

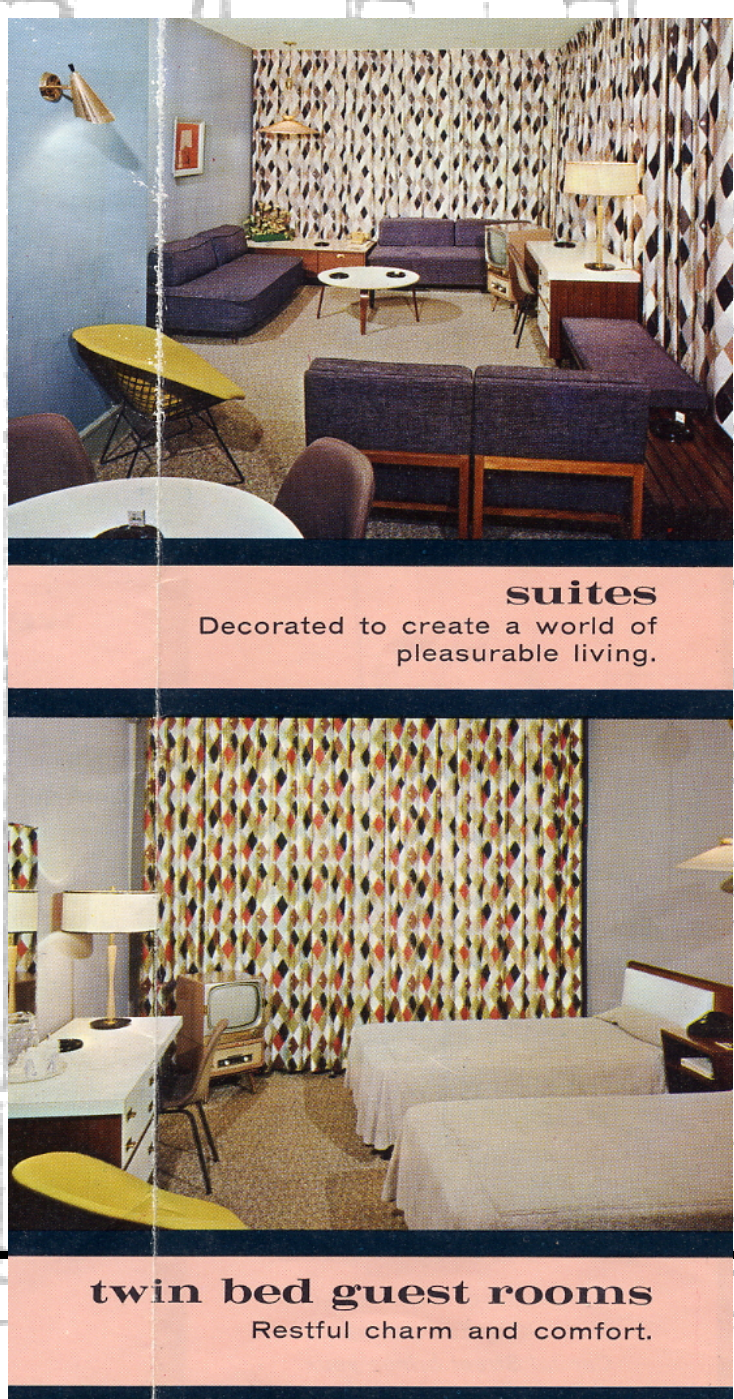
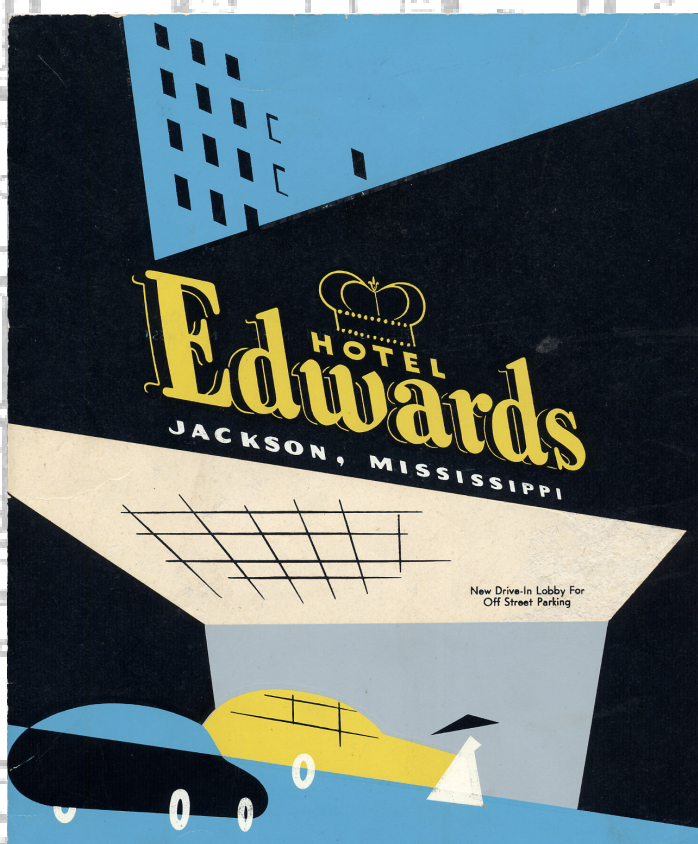


*Photo of the 1868 Edwards House*

The interior of the new hotel featured 300 rooms with private baths and all of the modern amenities of the time. The public areas of the hotel occupied the first two floors, with the main lobby at the center of the first floor, distinguished by six large columns set along the perimeter of an oval light well, lit by skylights above the second floor. Encircling the lobby were the hotel's business offices, main dining room, kitchen, coffee room, coffee kitchen and six retail shops. On the second level, accessed by a Tennessee golden vein marble staircase with an intricate bronze balustrade, was the convention hall with an arched and lighted coffered ceiling, club and private dining rooms, a beauty salon, and more hotel offices.

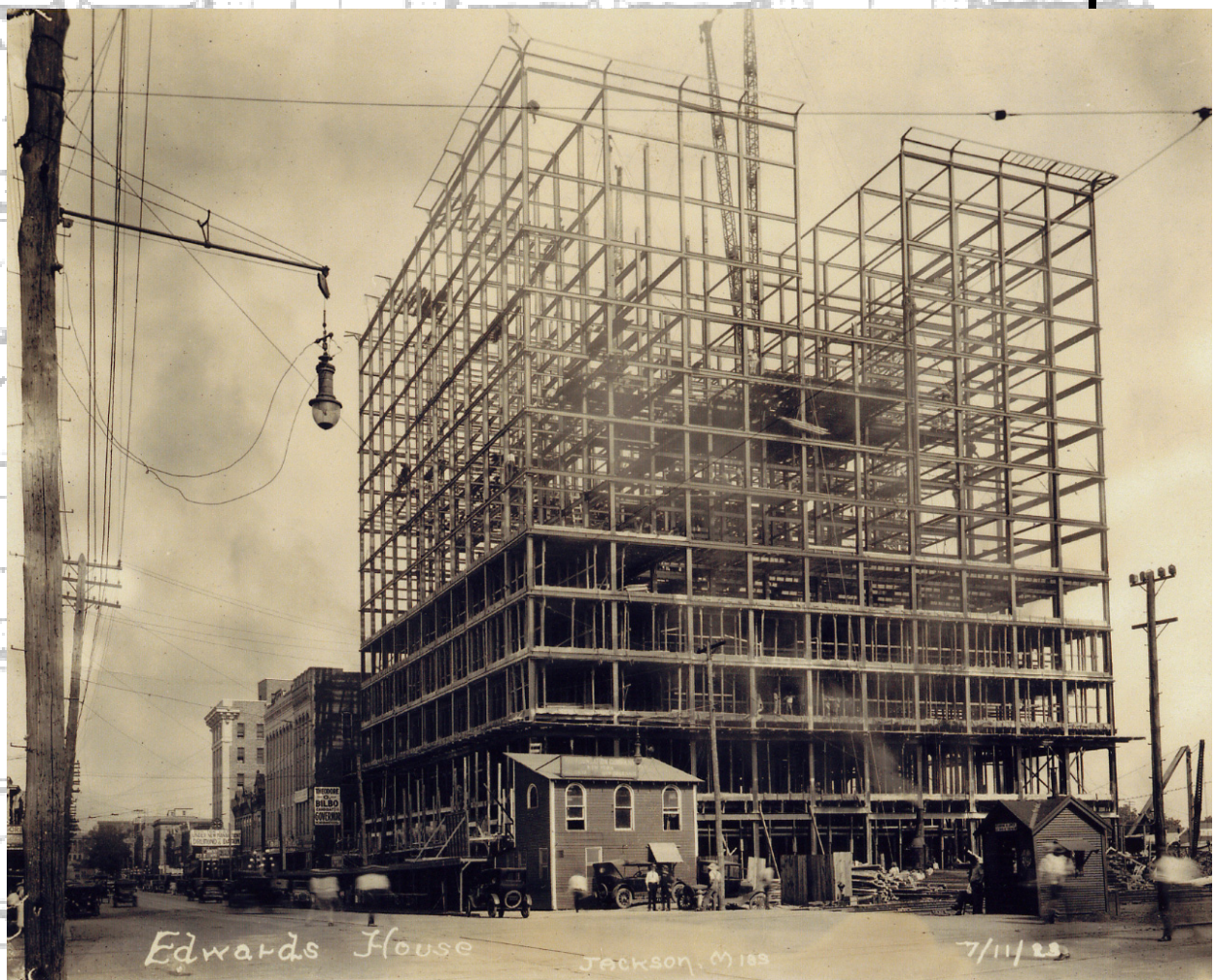
In 1954 the hotel was purchased by Milner Enterprises and a thorough renovation and expansion of the hotel took place. At this time, many of the original architectural elements of the interior lobby were “modernized” and the rotunda opening was floored over for additional floor space on the second floor. The hotel rooms were also refurbished in the modern style of the time. A convention hall complex with a multilevel parking garage was constructed including a patio area and swimming pool on the roof. At this time the hotel name was changed to the King Edward Hotel.

The hotel served as the center for political events, social receptions, balls, dinners and meetings. Over the years the Edwards House, Edwards Hotel, and King Edward Hotel hosted many politically important people. Besides being home to many state legislators, it was also home to Governor Edmond Noel while the Governor's Mansion was undergoing renovations in 1908, and home to Walter Sillers, who resided there from 1916 until the 1960s. A banquet at the Edwards House was given in honor of President Taft during his visit to Mississippi in 1909. The concentration of political activity at the hotel prompted one reporter to write: “There are three branches of Mississippi legislature - - the Upper House, the Lower House, and the Edwards House.” Sadly, in 1967, the hotel closed, putting an end to its storied past.



The hotel was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1976 and was designated a Mississippi Landmark in 2006. After sitting vacant for more than 40 years and several attempts to rehabilitate the building failed, the building was finally saved by a partnership consisting of HRI Properties of New Orleans, David Watkins of Watkins Partners and Deuce McAllister. In 2008 rehabilitation of the hotel began with completion in 2009. The newly rehabilitated King Edward once again will welcome guests with a 186-room Hilton Garden Inn, a restaurant, lounge, convenience store, coffee shop and fitness center. In addition, the building has 64 luxury apartments and retail space. Despite years of neglect and many odds, the King Edward Hotel is once again a cherished landmark in downtown Jackson.

*Images courtesy of the Mississippi Department of Archives and History and Jackson Landmarks. History from Jackson Landmarks and the Edwards Hotel National Register of Historic Places nomination form.*



*Photo of the Edwards Hotel during construction.*



*Photo of the convention hall from the late 1920's showing the arched ceiling with lighted coffers.*



*Interior of the lobby from the early 1950's before it was renovated and the rotunda opening floored over.*

