NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

1. NAME
   COMMON: Snodgrass Tavern
   AND/OR HISTORIC: Halfway House

2. LOCATION
   STREET AND NUMBER: Route 3, West Virginia
   CITY OR TOWN: Hedgesville vicinity

3. CLASSIFICATION
   CATEGORY: Building
   OWNERSHIP: Public Acquisition
   STATUS: Occupied
   ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC: Yes

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY
   OWNER'S NAME: Eva Fuss and Mary Fuss Gonano

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION:
   COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC: Berkeley County Court House
   STREET AND NUMBER: Public Square
   CITY OR TOWN: Martinsburg

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS
   TITLE OF SURVEY: Hedges, Hezekiah, Heirs Division (Rescaled)
   DATE OF SURVEY: D. B. 136 and Page No. 78
   DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
   STREET AND NUMBER: Public Square
   CITY OR TOWN: Martinsburg

* See letter dated June 30, 1979 from Dr. Samuel Davis to Dr. William M. March.
William Snodgrass received a Fairfax land grant of 1,000 acres in 1732, but it was not until 1740-1742 that he built the first part of the house, known for many years as Snodgrass Tavern. The front part of the house is built of log, covered with weatherboarding, the back is of sandstone; there are large twin chimneys at both ends of the house and a porch running the full length of the front. The house now contains ten rooms.

The southeast corner was built first. It was a fifteen-foot square structure, one and one half stories in height and was built of rounded oak logs.

The second part, of rounded pine logs, was built ten feet to the west, two stories high, with finished roof and gables, as a separate building. This was built possibly fifteen or more years later that the first part, as can be seen by the weather beaten plate that was not covered by the roof. The space between the two buildings was an open courtway with a roofed well. Some time later the southeast corner was raised to two stories, the courtway finished and covered. This was probably the time when the double porch with small rooms above and below were added.

The first floor west end, which is 18 x 24 feet, was used as the public room of the tavern. The second floor, containing two bedrooms, was reached by stairs leading up from the east end of this room. The large front door of the public room was a cross paneled door, strengthened by diagonal boards nailed with hand wrought nails. The iron hinges run across the entire width of the door and are riveted with hand wrought rivets. There were square port holes on either side of the door.

The last addition to the house was built of sandstone and runs the entire length of the north side of the house. This part dates to 1813. When it was added, the kitchen was moved from the southeast corner of the house to the northeast corner. This room is also fifteen-feet square, has a very large fireplace (5 feet 7 inches long by 4 feet 7 inches high, and 2 feet 3 inches deep) with a five-foot crane. The room has a flagstone floor, now covered with a board floor. At this time the roof was changed and an attic added to cover the entire structure.
This house is significant due to these facts: the first part was built between 1740-1742, the original structure is in excellent condition; it is of architectural interest because it has twin chimneys at both ends, an unusually high attic, and a very large public room. It was frequented by figures of historical importance.

Since no definite date as to the opening of Snodgrass Tavern as a tavern is available, it is assumed that it came into being gradually. It is located on the Warm Springs road about half way between Martinsburg and Bath (now Berkeley Springs) and was also known as Halfway House. Records do not show any other stopping place between the two towns, so travelers between the two towns, no doubt began spending the night there at a very early date.

The house is just east of Back Creek and although there was a ferry boat in use, the stream was frequently too swift for it to cross.

The tavern's most famous guest was George Washington. His first visit was made on his way west when surveying for Lord Fairfax before 1750. A later visit is recorded in his diary, as on September 5, 1784, "dispatched my wagon (with the baggage) at daylight and at 7 o'clock followed it-bated at one Snodgrass on Back Creek and dined there." He also stopped there on later trips to Bath.

Another prominent American who visited the tavern was Henry Clay. He was, at the time, Secretary of State, and often visited friends in Berkeley County. In July of 1827, after spending a few days in Martinsburg, he spent the afternoon and night at the tavern.

Snodgrass Tavern remained in existence as a tavern until 1847. Joseph Snodgrass, the last of the Snodgrasses to own the tavern, would not allow liquor to be sold, business became lax, gatherings became small and far apart and buildings fell into decay. The tavern was first rented, then sold and has been in use as a private dwelling ever since.

There are several features of architectural interest found in the house.

Public rooms in taverns were usually small rooms, but the one here was quite large, being 18 x 24 feet.
Twin chimneys are to be found at both ends of the house, which is unusual for this area. These are large, 32 feet tall, beautifully built chimneys, three are of sandstone and one of slate rock. The southwest one has two flues.

Another unusual feature is the very high (fifteen feet ten inches) attic where the hand hewn beams and rafters are still intact. The height of the house from ground to comb of roof is over thirty feet. When recent renovation was done, the rounded logs were also found to be in excellent condition.
STAGES OF TAVERN'S CONSTRUCTION

DIAGRAMS SHOW FIRST FLOOR CONSTRUCTION

SCALE 1" = 10'

1st Stage

2nd Stage

Well

Courtway

3rd Stage

4th And Final Stage

Log

Log

Log

Log

Stone