

24 LASALLE PARKWAY

Perinton's early history is primarily agricultural. As a result, a number of the town's designated historic landmarks are farmhouses or homes that are connected with a farm or a farming family. The house at 24 LaSalle Parkway, designated in 1991, is one of those structures.

The LaSalle Parkway house was originally the home of the John Van Ness family and was part of a farm that covered up to 158 acres. John and Alada Van Ness came to Perinton from Rensselaer County in the late 1820's and purchased 107 acres of land from Jirah Rowley in Lot 48 in the



southern area of the town. John and his son built homes on the farm. The children attended District School #1 in Bushnell's Basin, and both John Sr. and Jr. served the school as trustees. John and Alada died in the 1830's leaving a large family of five sons and six daughters. At least one of the daughters married into another local farming family when Catherine wed Joseph Ketchum of Bushnell's Basin. John Jr. and his wife Betty had three children, John, Calvin, and Sarah. John married into yet another pioneer Perinton family when he wed Mary Hannan, the daughter of James and Lucretia Hannan, and the granddaughter of Cyrus Packard, Perinton's first supervisor.

The 1852 map of Perinton has two Van Ness homes in the area of LaSalle Parkway, and by 1858, the map shows three, two belonging to J.H. Van Ness and one to C. Van Ness. The brick house that currently stands at 24 LaSalle Parkway was probably built in the late 1850's by Calvin Van Ness or possibly his brother John. It is, according to architectural historian Paul Malo, a "fine house." The house is brick, an unusual building material for Perinton, and the only one in the southern part of town. It sits in an excellent location on a wooded slope above what was the main stage route between Canandaigua and Rochester. The house has two stories with a 1½-story wing. An Italianate porch with bracketed columns fronts the wing and protects the main entrance. Most of the windows are six over six with wooden louvered shutters and stone sills and lintels. There is a lovely round window in the gable end.

By 1872, the house and its 90 acres of land had been sold to Clinton Brownell, who lived there until his death in 1882. His widow continued to live there for a time, but by 1902 the house belonged to Charles Schenk.

The LaSalle Parkway/Pittsford-Victor Road area has changed significantly over the past 100 years. The once rural and agricultural area has become a busy commercial center, farmland having been replaced by office buildings and malls. Fortunately for the house, Route 96 was rerouted to the south and LaSalle Parkway became a quieter residential street. The recent decision to make the street a dead-end has further reduced traffic and noise. As a result, it is still possible to imagine this house overlooking an expanse of farmland. Further, the owners over the years, including the present one, have faithfully cared for this elegant reminder of Perinton's agricultural past.

The Van Ness property, situated as it is in a heavily traveled, commercial area, manages to reflect Perinton's agricultural past and serve not only as an excellent example of rural architecture, but also as an example of how historic preservation and development can coexist.

