



Landmark Preservation Commission

Application for Landmark Designation

1. Name of property

Historic Name: Cableland

Current Name: Cableland

2. Location

Address: 4150 East Shangri La Drive

Legal Description: SHANGRI-LA HEIGHTS 06073 B2 L1 TO 7 EXC E 14.5FT OF L7 & UND 1/2 INT IN TRACT A

3. Owner Information

Name: City and County of Denver

Address: 144 West Colfax Ave

Phone: 720-913-0735

Email: LaTonya.Lacy@denvergov.org

4. Applicant/Contact Person (if other than owner)

Name: Cableland Foundation

Address: 4150 East Shangri La Drive

Phone: 303-596-5592

Email: finesilver1988@gmail.com





5. General Property Data:

Date of construction and major additions/alterations: 1986-1987

Source of Information: City and County of Denver assessor records and permits

Number, type, and date of construction of outbuildings: Cabana/guest house

Source of Information: Site visit

Approximate lot size and acreage: 45,490 square feet

Source of Information: City and County of Denver assessor records

Architect: Lawrence Pepper (architect), Andrew Gerhard (interior designer)

Source of Information: *Denver Post*, 2/21/98

Builder: JAR Enterprises, Denver, CO

Source of Information: Cableland records

Original Use: Residence and event space

Source of Information: City and County of Denver assessor records

Present Use: Event space and residence

Source of Information: City and County of Denver assessor records

Previous field documentation (date and surveyor): Not previously documented

National Register Status and date (listed, eligible, study list): Not listed in National Register of Historic Places

6. Statement of Significance

Explain how the structure meets at least one criterion in at least two of the categories.

To qualify as a Landmark, a property must meet at least one criterion in at least two of the three categories; history, architecture, geography. The specific criterion must be identified, and a statement provided as to how the property meets each selected criterion. The explanation should summarize why the property meets the criterion and therefore has the exceptional, unusual, or outstanding characteristics that make it qualify as a Denver Landmark. As part of the designation criteria a structure must have historic and physical integrity.

Landmark Designation Categories and Criteria

Category 1: History.

To have historical importance, the structure shall be more than 30 years old or have extraordinary importance to the architectural or historical development of Denver, and shall:

Criteria:

- a. Have direct association with the historical development of the city, state, or nation; or
- b. Be the site of a significant historic event; or
- c. **Have direct and substantial association with a person or group of persons who had influence on society.**



Cableland is significant for its association with Bill Daniels, an early pioneer in cable television. Daniels started one of the earliest cable operations in 1952, including establishing a financial network to back the fledgling business, which led to his career as a financial broker making deals within cable television industry. He also played an important role in cable content development, starting or supporting early sports networks and 24-hour news channels. Daniels, who primarily lived in the West, established the headquarters for his company in Denver. As the culmination of a successful and long-running career, he constructed the house at 4150 Shangri La Drive, known as Cableland, as a residence and social gathering space for Denver.

Daniels played a significant role in Denver society. As one of Denver's most prominent and significant philanthropists, Bill Daniels' home was an important part of his philanthropic impact, specifically designed to host charity events. Daniels hired architect Lawrence Pepper and interior designer Andrew Gerhard, both associated with high-end residential architecture in California, to design the home. Few houses of this scale had been built in Denver since the early twentieth century. Daniels built Cableland as a modern alternative to Denver's Phipps Mansion, and as a reinterpretation of Denver's grand mansions of the past. Cableland quickly became a status symbol for Denver, hosting glamorous events and garnering national press. With Daniels' cable empire based in Denver, Cableland also became associated with Denver's emergence as a technology center. According to the *New York Times*: "Cableland stands as a symbol of Denver's emergence as a high-tech center and a world capital of the cable television industry" (3/26/98). Featuring the most-up-to-date amenities and design trends, Cableland itself was a showcase of modern technology.

Category 2: Architecture.

To have architectural importance, the structure or district shall have design quality and integrity, and shall:

Criteria:

- a. **Embody distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style or type; or,**
- b. Be a significant example of the work of a recognized architect or master builder, or,
- c. Contain elements of architectural design, engineering, materials, craftsmanship, or artistic merit which represent a significant or influential innovation; or,
- d. Portray the environment of a group of people or physical development of an area in an era of history characterized by a distinctive architectural style.

Cableland is significant for Architecture as an exceptional example of residential Postmodern architecture in Denver. The concept of Postmodern architecture arose in the 1960s as a reaction against the austerity of Modern architecture. Postmodernists criticized Modernism as sterile, anonymous, too universal, overly simplistic, and meaningless. Postmodernists argued that when Modern architecture rejected ornament and forms with past associations, it lost the ability to communicate a building's reason for existence, creating buildings that looked similar regardless of purpose and place. Postmodernists promoted architecture that was unique and surprising, blending traditional, contemporary, and newly invented elements. Postmodernism reinterpreted traditional design elements, combining inspiration from various styles and periods. Familiar shapes and details were used in unexpected ways, creating striking contrasts.

Postmodernism gained popularity in the 1970s and 1980s, becoming hugely influential on design and culture. However, there are few examples of Postmodern residential architecture in Denver, and certainly none on the scale of Cableland. The style was more widely used for public and commercial buildings, with Michael Graves's Central Branch of the Denver Public Library and Philip Johnson's "Cash Register" building Denver's best-known examples of Postmodernism. Commonly referred to as the "mauve mansion," Cableland reflects 1980s design trends of excess, theatricality, luxury, and exuberance. Key Postmodern design elements seen in Cableland include: oversized, stylized versions of traditional building elements (arches, window surrounds, columns, corbelling); strong geometric composition with repeated motifs; use of textured surfaces; and highly varied wall planes with projections and recesses creating a play of light and shadow. Significant interior features included textured surfaces, recessed lighting, warm colors, brass details, irregularly shaped rooms, multiple levels, and geometric shapes.

When completed in 1987, Cableland featured four bedrooms, thirteen bathrooms, three fireplaces, four kitchens, a sunken bar, a swimming pool, a combined cabana and guest house, and staff quarters. The house showcased technology throughout. The

media room featured a wall of 64 televisions, one for each station on Daniels' Mile High Cablevision. There were also an additional 24 televisions elsewhere in the house, including a closed-circuit system. Other amenities included 10 telephone lines, 97 telephones, surround sound and tactile sounds systems, a 12-foot fireman's pole, a tanning bed, a driveway with a snow-melting system, laser security system, a LiteTouch customized lighting system, and a resistance exercise pool decorated with a seascape mural.

7. Architectural Description

Please provide a statement for each of the following:

- a. Concisely describe the structure and its surrounds. Include building size, shape, # stories, materials, style and site terrain.
- b. Architectural description including mention of major features, uncommon or unique design features, ancillary structures, and important landscape or site features. Also describe interior spaces with extraordinary design features (if any).
- c. Describe character defining features; identify the key visual aspects that make up the character of this building.
- d. Describe location and setting including physical context and relationship to neighborhood and other historic structures.
- e. Describe major alterations to the exterior of the structure and dates of major alterations if known. Describe any plans to alter the exterior.
- f. Include a statement describing how the building currently conveys its historic integrity. For example, does it retain its original design, materials, location, workmanship, setting, historic associations and feeling?

Cableland is located in Shangri-La Heights, which was platted in 1962. Located in the Hilltop neighborhood, the small subdivision lies on the east side of Leetsdale Drive, just north of Cedar Ave. Shangri-La Drive runs through the subdivision, which contains just two blocks (block 1 containing lots 1-5 and block 2 containing lots 1-8 along with tract A). Cableland occupies all of Block 2. Daniels combined multiple lots to create Cableland; the house extends across several of the original rectangular lots, going against traditional lot patterns. Burns Park is located opposite the subdivision, on the west side of Leetsdale. Cableland is arranged parallel to Leetsdale, oriented towards Burns Park. However, though Cableland faces the park, it was designed for privacy. Though Cableland extends over 24,000 sf, the design is low-slung and sprawling. The house is built into a slope, creating a two-story façade with only a single story exposed at the rear. Landscaping is further used to minimize views of the house with planter boxes integrated into the base of the house and several large evergreen trees planted around the house. Cableland's grand entrance is off the interior courtyard rather than on the façade, which features a simple entrance that discretely blends into the façade. Cableland is accessed from Shangri-La Drive, with a driveway extending across the façade of the house, exiting onto E. Cedar Ave.

Completed in 1987, Cableland is a good representation of the Postmodern architectural style popular at that time. Postmodern architecture abandoned the simplified forms of Modern architecture, reintroducing historical building traditions. However, Postmodern architecture was not a revival style. Rather than replicating past styles, Postmodern architecture used historical elements in new ways. This included playing with scale and proportion, exaggerating, manipulating, and distorting traditional forms. Historical building motifs were often combined in new ways and placed to emphasize geometric patterns. The use of over-sized, geometric shapes often gives Postmodern designs the appearance of having been constructed from a set of children's buildings blocks. Traditional elements featured in the design of Cableland include round columns, square posts, flattened arches, horizontal bands, and corbelling. Over-scaled and heavy, these elements are repeated throughout the design, creating strong geometric compositions. Cableland also incorporates elements of the Brutalist style including textured concrete, heavy feel, deeply punched openings, and varied wall planes which create a play of light and shadow.

Cableland is linear in plan, comprised of the main house to the south and the cabana/guest house to the north. A large courtyard with a swimming pool and fountains connect the main house and the cabana/guest house. The buildings are irregular in form, featuring multiple changes in wall plane including recessed panels, inset balconies, and projecting arches. Free-standing round columns are used to support the roof of the porches and engaged columns decorate many of the building's corners. The house is clad in stucco of varying textures, with smooth walls with a lightly textured finish contrasted by walls of highly textured, vertically scored concrete. Planter boxes featuring the scored concrete are integrated into the base of the house. Recessed horizontal bands in the stucco emphasize the house's horizontal orientation. The windows are irregularly spaced and sized, interspersed with large sections of blank walls. The windows feature heavy projecting concrete window surrounds which give the windows a deep-set appearance. The roof is flat and surrounded by a pent roof that is reminiscent of a traditional Mansard roof. The roof features a deep eave overhang and metal trim. The eave features a stepped design resembling corbelling on



a traditional masonry wall. Corbelling is a series of projections, each stepped progressively outward from the vertical face of a wall to support a cornice or other overhanging feature.

Though the overall composition of Cableland is asymmetrical, repeating elements are used to create continuity. A key element is a projecting, flattened, five-sided arch which reoccurs at various scales. The arches are used at several of the window openings and at the original entrance. Many of the arches, including the arch at the entrance, also feature corbelling. The original entrance is roughly centered on the main house, located at the interior connection between the public and private areas of the dwelling. Tall, paired entry doors are recessed into the wall and framed by rough textured walls with rounded corners. The entrance is located on the upper level of the house, with wide steps curving up to the entrance. Square posts and a gate mark the path to the entrance. In 2002, another entrance was added between the main house and cabana/guest house, leading into the courtyard. This entrance features a curved metal and glass canopy to shelter arriving guests being dropped off. An attached garaged is located at the south end of the façade with interior access to the private quarters. Another garage is incorporated into the façade at the guest house.

The courtyard provides a dramatic contrast to the façade. While the façade is heavy and massive, the courtyard is open and bright. Adjacent to the courtyard, the main house features rounded walls of glass, creating a play of indoor/outdoor space that makes the main house feel even more expansive. The interplay between the courtyard and the main house is one of the most distinctive features of the design. The exterior emphasizes privacy and while grand in scale, the materials and design features are simple. All the grandeur of the design is focused on the courtyard; it's the showpiece of the house. A two-story portico supported by oversized round columns extends from the main house to shelter part of the courtyard. A similar single-story portico extends from the cabana/guest house into the courtyard. Corbelling similar to that found on the façade is used on the portico roof as well as above the curved glass walls. The focus of the courtyard is a large, irregular swimming pool (1,102 sf). A series of fountains are located on the east side of the courtyard, built into the slope. Retaining walls and planting boxes featuring the same vertically incised concrete found on the façade are located around the pool.

Glass doors lead from the courtyard to the main house. Inside, the house is divided into public rooms designed for entertaining (on the north) and private quarters (to the south). The walls of glass looking onto the courtyard connect this exterior entertaining space with the open-plan entertaining area of the house. This area includes a reception area with sofas, a dining area, and a sunken bar. The space was carefully crafted with entertaining in mind, intended to be impressive as well as functional. Texture was key to the design. The walls are fabric textured with a rough, vertical pattern which echoes the textured concrete on the exterior. This contrasted with plush furnishings, polished floors, and brass accents. The tall ceiling (extending the full height of the building) gives the feeling of spaciousness while drop ceilings in various intersecting geometric shapes (circles, rectangles) provide visual interest and acoustical dampening. Corbelling echoing that on the exterior is used around the space along with round columns. Recessed lighting installed in the ceiling was used to flatter visitors.

Stairs at the south end of the entertaining area lead up to Daniels' private quarters and the original primary entrance. Here, another dramatic contrast occurs. While the entertaining space is bright, open, and airy, Daniels' private quarters are cave-like. The amount of natural light in the space is limited and the walls are painted a dark gray. Many have compared the space to entering the bowels of one of the naval ships Daniels served on. Brass ceilings and trim are used to brighten the space. The private rooms are highly irregular in plan and arrangement, with a variety of floor to ceiling heights. The entrance leads to a tall-ceilinged living room featuring a U-shaped sunken sofa and fireplace. The master bedroom is located above, with a low wall along one side enabling view to the room below. A firepole provides quick access from the bedroom to the living room. A level below the living room is Daniels' media room which features a wall of 64-small television sets and rows of sofas. The private area also includes an expansive pink-tiled bathroom, a smaller grey-tiled bathroom, a kitchen with an adjacent eating area, a balcony with a built-in grill, a solarium illuminated by a skylight, and a guest bedroom.

Integrity

Cableland retains a high degree of integrity. The house passed directly from Daniels to the City and County of Denver, under the management of the Cableland Foundation. When Daniels donated the property to the City in 1998, he stipulated that neither the exterior or interior be substantially changed or renovated without the approval of a foundation established to manage the property (*New York Times*, 3/26/98). As a result, no significant alterations changing the character of the property have occurred. The city has completed two renovation projects at Cableland. In conjunction with the dedication of Cableland as the official mayor's residence in 2002, Wilma Webb, wife of then-mayor Wellington Webb, oversaw the first renovation project. It included adding a photograph of Daniels at the entrance, installing a carpet with the city seal, creating a new entrance for handicap accessibility, constructing a canopy at the new entrance, and additional landscaping, including



the creation of a rose garden. No alterations were made to Daniels' private quarters (*Denver Post*, 12/3/2002). In 2012, a second project updated the entertaining space (*Denver Post*, 10/27/12). The original mauve colored walls were repainted a more neutral taupe color (the original texturing was retained). Plush dining chairs featuring a multi-hued pink geometric pattern were replaced with much simpler chairs and smaller dining tables that could be more easily rearranged. Overstuffed pink and gray chairs and sofas in the reception area were replaced with neutral colored sofas and purple benches. Displays on Denver history and its mayors were also added, and a pink piano replaced by a speakers' lectern. Given the massive scale of Cableland, these changes have been minor. The original character of Cableland remains intact. The property is in its original location, and the surrounding residential neighborhood remains largely as it was when the house was constructed. The continued use of Cableland for philanthropic events and other social gatherings enhance integrity of feeling and association. With few physical alterations, the property retains integrity of design, material, and workmanship.

8. History of the Structure and Its Associations

Please provide a statement for each of the following:

- a. Describe the history of the structure and its associations with important individuals, groups, events, or historical trends.
- b. Describe significant historical associations including why this structure has direct association with the individual, group, event, or historical trend.
- c. Describe other structures that have similar associations and the relationship/comparison of this of this structure to other structures.

Early Life

Bill Daniels was born in Greeley, Colorado in 1920 (*Life and Legacy*, Archer, 3 and 6). Shortly thereafter his family moved to Omaha, Nebraska and then, due to financial problems during the Great Depression, moved to his grandmother's house in Council Bluffs, Iowa. While living there, he started working at a young age in a variety of jobs - as a door-to-door salesman for the *Saturday Evening Post*, as a newspaper delivery boy, and as an ice cream salesman (*Life and Legacy*, Archer, 9). In the midst of the Great Depression, his father Bob Daniels found a job as an insurance salesman for oil and gas companies in the small town of Hubbs, New Mexico. As with many oil boom and bust towns, it was isolated and did not offer many amenities or have a well-developed educational system. After the move, Bill did not do well at school and frequently fought with his peers. His family believed that the best way to help Bill and keep him out of serious trouble was military school. Bill was sent to the New Mexico Military Institute (NMMI) for his final two years of high school, and then stayed for two additional year to earn the equivalent of an Associate's degree. While at the NMMI, Bill excelled at organized sports. He participated in baseball, football, basketball and boxing, becoming the golden glove winner for the state of New Mexico (*Cable Center*, Paglin).

After leaving the military academy, Bill entered the Navy and graduated from flight school two weeks after the attack on Pearl Harbor (*Father of Cable*, Muenker, 7). During World War II, Daniels served as fighter pilot in both the European and Pacific theaters and worked as a flight instructor. His time on aircraft carriers influenced his preference in living quarters, as is seen later in life in the design of the private spaces in Cableland, which are small and dark with low ceilings.

After the war, Daniels returned to New Mexico, working with his father selling insurance. However, he was called up to serve in the Korean War where he continued to train fighter pilots. He eventually retired from the Navy in as a Commander. After his retirement, Daniels intended to return to work at his father's oil insurance company, which was then run by his brother (*Cable Center*, Paglin). However, after family disagreements, his brother bought him out of the family business (*Relentless*, Singular, 40-42).

With a background and knowledge of the oil insurance business, Daniels relocated to Casper, Wyoming, another oil boom town. In 1952, on his way to Wyoming, Daniels stopped at a bar in Denver for dinner. Here he saw a television for the first time, which was broadcasting a boxing match in Madison Square Garden. Watching a live sporting event, transmitted from across the country, left him in awe and impacted the trajectory of his career. Once settled in Wyoming, he successfully worked as an insurance salesman, but continued to be enthralled with television and was bothered that it was unavailable in Casper. Because of its location and the geographic position of the surrounding mountain ranges, the TV signal broadcast from Denver could not reach Casper. While continuing his insurance business, Daniels worked to find a way to bring TV to Wyoming (*Relentless*, Singular, 50-54).



Development of Television

The technology of television evolved from the initial patent associated with television in 1884 to the broadcast of the coronation of King George VI in England in 1937 (Tube, Fisher, 357 and 362-63). In the US, several companies competed to create the first complete system - camera, transmission, receiver, and replay device. As companies developed competing technologies, they utilized different operating systems and components that were not interchangeable. In 1938, the system developed by Radio Corporation of America (RCA) became the established national standard, forcing other companies to conform to the new standard (Tube, Fisher, 363).

One of the earliest attempts at television transmission in the US was the National Broadcasting Company's (NBC) coverage of the 1939 World's Fair. The television enterprise grew slowly due to a combination of factors, including the prohibitively high cost of a TV (ranging in price from \$200 - \$1,000), the poor quality of image, and the lack of programming. In 1941 only ten stations were in operation and less than 3,000 televisions had been sold in New York, a city of 9 million people. However, seven years later in 1948, the number of stations had grown to 52 covering 29 cities, with approximately 1 million televisions sold. Each of the 52 stations broadcast their own individual programming (Television, Eboch, 32). Eventually broadcasters began sharing programming, with an NBC station in Philadelphia using programs from the NBC station in New York. With this cross sharing, the number of programs slowly increased, often growing out of radio programs. The technological limitations of a single camera with minimal movement led to the development of shows that could be filmed with a camera in a nearly static position such as news programs, game shows, comedies, and sporting events such as boxing or wrestling.

The industry was not only restricted by the limitations of the camera and programming, but by the range of transmission. Signals could not reach rural communities due to distance or interruption of transmission by mountain ranges. In 1948, a few communities isolated by geography found similar solutions to the transmission issues (Relentless, Singular, 49). By installing a single large antenna that could receive the signal, and connecting it to a television via a coaxial cable, they could view the broadcast. In these communities the clamor for television led individuals to connect multiple houses to the antennas via cables, establishing the first cable networks and bringing TV to isolated communities.

Cablevision

Daniels traveled back and forth between Casper and Denver to watch TV and investigate how to bring television to rural Wyoming. He contacted those other rural communities that had successfully brought in television signals for information and formed a team to overcome the geographic obstacles in Wyoming (Cable Center, Paglin). Using a combination of microwave signals, telephone poles, and coaxial cables, Daniels' team found a technological solution to the problem. However, financing the extensive operation was daunting, as most banks were unwilling to extend a loan to such an unproven enterprise. But through his contacts in the oil and gas industry, Bill Daniels located sufficient funds to establish the first microwave cable system, the Community Television Systems of Wyoming. He began marketing this 'cable' system in Casper and found subscribers who were willing to pay a hook-up fee of \$150 and a monthly subscription fee of \$7.50. Additionally, Daniels worked with businesses in Casper to stock televisions for his subscribers to purchase. By 1954, the Community Television Systems of Wyoming had 4,000 subscribers and had recouped the cost of the operation. With this success, Daniels went on to establish networks in Rawlins, WY and Farmington, NM (Relentless, Singular, 54-56).

Daniels worked with others in the fledgling industry to establish similar cable networks, and, through his connections, helped promote cable TV and the National Cable Television Association (NCTA). In 1956 and 1957, Daniels served as president of the NCTA. During this time Daniels found his unique skill set of salesmanship and finance acumen ideally suited to creating independent cable companies. At the conclusion of his term as president, he established Daniels and Associates as a brokerage company that created and established cable companies and networks (Life and Legacy, Archer, 33). Typically, once companies were established, he would sell them to others for the day-to-day operation. Throughout his career he founded, brokered, or operated hundreds of cable companies throughout the US (Life and Legacy, Archer, 35). This includes the Denver-based Mile Hi Cablevision (Father of Cable, Muenker, 18).



Daniels was also involved with and supportive of innovative programs within the industry. He believed that for cable TV to maintain long-term success it also needed to create its own programming. He established Prime Ticket Network, a sports network that provided a cable sports subscription to residents of California, Arizona, Nevada, and Hawaii, with Los Angeles Lakers owner Jerry Buss (Father of Cable, Muenker, 18). This led to his minority ownership of the Lakers. He established another sports subscription system, Prime Network, which “served 40 million subscribers and became the largest independent sports programming company in the nation” (Father of Cable, Muenker, 19). Daniels also partnered with Ted Turner as a supporter of CNN, the first 24-hour news channel (Me and Ted, Schonfeld, 324). Turner and Daniels’ relationship continued with Daniels becoming the second largest shareholder of the Turner Broadcasting Station (TBS) (Life and Legacy, Archer, 40).

As a major player within the industry, Bill Daniels established Denver as the headquarters for Daniels and Associates, cementing Denver as a center for the cable industry. The headquarters for Daniels and Associates changed overtime. The headquarters were first located at 2930 East 3rd Ave. That building was eventually demolished, and a new company HQ was constructed in the same location. By 2007 it was moved to 3200 Cherry Creek South Drive (Life and Legacy, Archer, 34 and 47).

Daniels Life Outside of Cable Television

Throughout his career, Daniels also pursued other interests. His love of sports extended beyond professional basketball and led to his investment in boxing, Indy 500 racing, and the establishment of the United State Football League (USFL). Neither the boxer he supported nor the Indy 500 car he sponsored became long-term success in their respective sports. The USFL only lasted a couple of years after failing to generate a large-scale following. None of these pursuits proved as successful as his cable empire.

While Daniels’ business life was successful, his personal life was not always as positive or fulfilling. In an interview, Daniels said that he “was more interested in my business, and I am ashamed of that.” He elaborated “I have seen a lot of friends who built an empire and have a great family. I was unable to do that” (Life and Legacy, Archer, 36). It was during his fourth marriage to Devra that Cableland was designed and constructed. Throughout his life Daniels was known to both play hard and work hard, with partying not interfering with his business life. However, that changed in the 1980s. During design and construction of Cableland, Bill Daniels checked himself into the Betty Ford Center, a nationally-known residential addiction treatment center. Upon leaving the center, Daniels became an outspoken advocate of the program (Life and Legacy, Archer, 95).

Remembering his childhood in the Great Depression, Daniels used his success and financial wealth to give back to the community. Bill Daniels established the Daniels Fund and supported a variety of organizations. He donated \$22 million to the University of Denver business school and \$5 million to the NMMI. He established Young Americans Bank, a bank for children and young adults, as a way for children to learn about and understand banking and finances. With his struggles with alcoholism, Daniels donated generously to the Betty Ford Center, and continued as a vocal supporter of the treatment program. In addition to donations to these organizations, he often allowed non-profits or foundations to use his house as venue for fundraisers. Daniels was also known as a generous man with those he knew and worked with.

Cableland reflected the man who built it. It was the culmination of technological advancement that showcased his success in the cable TV industry, with televisions in every room and incorporated the most innovative technological designs of the times. The private quarters illustrated his love of small, enclosed spaces from his days in aircraft carriers, while the larger public spaces provided a grand entertainment center for his guests and a modern venue for fundraisers.

Postmodern Architecture

Postmodern architecture developed in the 1960s as a challenge to Modernism, particularly the International Style. Originating in Europe, the International Style was introduced to the United States through an exhibit at the Museum of Modern Art in 1932. Key tenets of the style included: regularity and balance without symmetry, no applied ornament, and functional designs. International Style architecture exploited modern materials (concrete, steel, and glass) and technology. One of the key innovations was the use of structural skeleton that could be covered by a thin, non-structural skin. The International Style became widespread in the U.S. following World War II, especially for commercial construction. But by the 1960s, buildings once praised for their simplicity were starting to be disparaged as dull and monotonous. Critics argued that modern buildings lacked individuality and a connection to place, looking the same in every city.



The publication of Robert Venturi's *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture* in 1966 is often credited as the beginning of the Postmodern movement. In the book, Venturi criticized the cold, abstract starkness of Modern architecture and celebrated traditional architectural forms. He advocated for the return of decoration and variety to architecture, and argued that good architecture should be able to appeal to both the critic and the general public. Venturi became best known for his response to the Modernist claim that "less is more," proclaiming that "less is a bore." Modernism was seen as rational, objective, scientific, austere, and universal while Postmodern designs expressed emotion, whimsey, playfulness, theatricality, and a connection to place.

Postmodern architecture evolved into an identifiable architectural style in 1970s and gained widespread popularity by the 1980s. Postmodern architecture was part of a larger Postmodern cultural movement that included philosophy, education, criticism, literature, performing arts, and sociology. Overarching themes of the Postmodern movement include the questioning of reality and presentation, a critique of Western institutions and established knowledge, and an emphasis on individual interpretation. Postmodernists were skeptics who promoted relativism and subjectivity over universal truths. In architecture, this is seen in the reaction against abstraction and highly referential designs. Architects emphasized the importance of context, often achieved through symbolic references to history, local materials, and vernacular forms. Postmodern architecture reintroduced identifiable forms and motifs such as columns, gables, arches, and chimneys, but often modernized or abstracted traditional elements in humorous, whimsical, and ironic ways. Postmodern architecture was a theatrical style, often using dramatic effects to engage the viewer, playing with the form and scale of traditional elements. Postmodern buildings often featured a juxtaposition of elements not historically found together, with bold, geometric forms common.

Unlike previous architectural styles that could be identified by similar architectural motifs, Postmodern buildings were connected by a related design philosophy. *A History of Postmodern Architecture* identifies the following features as defining Postmodern architecture: symbolism replaces abstraction; function no longer a key focus; building designs may have multiple meanings; architects abandon Modernism's utopian view of architectural technology and progress; architects emphasize imagination, improvisation, and spontaneity rather than perfection; designs connected to historical, regional, and environmental conditions replace universal forms; and pluralism emphasized over a dominant style, resulting in a diverse range of designs (Klotz 1988, 421).

In the 1990s, Postmodern architecture fell out of favor. Critics declared it kitsch, garish, cartoonish, and overly commercial, a reflection of the excess of the 1980s. However, Postmodern architecture had recently seen a revival in interest. New articles and books have examined the style, and the V&A Museum in London put on a major exhibit "Postmodernism: Style and Subversion 1970 – 1990" in 2011. Contemporary architects are beginning to look to Postmodern designs of the past for inspiration, and efforts have been made to preserve significant works of Postmodern architecture.

So far only a handful of Postmodern designs have achieved designation. Two designs by Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown have been the focus of designation efforts. The Vanna Venturi house at 8330 Millman Street in Philadelphia was locally landmarked in November 2016, and a designation application was recently submitted in Pittsburgh for the Abrams House at 118-A Woodland Road. Philip Johnson's AT&T Building, completed in 1984 and considered the first Postmodern skyscraper in the U.S., was designated as New York City's first Postmodern Landmark in July 2018 following a public outcry over a proposed remodel of the building facade. The New York Landmark Preservation Commission has also added a Postmodern interior design to its list of interior Landmarks, designating the Ambassador Grill within the United Nations Plaza Hotel in January 2017. To date, two works of Postmodern architecture have been placed on the National Register of Historic Places: the Portland Public Service Building by Michael Graves (completed in 1982) was designated in 2011 and the General American Life Insurance Company National Headquarters by Philip Johnson and John Burgee in St. Louis, MO (completed in 1977) was designated in 2008. No Postmodern buildings have been designated in Denver. There are few examples of Postmodern residential architecture in Denver, and certainly none on the scale of Cableland. The style was more popular for public building, with Michael Graves's Central Branch of the Denver Public Library and Philip Johnson's "Cash Register" building, Denver's best-known examples of Postmodernism.



Design and Construction

Bill Daniels and his wife Devra purchased property in Shangri-La Heights in 1967. This included two houses which they combined into a single dwelling. In the 1980s, Daniels hired Andrew Gerhard of the Gerhard Design Group in Rancho La Costa, California to remodel his Denver home. Daniels owned multiple homes, and Gerhard had done the interior design for his house in Rancho Santa Fe, California. Daniels respected Gerhard's work and wanted his experience with designing high-end public and private spaces (*Denver Post*, 2/21/98). Located north of San Diego, Rancho Santa Fe was an affluent residential community, characterized by luxury homes emphasizing privacy and exclusivity, and often listed among the most expensive zip codes in the U.S. Gerhard recommended Rancho Santa Fe architect Lawrence Pepper for the project. Born in Mishawaka, IN in 1946, Lawrence Pepper received a degree in Architecture from the University of California at Berkeley in 1971. He established Lawrence Pepper Architects in Fresno, CA soon after, but moved his firm to the San Diego area in 1987. Gerhard would also bring in a lighting designer from California for the project, Noel Allanmeyer of Carlsbad.

Andrew Gerhard was the lead designer for the project, resulting in a strong integration of interior and exterior spaces. Well-known in the San Diego community, Gerhard received several achievement awards from the San Diego chapter of the American Society of Interior Design. Some of the features praised by judges can be found in his work at Cableland, including using materials and textures in uncommon ways and creating spaces specifically for entertaining. In 1989, *the San Diego Union Tribune* ran a feature on Gerhard titled "The grand gesture—Designer's own home downplays the glitz but keeps the glow." According to the article, Gerhard's career had been focused on "high-fashion" interiors for wealthy clients in places such as the Hamptons, Boca Raton, Park Avenue and Palm Springs. His most frequent clients were the "high-end sleek set -- movie magnates, television tycoons and corporate hotel moguls, the people who live in five or six houses around the world, depending on the season." Gerhard's hallmark was interior spaces that were stylish and theatrical as well as livable and comfortable. A shared feature of his interior designs was a glow created by the use of reflective and metallic finishes with stylized lighting. Gerhard also designed custom furniture and built-ins for his clients, and was skilled at incorporating modern technology into designs, such as televisions that could be hidden in the floor. The article also mentioned Gerhard's design project for Daniels, describing Cableland as "a home designed for entertaining on a grand scale" with a living room seating 86 and a formal dining room seating 36. Said Gerhard of the project: "These things are feats to do, and it's dynamite to have clients who like it. An ideal client is one that knows what they want, knows what the budget should be and is open to suggestions about how to best accomplish the project" (*San Diego Union Tribune*, 12/10/1989).

Daniels appears to have been Gerhard's ideal client. Daniels was reportedly fond of saying "the best is good enough for me," so price appeared to be no object for the approximately \$7 million residence (*Denver Post*, 10/27/12). The original plan had been to remodel and expand Daniels' existing house on Shangri-La Drive. However, as Daniels' wish list for his new residence grew, Gerhard recommended demolishing the existing dwelling and starting new. To accommodate Daniels' grand vision, three neighboring houses and a local swimming pool were also purchased and demolished. Though Daniels provided input on what he wanted the home to be, he left the final product up to Gerhard. According to Daniels: "From the day we broke ground to the day it was furnished I never came, and, in fact, when I drove down Colorado Boulevard I'd look the other way. Andrew wanted me to see it the first time at night, and that's what we did. It was gorgeous, and 10 years later, there's not a thing I'd do differently with this house" (*Denver Post*, 2/21/1998).

Cableland was designed to impress. Just one of several properties owned by Daniels, and never intended as a full-time residence, the house was more a showplace than a home. Daniels planned to offer Cableland to nonprofits as a fundraiser venue free of charge (*Denver Post*, 12/23/88). Daniels hoped the house would fill "Denver's need for a modern setting for grand entertaining. . . . He wanted to create both a place that could be used to woo potential investors and could also be made available for civic fund-raising" (*New York Times*, 3/26/98). An article in the *Denver Post* called out this unique design brief: "The house may be noteworthy for its elegance, but even more unusual in its genesis. That may make it unique in the United States. Daniels had the house designed with a large public area that could accommodate lavish philanthropic events, and a smaller wing for his personal quarters" (*Denver Post*, 2/21/1998). In evaluating available event venues in Denver, Daniels found hotels, which he considered too cold, or historic homes such as the Phipps Mansion, which were lovely, but old. Daniels wanted a grand home that could serve as a modern equivalent of the Phipps Mansion (*Denver Post*, 2/21/1998).



For the public areas of the house, Daniels requested a color that would flatter women and be masculine for men. Gerhard chose pink hues for the interior, stating that “blush tones, mauve tones are very flattering to ladies and most charitable functions are for women” (*New York Times*, 3/26/98). The furnishings were custom designed with soft fabrics set off by metallic, reflective accents around the room. Daniels’ personal space was darker, with shades of gray used. According to Gerhard, “Bill likes to read a lot, doesn’t want bright lights to distract him, so we used indirect lighting, dark walls and reading lights” (*Denver Post*, 2/21/1998). The private quarters also reflected Daniels’ past as an Air Force pilot. Daniels said he had a cockpit in every home. At Cableland it was desk in the kitchen equipped with a phone, radio, TV controls, computer, and reading light (*Denver Post*, 2/21/1998).

The location of the home in Denver was also significant in a time when much of the new construction had moved to the city’s suburbs. Very limited new residential construction occurred in Denver during the 1980s. Following an oil boom in the 1970s and early 1980s, the Denver economy crashed. The city lost residents during the 1980s, and what little new construction was undertaken was on the periphery in areas such as Montbello and Green Valley Ranch. According to Daniels, he wanted the house “to be useful, to give back to Denver” (*Denver Post*, 2/21/1998). Locating Cableland in central Denver during the midst of a downturn and suburban flight also provided a symbolic value to Denver. According to Bob Russo, a former Daniels & Associates executive vice president, “when Daniels decided to build a grand house in Denver, he wanted it to be centrally located and state-of-the art. Bill was one of Denver’s proudest residents, and it would have been unconscionable to him to build in (the) suburbs” (*Denver Post*, 10/27/12).

The Mauve Mansion

One goal of Postmodern architecture was to evoke an emotional response, and Cableland definitely made an impression on all who visited. Some saw over-the-top excess while others saw lavish grandeur, but few were unmoved. One early Cableland guest described it as reminding him of “a country club, the most elegant country club I’ve ever seen” (*Denver Post*, 12/22/88). With its large scale and expansive lobby, another visitor described it as “more like a five-star hotel than a home” (*Rocky Mountain News*, 11/21/97). A 1998 article in the *Denver Post* described Cableland as “stately in scale, beautifully designed and decorated, and boasts the latest in technology. . . . It exudes glamour, understated elegance and sheer drama” (2/21/98). Other visitors saw the home as the ultimate bachelor pad. In 1988, the *Denver Post* described it as “one man’s pleasure dome” (6/30/88). This perception would stick with the property, which was variously referred to as a “groovy love pad” (*Rocky Mountain News*, 12/4/2002), “a great place to party” (*Rocky Mountain News* quoted in the *New York Times*, 3/26/98) “swanky bachelor pad,” “Bacchanal bastion,” and “swanky 80s pleasure palace” (*Westword*, 6/3/2010).

Cableland quickly achieved success as a fundraising venue with more than 40 organizations using the space and raising roughly \$3 million between September 1987 and December 1988 (*Denver Post*, 12/23/1988). In 1998, just over a decade after the house was completed, Daniels offered Cableland to the City and County of Denver for use as a mayor’s residence. Many initially found it difficult to envision the bachelor pad as an official city property. According to the *New York Times*, “Cableland feels more ‘Miami Vice’ than mayoral” and “the mauve mansion on Shangri-La Drive is decidedly more James Bond than John Hickenlooper” (*New York Times*, 6/12/10). Bill Husted, a columnist for the *Denver Post*, wrote: “Any mayor would feel out of place at Cableland—unless Hugh Hefner gets elected” (*New York Times*, 3/26/98). But according to Colorado historian Tom Noel: “It is entirely appropriate that Denver’s mayoral residence should be the house of a TV mogul because metro Denver really rose to national prominence with the cable TV boom” (*New York Times*, 3/26/98). Daniels recognized the unique nature of the property, telling the *New York Times* that he donated Cableland to the city because: “I knew this house wasn’t very easy to sell. It’s not built to suit a lot of people” (*New York Times*, 3/26/1998).



9. Owner Consent to Designation:

I / We, the undersigned, acting as owner(s) of, the property described in this application for landmark designation do, hereby, give my consent to the designation of this structure as a Structure for Preservation.

I understand that this designation transfers with the title of the property should the property be sold, or if legal or beneficial title is otherwise transferred.

Owner(s): Michael B. Hancock Date: 1/20/19 (please print)

Owner(s): [Signature] (signature)

If the owner does not consent to designation, please describe the reasons for recommending designation:

It is strongly suggested that if the owner does not consent to designation the applicant should meet and discuss application with owner prior to filing an application. Provide a statement describing efforts that have been made to contact the owner to talk about designation and possible alternatives if owner does not consent to designation.

NOTE: Applicants have certain responsibilities and obligations under the designation process. Citizens, in addition to the required applicants, may want to support the designation, but not assume applicant responsibilities. The Landmark Preservation Commission recommends that these citizens show support through signing a petition, rather than signing on as an applicant.

Applicant(s): _____ Date: _____ (please print)

Applicant: _____ (signature)

Applicant Address: _____

Applicant(s): _____ Date: _____ (please print)

Applicant: _____ (signature)

Applicant Address: _____

Applicant(s): _____ Date: _____ (please print)

Applicant: _____ (signature)

Applicant Address: _____

Three applicants are required if the designation does not have owner consent. All three applicants will need to be either a Denver resident, property owner in the City and County of Denver or representative of a Denver based organization or business.



10. Resources - Bibliography

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10. Resources

Provide a list of research sources used in compiling this application.

11. Photographs

Attach at least four (4) 5x7 or larger color photographs showing the views of the property from the public right of way(s) and any important features or details. If available, attach copies of historic photographs of the structure.

12. Site map

An overall site plan should be included graphically depicting the building, the location of other significant site features and the boundaries of the designation.

13. Staff Visit

Site visit by LPC staff.

14. Application Fee

There is a non-refundable application fee of \$250 for an individual structure with owner consent or \$875 for an individual structure without owner consent. (Make check payable to Denver Manager of Revenue).

The designation process is outlined in Denver Revised Municipal Code; Chapter 30 which is based upon the criteria used by the National Register of Historic Places. National Register evaluation principles regarding criteria, categories, and integrity have been adapted for local applications. More information may be found at www.denvergov.org/preservation.

Cableland Photographs:

Historic Photographs



Figure 1: Façade, looking north



Figure 2: Original entrance



Figure 3: View from kitchen balcony, looking northwest



Figure 4: Courtyard, looking southeast towards main residence



Figure 5: Courtyard, looking northwest towards the cabana/guest house



Figure 6: Reception area



Figure 7: Reception area showing textured walls, brass accents, and dropped ceiling panels



Figure 8: Dining area



Figure 9: Bill Daniels' quarters, living room with sunken sofa



Figure 10: Bill Daniels' quarters, master bedroom



Figure 11: Bill Daniels' quarters, tv room



Figure 12: Bill Daniels in front of wall tv sets

Current Photographs (taken June 11, 2018)



Figure 13: Driveway running along the façade of Cableland, looking northwest



Figure 14: Façade, looking north



Figure 15: Entrance and canopy added in 2002



Figure 16: Detail of façade showing round columns, contrasting wall textures, recessed balcony, horizontal banding, and projecting eaves



Figure 17: Façade of cabana and guest house, looking east



Figure 18: Gate enclosing pathway to original entrance



Figure 19: Original entrance with five-sided, corbelled arch, and textured walls



Figure 20: Southeast side of house showing recesses in wall and recessed balcony



Figure 21: Detail of eaves showing corbelling



Figure 22: Courtyard, looking northwest towards cabana and guesthouse



Figure 23: Courtyard, looking southeast to main residence



Figure 24: Courtyard, detail of pool with courtyard entrance and cabana/guest house to the rear



Figure 25: Courtyard, detail of pool, planters, and fountains, looking northeast



Figure 26: Courtyard view from the roof deck of the cabana/guest house, looking southeast



Figure 27: Courtyard, detail of curved glass walls and corbelling at main residence



Figure 28: Reception area



Figure 29: Reception area, detail of dropped ceiling panels



Figure 30: Dining area



Figure 31: Detail of staircase showing textured walls and brass accents

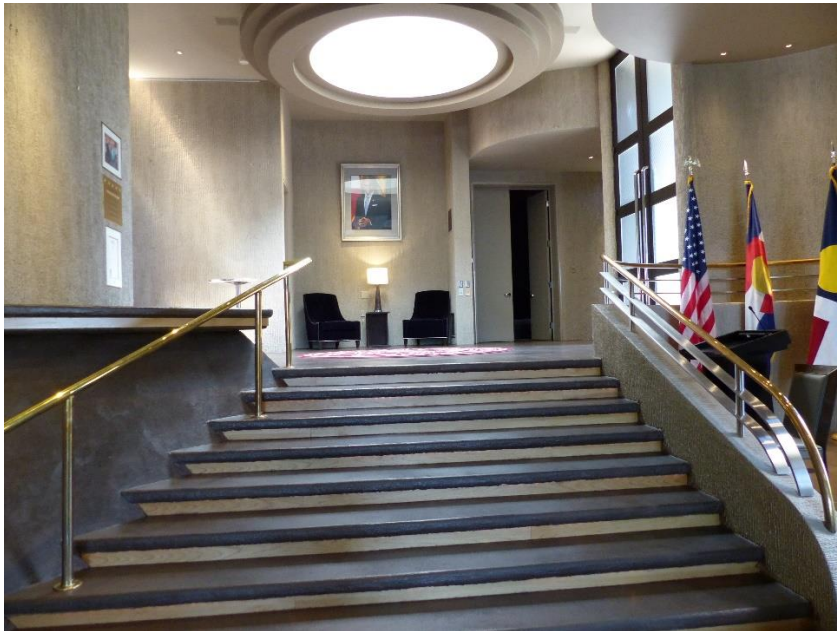


Figure 32: Stairway up to the original entrance (at right) and entrance to Daniels' private quarters (at rear)

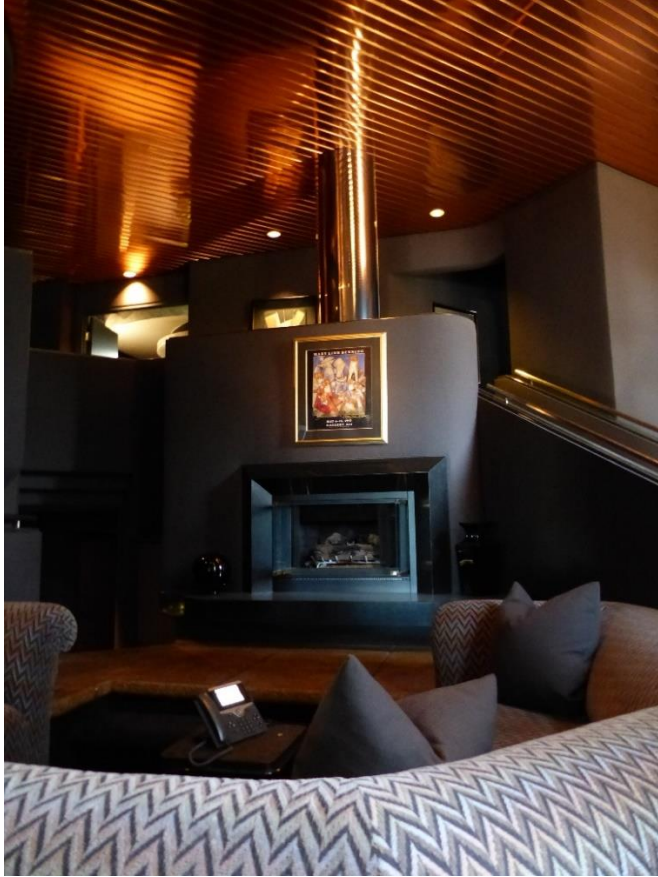


Figure 33: Private quarters, living room with sunken sofa



Figure 34: Private quarters, at rear of photo tv room (below) and master bedroom (above)



Figure 35: Master bedroom