

# JONES & HERRIN

Architecture/Interior Design

October 20, 1997

Mrs. Sara Hall  
488 Gurley Pike  
Gurley, Alabama 35748

Re: 1870's Gurley Hotel

Dear Mrs. Hall:

Richard and Nancy Van Valkenburgh (Van Valkenburgh Realty), who specialize in historic buildings, are working up some data on the Gurley Hotel, on the following assumptions which we discussed:

1. Your main objective is to see the building preserved, and restored to the greatest practicable degree.
2. In order to do this, the building would need to be offered for sale to a qualified buyer at a price low enough to enable the buyer to in addition spend the \$300,000 or more needed for a good restoration.
3. Deed restrictions should be attached which would, within reason and legal possibilities, require the preservation and restoration of the house, in exchange for the below-market sale price. These restrictions could be incorporated in a legal "Preservation Easement" that could be held by the Alabama Historical Commission or the Huntsville Historic Preservation Commission. This easement would also lower the taxes on the house and would be transferred to future buyers. The easement-holder would enforce the easement restrictions. Attached is some basic information on preservation easements. An attorney who is familiar with preservation easements and your own tax situation should advise you on this. Preservation easements are a widely used device in situations such as yours where an owner's main interest is the continued preservation of a historic building. The hotel should be put on the National Register of Historic Places, for which it is qualified.
4. In our considerable experience, it would require about 65% - 75% of the cost of a new nice custom house to do a good restoration of this house. This translates into about \$75 - \$80 per square foot needed to restore the house. Therefore the sale price should be not more than about \$20 per square foot plus land value, and will probably need to be less to induce a suitable buyer. Van Valkenburgh can advise you on their opinion of a price.
5. The Huntsville Historic Foundation Quarterly is presently without an editor, so for the moment that method of making known the availability of the hotel is not available.
6. Attached is information we discussed on exterior wood repairs and reprinting.
7. I can give some assistance for a National Register nomination if you desire to do this.

Best wishes on your efforts! Van Valkenburgh is to get with you on their ideas.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Harvie".

Harvie P. Jones, FAIA  
HPJ/tm

copy: Mr. Richard Van Valkenburgh  
HJ

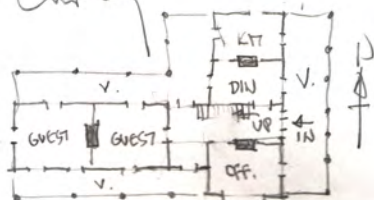
attachments



Gurley Hotel, Gurley, Al.

1880's opened by Capt. Frank Gurley  
after the Civil War & operated  
by him.

Photos Nov. 1993  
Harvie P. Jones F.A.I.A.



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two N.E. Rms = 1870's  
remodeled 1880's

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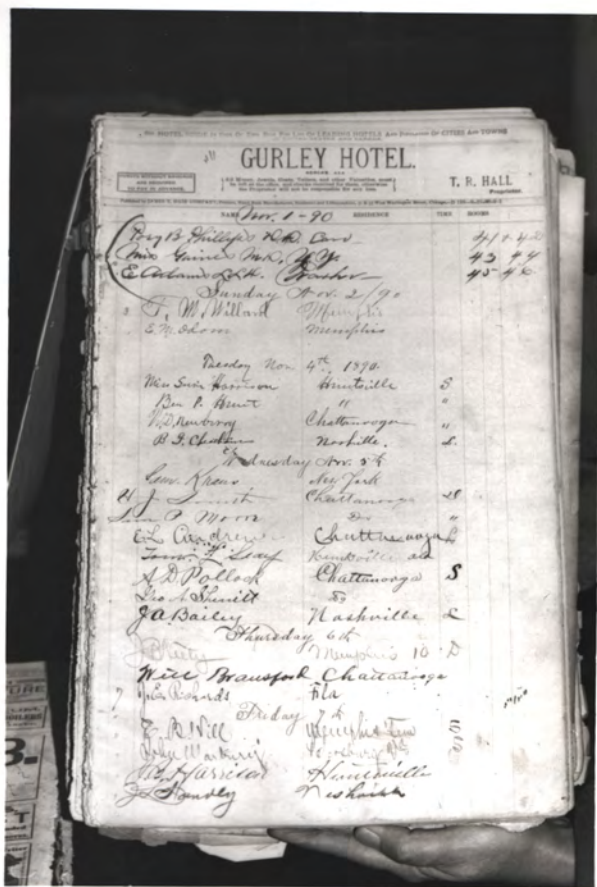


c. 1880's  
GURLEY  
HOTEL





1870's rms. just N. of  
entry hall, looking S.  
(door opens into entry hall)



Nov. 1-1890 Registration book (at the c. 1917  
Boganshott House, just N. of  
Gurley, home of Frank Hall,  
Gurley's grandson, age 100 in 1943)