

By Ruth Hultz

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Bill and Mary Twaddle call restoring their 12-room historic home "great fun."

They had two full years of fun turning the neglected William and Ella Dwire mansion, 1621 Vermont, into the elaborate bed and breakfast it is today. The longtime home improvement enthusiasts spent nights and weekends faithfully renovating Dwire House.

"Doing it together is fun; and knowing what we accomplished," Mary Twaddle said.

Bill Twaddle likes the challenge, and they both like the planning and the process.

"I am very meticulous. I have things all planned out ahead of time. I'm not in a hurry," Bill said.

The Twaddles planned out the redecoration of their bed and breakfast together.

"We have fairly similar tastes," Mary said. "We don't have too many disagreements. When we do, we work it out. We just keep at it till we find a solution we both like."

The main floor of the bed and breakfast is done in rich greens, blues and reds, with damask wallpaper in the foyer/music room and dining room. The Twaddles painted the canvas walls in the two parlors a cream color.

Hanging the embossed wallpaper on the foyer and dining room ceilings was a memorable experience for the Twaddles — one they couldn't manage alone. They needed the help of their son and daughter to get the heavy paper with clay paste to adhere.

Dwire House has had many owners since it was built in 1897. Luckily, those owners kept the butternut trim and paneled sliding doors on the main floor in excellent shape, along with the crown molding throughout the house.

Bill did have to refinish a few of the home's oak floors, and the couple put in antique crystal chandeliers in the foyer



and dining room. Bill also did some plaster work around the house, but that was just part of his "fun." He learned plastering skills as a teen-ager, working with his father and grandfather.

Designing the two kitchens was an interesting project. The Twaddles completed the work with the integrity of the

house uppermost in their minds.

They turned the large butler's pantry into their "cooking kitchen" and use the original kitchen for their personal kitchen. They built open shelving over the large Victorian windows in both rooms for spices and Bill's cookbook collection.

AT A GLANCE

❑ **Original Owner:** William T. and Ella Dwire. Dwire was co-owner of the seven-story Wellman and Dwire Tobacco Co. at Fifth and Ohio.

❑ **Date of Construction:** 1897.

❑ **Architect:** Ernest Wood.

❑ **Style of Architecture:** Queen Anne.

❑ **Architectural Features:** Half-timbering on upper floors; front porch with heavy turned posts and solid spandrels and porte-cochere; dominant front-facing gabled dormer with a cutaway bay window and row of three windows; polygonal wooden tower with foil projecting from the front of the second story; two-story back porch with arches.

Upstairs the Twaddles took great delight in decorating their three guest rooms. The masculine "Grandfathers Room" in honor of Bill's father, George Twaddle, a former assistant Quincy fire chief, and Mary's great-grandfather, Henry Dreasler, who was the first mechanic for the Quincy Fire Department.

The plaid walls are covered with firefighter memorabilia that Bill, a retired Quincy firefighter, has collected for years. The room includes the bell from Quincy's first pumper truck, which Bill got at an auction.

"Teddy's Room" is the home of Mary's bear collection. The elegant room has a fanciful ceramic fireplace with an intricately carved mantle and mirror. The room shares a marble washstand with the Grandfathers Room.

The third guest room is the "Victorian Room," which also has a carved fireplace with a beveled mirror. The Victorian Room has a pleasing private balcony/porch that overlooks a fish pond and fountain in the side yard.

For their personal space, Bill and Mary took one of the two maid's rooms and also designed and built a private bathroom/spa. They were careful to make no exterior structural changes.

The Twaddles said the previous owners, Rod and Jorja Frazier, did the most drastic work in the renovation — returning the mansion to a single-family home after it was turned into apartments in the 1960s.

As part of that renovation, the Fraziers had Jeff Sibbing rebuild the staircase in the foyer/music room. Sibbing used several newels from the Quincy College friary to recreate a period staircase and built a starting newel to match. He also used old oak to craft paneling to match some original staircase paneling that escaped the 1960s remodeling.

With the big work complete, the Twaddles say they were left with only the fun parts of restoring the Dwire mansion.