

Bill Lamb was a home creator. We've owned two homes in Charlestown over the almost 45 years we've lived here, and Bill was the architect responsible for renovating both of them.

The first was in the former Knights of Columbus building on High Street. Bill's sensitivity to the history of our building was reflected everywhere in our unit. He maintained the beautiful paneled living room with its many large windows. He created an extra room out of part of a trellised porch, keeping the porch's ceramic tile floors. In the master bedroom he added French doors that opened onto the remainder of that porch, creating a quiet oasis in the city.

When we outgrew this space, we purchased a house built around 1860 that was just around the corner. The Greek Revival building was in need of a facelift, but we wanted to bring it back to its former life as much as possible. So we asked Bill to be the architect.

Bill modernized the house and at the same time brought back the historic home we wanted. Out of a dark ground floor apartment he created a large, sun-filled eat-in kitchen that opened onto the back garden. He added working fireplaces, designed a beautiful library for our many books, and expanded the bathrooms -- all through his design creativity.

At the same time he made sure we kept the original doors, woodwork, moldings, marble surrounds and mantels. He got the broken dumb waiter to function so we could use the dining room more easily. He helped us find fixtures that fit the history of the house. And he educated us on architectural history, sometimes having to push us in his ever-gentle way.

In the end he created a lovely home where we could dine by candlelight and feel as if we were going back through history. Our children could roller blade from the back garden through the kitchen. In winter they could play intense ice hockey games in that same garden while we were warm inside, watching them through the glass wall of windows.

We recently left this house after 35 years. But for us and our children it will always be home.

Thank you, Bill.

Jane Philippi is a Charlestown resident and former president of the Charlestown Preservation Society.

