

BRETSCH HOUSE (WALNUT GROVE)

Resource History

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c. 1780 – The Bretsch House was established on land that was originally granted by Lord Fairfax to Thomas Rutherford in 1751. In 1768 the tract was turned over to Rutherford's friend Charles Yates as repayment for a loan. Charles Yates visited several times but ultimately gave the property to his nephew John Yates. John's daughter Janet Yates married George Brooke Beall in 1826 and they raised 8 children on the property including John Yates Beall, a Confederate spy executed in 1865. The property would remain in the Yates/Beall family line for over a hundred years until Janet and George's eldest daughter Mary sold it in 1907.

October 1907 – Prominent Jefferson County farmer Jacob H. Dutterer purchased the 337 acre Walnut Grove property from Mary Y. K. Beall for \$27,830.15. Mary inherited the property after the death of her brother William Beall, who had inherited it from their parents. (JCDB 100/399)

December 1921 – Jacob H. Dutterer died in 1921, leaving the "Beall Farm" to his younger son Robert S. Dutterer (sometimes written Dutrow). (JCDB 121/246) (JCWB E/46) Jacob H. Dutterer's will was disputed by his children who filed suit alleging that their eldest brother J. Henry Dutterer had taken advantage of their father in his old age to gain a more favorable inheritance. Initially the courts ruled in favor of the plaintiffs, ordering that the property be divided equally. However, J. Henry Dutterer appealed, and in 1927 the West Virginia Supreme Court of Appeals reversed the lower court decision, putting the matter to rest.

July 1968 – Kenneth W. and Mary Y. Metz purchased the now 181 acre Walnut Grove Farm from Robert S. Dutrow for \$91,500. (JCDB 298/60)

October 1972 – Kenneth W. and Mary T. Metz sold a 2.43 acre portion of the Walnut Grove property containing the Bretsch House to Stanley and Helen Jones for \$20,000. (JCDB 351/249)

October 1975 – Stanley and Helen Jones sold to Earnest A. and Rosalie A. Norton for \$37,500. (JCDB 397/432)

August 1979 – Earnest A. and Rosalie A. Norton sold to Hermann P. and Ann T. Bretsch for \$64,000. (JCDB 459/419) The Bretschs were excellent stewards of the property and were the owners at the time that the house achieved landmark status in 1981.

December 2005 – Ann T. Bretsch sold to Natalie Anne Sterling for \$353,000. (JCDB 1019/24)

January 2006 – The property reverted to Jefferson County after Natalie Anne Sterling defaulted on the mortgage. (JCDB 1516/591)

October 2008 – U.S. Bank, on behalf of the Terwin Mortgage Trust, purchased the property at auction from Jefferson County for \$200,265.05. (1058/140)

June 2009 – U.S. Bank sold to William Hewitt and Lisa A. Hewitt for \$170,000. (JCDB 1066/700)

September 2020 – William Hewitt and Lisa A. Hewitt sold to Kenneth R. and Heidi Lyn Lockridge for \$305,000. (JCDB 1249/552)