NAME(S) historic/common: Hermitage Motor Inn

LOCATION street/road: Virginia Ave (US Route 220)
city/town: Petersburg, WV 26847
(incorporated/unincorporated)

USE/FUNCTION present: Hotel
original: Residence

OWNER/ADDRESS present: Jim & Diane Roby
P.O. Box 1177
Petersburg, WV 26847

original: Mr. Jacob Kenny Chambers

PHOTO/SKETCH OF Petersburg, WV 26847

LOCATE ENVIRONMENT (map)

ACREAGE (approx):

1 Acre

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:
The Hermitage is located within a rectangle formed by
Virginia Ave. on the north; a driveway on the east; the north
edge of a parking lot on the south; and the
east edge of a driveway on the west.
### SIGNIFICANCE

**a. Architect/Builder/Engineer:**

- which has been in continuous operation since 1881. Located adjacent to the old Grant County Court House and on the main highway through the South Branch Valley. It was prominently located to serve travelers. Originally a two story structure, the house is a good example of the mid 19th century vernacular architecture of the South Branch Valley, showing influence of the Greek Revival Style.

**b. Style/Period:** Vernacular

- with Greek Revival Influence

**c. Date(s):** ca. 1840

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### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Accessed from survey documentation prepared by Nan Stevens, Region 8 Planning and Development Council, P.O. Box 887, Petersburg, WV 26847, for the West Virginia Department of Culture and History.

During the early 20th century, a third story, also of brick construction was added, changing the proportion of the building. A turn-of-the-century period two-story porch with turned posts and balusters is also part of the updating received by the inn at that time.

The significance of the Hermitage derives from its continuous operation as an inn since 1881. Over a century of operation as a hostelry illustrates the importance of the commercial associations of the property to Petersburg and the South Branch Valley.

The social significance of the Hermitage (before 1904 called the Taylor Hotel) relates to the large numbers of guests, such as statesmen, judges and lawyers who regularly stayed at the hostelry while in Petersburg for court business at the neighboring courthouse. Tourists, hunters and fishermen were also attracted to the hotel because of the spectacular recreational and scenic qualities of the South Branch Valley.

The Hermitage is also important for its longevity as a hotel business in the region. No other hotels in the immediate vicinity have existed continuously for over a century. The Hotel was called the "Cunningham" and later in the 19th century, the Taylor Hotel.

Historically, the building was constructed in the ca. 1840-41 period by local slaves who used bricks fired on the site. Jacob Kenny Chambers was the original owner. During the Civil War the building housed federal troops engaged in valley-wide campaigns. Mountain climbers stayed at the facility while training at nearby Seneca Rocks during World War II.

The original block of the building continues to convey its strong architectural flavor as an inn. The 2-tier porch, with turn-of-the-century sawn trim, is evocative of Victoria-era rural architecture.
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PETERSBURG QUAD