

priorities. Yet, beyond that sort of academic lifestyle, the house and its reputation allow its residents the freedom to develop into the men that they want to be. We have a good reputation as a house, not because we never do the types of things that are commonly—and often wrongly—associated with our peers, but because we have proven ourselves capable of living the balance between working hard and playing hard. The College trusts us to live as responsibly as those Bampton men have before us.

As I look forward to my last semester in Bampton, I find myself realizing that the house is merely a manifestation of what the College hopes all Hobart men will strive to be. It is not sufficient to praise the house without recognizing the Hobart family of which it is a part.

Whether they live in Bampton or not, I hope that Hobart men are always aware of the standards that the College puts forth in its mission. It is that sort of standard that makes us successful as an academic and social community.

## The View at Bampton

Michael Fazio '04

As a resident of Bampton House, I have had the rare opportunity to see the variety of ways in which other students succeed during their time at Hobart. My fellow housemates are members of athletic teams, students in public service, members of honor societies, dean's list constituents, students embarking on Honors and individuals involved in many other extracurricular activities. I am able to see how they organize their work, how each prepares himself for his path in life.

It is not just academic success that we should pursue, however. We need to learn from others. We can use our four years here to best prepare us for this challenge. Do not just allow your professors to teach in the classroom, but allow your everyday experiences to be your teachers. By doing this daily, it will become a habit. Your habits shape your character, and your character ultimately defines your success in life.

I would like to thank those who created an environment at Bampton House that allows me to observe and learn, and wish all fellow Hobart students as rewarding an experience during their stay at the Colleges as I have.

### Bampton House Quick Facts

YEAR BUILT: 1924

ARCHITECTURE: Tudor/Jacobean

ORIGINAL OWNER: William J. Brennan Sr., president of the Geneva Foundry Corporation

Purchased by the Colleges in 1986 from Finger Lakes Cerebral Palsy Association

Many of the Stickley Company furnishings in the living room—selected by former President Carroll Brewster's wife, Mary—are still in use today

Bampton's one stipulation of his gift was that the house would never be a coed residence

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HOBART COLLEGE

# Hobart Heritage

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## The Legacy of Bampton House

by Karl A. Brautigam III '04

I've had the opportunity and honor to live in Bampton House three of my four years at Hobart. It's a grand old house that feels more like a true home than a college residence hall. So when Dean Capraro suggested I do a research project on the house, I jumped at the chance. I wanted to know who James W. Bampton was and why he was so paramount to the heritage of Hobart College.

This project encompasses three aspects: the physical structure itself, at 720 South Main Street; a biographical perspective of the gift possible, James W. Bampton '32; Bampton House and the integration of the Residential Education system at Hobart and William Smith Colleges.

Over the course of my research, I learned that the granddaughters of the original owner, Barbara Lynch Springstead '57 LHD '90 and Joan Lynch '61, live in Geneva, so I was able to interview them. Through them I learned about their family, the Brennans, who at one point ran the steelworks plant in downtown Geneva.

It also was interesting to talk to past administrators of the Colleges and alumni. They generously took time to share their experiences with and memories of Bampton House and the man it was named after, and I thank them.

I encourage everyone to take a look at the full project. The Bampton Project can be accessed online in Adobe Acrobat PDF format at <http://people.hws.edu/bampton/index.asp>. You might be surprised by what you discover.



## Bampton House: A Brief History

Bampton House was built in 1924 by William Brennan Sr., the owner of the Geneva Foundry. The Brennan family has a rich tradition at Hobart and William Smith; three generations attended the Colleges. Built in the Tudor/Jacobean style, similar to Coxe and Medbery halls on campus, the house at 720 South Main Street stayed within the Brennan family through four generations. Then, in 1971, it was sold to the Finger Lakes Cerebral Palsy Association and became that organization's Happiness House.

It wasn't until 1986, when James W. Bampton '32 donated the funds that the house would become part of the Colleges. A shrewd and successful businessman, Bampton is best known for his pioneering brand expansion at Krylon, where he developed what we know as spray paint—earning him the moniker "Grandfather of Graffiti," which he despised. He eventually sold the brand to The Borden Company.

Aside from the many scholarships Bampton endowed at the Colleges, the house was his most notable and generous donation. He was able to see the impact his gift made at the ribbon-cutting ceremony in October 1986.

The concept behind Bampton House was to create a small living community for Hobart students based on academic, athletic and extracurricular achievements. It was meant to produce a sense of service, pride and commitment to Hobart—a place that would foster dialogue and an exchange of ideas.

Today, Bampton House carries on that tradition. It provides an open setting for both academically driven and extra/co-curricularly involved students to exchange ideas relating to their specific fields and interests.



Members of the first group of Bampton House residents



Bampton House, decorated for Halloween

## Before Bampton

Generations of Hobart men have felt a strong sense of kinship while living in Bampton House. Within its walls they have shared meals, life stories, each other's setbacks and triumphs—just like a family.

That's only fitting, since Bampton House started out as a family home.

The first owners, the Brennans, were well-respected in Geneva. William Brennan Sr. was president of the Geneva Foundry Corporation, a major employer that supplied iron castings to businesses across the Eastern Seaboard. Brennan had played football for Hobart in the 1900s but never enrolled at the College.

In the 1920s, construction on 720 S. Main St. began. A sprawling two-story structure sprang up on the former site of tennis courts owned by the Rose family, who lived at 731 S. Main.

The Brennan's house replaced one on North Main Street that was destroyed by fire. "They wanted to make a house that was more fireproof in design," recalls Barbara Lynch Springstead, William Brennan Sr.'s granddaughter and member of the William Smith Class of 1957. "That is why it is brick and the moldings are all in stone."

"Architecturally it was built with steel beams and had fireboards that made it impossible to hang a picture or put nails and hooks in the walls," adds her sister, Joan Lynch '61. "Everything had to be dropped from the attic down. The carpenters and specialists did not like it very much."

Although the basic structure remains the same, the layout of the house was quite a bit different when the Brennans lived there. Of the eleven bedrooms in Bampton House, only five started out as such. Room 106 originally was the veranda and Room 100 was the dining room. The garage was converted to two single rooms, while the butler's pantry was transformed into the current bathroom off the kitchen.

There also was a garden in back that almost reached the creek, but that was filled in long ago. When Jackson Potter and Rees halls were built, construction trucks ripped out the hedgerow.

In the Brennans' day, the house was a key gathering spot. "Christmases and Thanksgivings were amazing," says Barbara. "It was the house everyone went to."

Joan says Sunday brunches were popular too. The family's pug dog, Albert, was well-known around town, especially by Hobart and William Smith students who used to drop by for a visit.

"Living on the edge of the campus and having lots of friends who went to [the Colleges] made it a great place to live," says Barbara of the residence.

Ask Hobart men how they have felt about living in Bampton House and they'll probably say pretty much the same thing.

## Home Away from Home

Matthew C. Weir, H '04

I've always been a sucker for the traditions of this college, and I love the fact that we still have a house that has as its mission based on the success of its residents and, more importantly, Hobart as a whole.

The beauty of Bampton House's interior reflects the excellence of the men who have lived within it during their time here. Walking through the halls to my room is always reassuring. I am somewhere safe, somewhere quiet and somewhere that actually feels like home. It is a security blanket of sorts, as we live there with the assurance that we will always get a good night of sleep (or studying, for that matter).

Bampton House has been a haven for those Hobart students who have chosen work and success as their



100th Anniversary of Hobart College	720 South Main Street built and occupied by Brennan Family	James W. Bampton enrolls at Hobart College	Bampton graduates with an A.B. in history and economics	125th Anniversary of Hobart College	Bampton elected member of HWS Board of Trustees	Bampton begins four-year tenure as president of the Hobart Alumni Association	150th Anniversary of Hobart College	720 South Main Street sold to Finger Lakes Cerebral Palsy Association; becomes Happiness House	HWS purchases 720 S. Main St. with help of funds donated by Bampton	Bampton House dedication ceremony
1922	1924	1928	1932	1947	1957	1964	1972		1986	