberta

Why I Needed This to Become Real

I never wanted someone to wonder whether another person deserved the good piece more.

Our Lil BoTeek has taken far longer and followed a far stranger road than anyone can see from the finished garage. It is easy to look at rows of clothing and hundreds of shoes and assume this is a sale. It is not.

I have lived in many different bodies - from a size 26W, through 16/18 and 8, to roughly 4-6 now. I know how quickly a person's size, health, finances and identity can change. I also know the difference between wearing whatever technically fits and finding something that makes you feel capable, comfortable and like yourself.

My life has included a house fire, financial hardship, six months in a women's shelter, becoming my child's sole provider, rebuilding work through consulting, and then being diagnosed with MS in 2017. Emergency abdominal surgery on November 11, 2024 interrupted the project again. None of that makes me the person deciding who is worthy. It simply explains why dignity matters so much to me.

Where the Collection Began

someone close to me set the earliest part of this story in motion after a connection involving Medicine Hat Cares. What followed was an enormous amount of clothing with more potential than any one person could use.

The clothing was not treated as unwanted household castoffs. Much of it came through the standards and relationships surrounding Phase 2 High End Consignment and its owner. That meant there were recognizable labels, premium denim, office wear, activewear, beautiful dresses and many new-with-tags pieces.

The goal became simple to say and difficult to execute: get the quality into people's hands.

A journey that refused to be straightforward

FIRST PLAN A larger event that never happened
A planned college event was cancelled. The collection still existed, so the question became what route could honour its purpose next.

SHARING

More than 110 bags moved on
Large amounts were passed into the community. Other pieces went through the Mustard Seed, and more than 70 winter coats supported the Finlay Bridge fundraiser.

ROADBLOCKS

Not every organization could accept it
Even a food bank declined. That did not mean the clothing lacked value; it meant the project needed a more personal route.

STORAGE

Keeping the collection safe
People close to me helped with storage through a period memorable enough to include the infamous coyote incident. Moving and protecting this much inventory was real physical work.

HEALTH

November 11, 2024
Emergency surgery forced another pause. A community connection helped when the project could not move forward in the way originally planned.

TRANSITION

Medicine Hat to Brooks
In 2025 I was in Medicine Hat. I met my partner in November 2025, and by 2026 a Brooks garage began becoming the first true home for the experience.

Why Brooks

I did not choose Brooks because I wanted a new market. I chose it because I kept noticing the community.

Brooks has long-time locals, newcomers, families, workers and people who can get lost inside the labels others attach to them. I tend to meet people through conversation, remember them and think about what might genuinely help. Our Lil BoTeek gives those connections somewhere to go.

This is also part of my own gradual integration into the community while our family works toward a future acreage. It can become a place where my child's flexible homeschooling connects naturally with creativity, technology, practical skills and real people.

The Meaning of \$5

If you love it and it works for you, that is enough.

The \$5 is not a retail strategy. It is a token exchange. Free can unintentionally make a person feel as if they must prove hardship, accept charity or decide whether somebody else needs an item more. Five dollars says: you chose it, it is yours, and no explanation is required.

If I missed a flaw in a clothing piece, that clothing piece is free. Footwear and accessories remain \$5. Bartering can be welcomed in conversation, but it is not the headline and it is not pushed on the key invitations.

The collection is protected from resellers and commercial buying. It is meant for the person standing in the garage, or someone they genuinely know. The point is seeing useful things become useful again - not watching them reappear online for profit.

What Exists Now

The founding collection includes a very large range of clothing, substantial office wear, premium denim and activewear. Representative names include Paige, Citizens of Humanity, Levi's, AG Jeans, Lululemon, Alo Yoga, Vuori and Roots. Brand names are examples, never promises.

There are more than 300 pairs of footwear, approximately sizes 5.5-10, organized by type: sandals, flats, platforms, heels, stilettos, sneakers, boots and the occasional pair that defies explanation. They are not being turned into a giant online size catalogue. People need to come discover what fits.

Purses, belts and other one-off treasures complete the experience. Everything is limited. This is the founding collection and there is no replacement stock waiting behind it.

How the Experience Should Feel

Visits are private, personal and extremely flexible. A visitor tells me what day and approximate time works - daytime, evening or weekend - and I confirm personally. The address is shared only after confirmation.

There should be no crowd, no pressure and no sense of being timed through every bin. The garage setup has to be practical enough to display, reset and put away, but warm enough that someone feels invited to browse and try something unexpected.

My talking, curiosity and instinct to connect are part of the experience. The goal is not a perfect retail performance. The goal is a real interaction that leaves somebody smiling.

What Comes After the Clothes

The collection is where Our Lil BoTeek begins. It is not where it ends.

The antique key became the right symbol because clothing is only the first thing it opens. The garage now includes the Cricut Explore 3, Canon photo printer and a large collection of creative supplies. That creates room for personalized pieces, party items and other projects.

Future possibilities may include a separate pagan-inspired collection, gluten-free blends and Indigenous-made work, each under its creator's own ownership and voice, other community contributors, and eventually a greenhouse at the acreage.

None of those things should be advertised as available before they are ready. The future is not a product list. It is a promise to stay open to good ideas, protect clear ownership and let one positive connection lead to another.

What I Hope You Carry Forward

Keep it personal. Share the invitation with people who will understand the spirit of it, not simply chase a bargain.

Keep it accurate. Everything regular is \$5. Only a missed flaw in a clothing item makes that clothing item free.

Keep it private. Do not share the Brooks-area address. Visitors request a time and receive it after confirmation.

Keep it human. Do not promise brands, sizes or outcomes. Invite someone to come discover what is there.

Keep it protected. No resale, online listings, commercial bundles or bulk buying for profit.

Keep the bigger picture. This is not a failed store or a garage sale. It is the first working chapter of an idea built around passing on positivity.

**Thank you for taking the time to understand the road behind this.
If this story connects with you, you are welcome to pass along the
positivity - and the invitation.**

ourlilboteek.ca