

59 July. 2018 Bonnington Neighbourhood.

MOUNTAIN MEMORIES FINDS BONNINGTON

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Have you ever heard of Hamilton Mountain's **Bonnington** Neighbourhood? ...Neither have I.

But wait, there it is, right "smack-dab" in the middle of the Hamilton Mountain community. Like an elongated hole squeezed into a donut, it is embraced starting clockwise on the north by Fennell Ave., Upper James, Mohawk Road, and West 5th Street. It is effectively boxed in by three shopping plazas, Terryberry Library, Buchanan Park, Mohawk College and historic Auchmar.

Being at the centre of the mountain's business and cultural activities, one would expect the name Bonnington must have some significance. But no-ooo, even the Planning Department, responsible for selecting neighbourhood names associated with the founding and early growth of our area's heritage is vaguely mysterious about the origin of the name. Nothing peaks my curiosity like a history mystery.

Using the search engine on my computer, I found that Bonnington was a village on Leith Water flowing into Edinburgh, Scotland. With a large water wheel it is well known for its milling industry and an engineering works associated with the name **BERTRAM**. **That rang a bell!**

John Bertram (1829-1906) was born in the parish of Glenholme in Peebleshire south of Edinburgh to a family of leading millwrights and engineers. He came to Canada in 1852 and found work in the Gartshore foundry in Dundas.

By 1863 he formed his own machine tool business which he and his sons built into one of Canada's leading metal engineering companies.

In 1884 John Bertram built a grand home and beautiful gardens on 12 acres of land at 101 Governor's Road. He named it Glenholme after his home parish in Scotland. It remained in the family until 1978.

The youngest of his three sons, James Bennett Bertram, was the superintendent of the Bertram and Sons machine industry for 40 years during its most productive era. One of its many outstanding engineering accomplishments was the Peterborough Trent Severn Canal lift lock.

Like his father, James B. Bertram built a beautiful mansion on fashionable Sydenham Road in Dundas. He called it "**Bonnington**", after a fine old home in the afore mentioned milling town on the Leith Water in Edinburgh Scotland.



*Photo by James B. Bertram courtesy Don Warren.
Mr. & Mrs. James B. Bertram with their new 1920 Marmon Coupe beside their residence, 'Bonnington', on Sydenham Road and Victoria Street, Dundas.*

Is the Bonnington Neighbourhood name on Hamilton Mountain a tribute to the fine contributions that Scottish engineers made to the founding and early growth of our country's industrial heritage? It certainly fits with the industrial image attained by our region. I believe that it is as good a guess as any.