

# **L. Gale Abels Collection**

## **Mss.02643**

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History Colorado. Stephen H. Hart Research Center  
1200 Broadway  
Denver, Colorado, 80203  
303-866-2305  
[cosearch@state.co.us](mailto:cosearch@state.co.us)

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## Summary Information

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<b>Repository</b>	History Colorado. Stephen H. Hart Research Center
<b>Title</b>	L. Gale Abels Collection
<b>Date</b>	1957-1993
<b>Extent</b>	1.5 Linear feet
<b>Language</b>	English
<b>Collection [Linear-Feet]</b>	1.5
<b>Abstract</b>	<p>L. Gale Abels was an architect in the Boulder area (1963-1992). Abels took inspiration for his work from modern and late modern architecture. Outside of his work as an architect, Abels was an avid airman. He competed in glider and flying competitions and also designed airplanes. This collection contains papers and drawings related to his firms' work on Pioneer Elementary, Angevine School, and Centennial Airport located in Arapahoe County. Drawings are also included for other residential and commercial jobs the firm completed. The majority of the work done by L. Gale Abels &amp; Associates is in Boulder, Colorado.</p>

### Preferred Citation note

Cite as: L. Gale Abels Collection, Mss.02643 (2014.158), History Colorado

## Chronology

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### Works by L. Gale Abels

1963	Martha Weiser Residence, Boulder, Colorado
1964	L. Gale Abels Residence, Boulder, Colorado
1966	William Schemmel Residence (remodel), Boulder, Colorado Frederick Waterman Residence, Evergreen, Colorado
1967	Rehabilitation of the Fine Arts Building-CU Boulder, Boulder, Colorado Dr. Ellen Tye Medical Arts Building, Boulder, Colorado Rovert Tisserat Commercial Building Dean Valentine Residence, Boulder County, Colorado
1968	George Woodman Storage Building, Boulder, Colorado Wave Flights, Colorado Springs, Colorado Olson-Willyard Insurance, Boulder, Colorado Tennis Mahoney Residence (addition), Ft. Wayne, Indiana
1970	Emmanuel Gallery, Emmanuel Episcopal Church (rehabilitation), Denver, Colorado
1975	Tippit House, Boulder, Colorado
1977	Art Hardware-Meninger's on the Hill, Boulder, Colorado
1979	Goose Creek Clinic/Goose Creek Office, Boulder, Colorado
1982	Kinko's remodel, Boulder, Colorado Mattson's on the Hill, Boulder, Colorado

1982-1983	Aero-Associates-Jeffco Airport, Broomfield, Colorado
1983	Kenneth Garry Residence, addition, Boulder, Colorado
1984-1993	Boulder Enterprise, Inc. (BEI), Boulder Colorado
1984	Arapahoe County Airport Control Tower, Centennial, Colorado Lawrence Coval, Shop at Tabor Center, Denver, Colorado

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## Historical note

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Modern architecture gained popularity after World War II specifically for the design of institutions and corporate buildings. Several characteristics associated with modern architecture are: simple lines, use of industrially produced materials, visual emphasis on horizontal and vertical lines, and "form follows function." Notable modern architects are Frank Lloyd Wright and Walter Gropius.

Late Modernism architecture took hold in Colorado in the late 1970s. Buildings often built in this style of architecture were schools, high rises, factories, and shopping centers. Several designs are the same as those of modern architecture, such as horizontal lines and little ornamentation. Characteristics associated with later modernism are: hooded windows, large areas without windows, decorative use of features, and flat or winged roofs.

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## Biographical note

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Lewis Gale Abels was born on August 18, 1927 in Sutherland, Iowa to Bernard Abels (1901-?) and Marian Adelaide Culp (1905-?). Lewis had one brother, Gordon, and a sister, Janice. Lewis rarely used his full name, instead he was known as L. Gale Abels or simply Gale Abels. In 1932, the family moved to a farm near Cherokee, Iowa.

L. Gale Abels developed a fascination for planes at a young age, taking his first plane ride around the age of 13. Less than five years later, Abels joined the Army Air Corps, enlisting at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas on February 1, 1945. Abels was only 17 at the time, and would not turn 18 for another six months. He lied about his age, listing his birth date as 1926 so he could join. On September 6, 1947, after returning from

active duty at the age of 20, he married Marilyn Joyce Troupe (1927-1980) in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Gale and Marilyn had three daughters: Betsy, Vicky and Jenny.

After the war, Abels attended the University of Minnesota, where he was a part of the school's wrestling team. The team traveled the country for wrestling match. After traveling for a meet in Colorado, Abels decided that he would one day live in Colorado. After graduating in 1950, Abels was torn between pursuing advanced studies in architecture or aeronautical engineering. He chose architecture, and was accepted to the master's program of architecture at the Harvard Graduate School of Design, which was under the direction of Walter Gropius. Gropius is one of the icons of Modern Design and was director of the Bauhaus School in Germany.

Abels graduated from Harvard in 1952, and two years later started working for the firm of Eero Saarinen, FAIA in Detroit, Michigan. Saarinen is considered a master of American 20th Century architecture and furniture design.

After leaving Saarinen in 1958, Abels moved to Boulder, Colorado with his family. Abels went to work for prominent Denver architect, William Muchow, FAIA at his firm, Muchow Associates Architects. The firm opened in 1950 and closed shortly after the death of William C. Muchow in 1991. Abels stayed with Muchow until he decided to open his own practice.

L. Gale Abels and Associates opened in 1963 in Boulder, Colorado. The size of Abels' firm varied depending on the amount of projects, but averaged six employees. Abels was also a lecturer at the University of Colorado at Boulder's School of Architecture and used students in the architecture program as interns at the firm. Abels projects included residential design, commercial buildings, historic preservation, and airports. He designed a variety of Modern subtypes including Contemporary Formalism and Late Modernism. Many of Abels house designs can be found in the mountain and foothill communities, including Pinebrook Hills Community, Coal Creek Canyon, and Boulder. Abels' own home (1964) located at 6th Street and Evergreen Avenue in Boulder, Colorado is a great example of Abels' work.

Abels was an avid glider, building gliders as well as flying them. He won numerous awards and set records. He was the first to fly a glider across the Rocky Mountains and was a founding member of the Soaring Society of Boulder in 1959. Abels wrote numerous articles for *Soaring Magazine*. He traveled often to gliding competitions, and later in life for similar competitions featuring airplanes. Abels' love for flight appears to have strongly influenced the design of his buildings. Abels is known for designing several buildings at airports across the Front Range, including Jefferson County Airport, now known as Rocky Mountain Metropolitan Airport, as well as the Airport Traffic Control Tower and Administration Complex at Centennial Airport, southeast of Denver. The butterfly roof of the Weiser House appears to be an early design connection with Abels' passion for aeronautics, as the roof appears to take flight.

L. Gale Abels passed away on September 26, 1995. The Martha Weiser Residence (1963) designed by L. Gale Abels and Associates was nationally registered an historic place in 2013.

Information taken from the Martha Weiser House National Register of Historic Places nomination form.

## Scope and Contents note

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The collection includes architectural drawings, photographs, firm records, and architectural model. Much of the firm records relate to three specific projects: Pioneer Elementary, Angevine School, and the control tower and administrative building at the Arapahoe County Airport. The architectural drawings vary from personal residences and businesses to airplanes.

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## Administrative Information

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### Publication Information

History Colorado. Stephen H. Hart Research Center

### Provenance

Donated by the Estate of L. Gale Abels in 1995.

### Processing Information note

Processed by Haley Suby, March 2015.

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## Controlled Access Headings

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### Corporate Name(s)

- L. Gale Abels & Associates.

### Genre(s)

- Architectural drawing.
- Correspondence.

- Newspaper clippings.

### **Geographic Name(s)**

- Arapahoe County (Colo.)
- Boulder County (Colo.)
- Denver (Colo.)

### **Occupation(s)**

- Architect

### **Personal Name(s)**

- Abels, L. Gale, 1927-1995
- Abels, L. Gale, 1927-1995

### **Subject(s)**

- Airplanes.
- Airports.
- Angevine School
- Pioneer Elementary School

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## **Accession number**

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2014.158

Correspondence

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## Collection Inventory

### Correspondence 1992

FF1 Allen Plumbing and Heating, Inc. Feb. 26, 1992

FF2 Gerald H. Phipps Inc. May 10, 1992

### Angevine School 1988, 1991-1992

FF3 Project Manual for Remodel and Additions June 3, 1991

FF4 Project Manual, Phase II Sept. 18, 1991

FF5 Remodel and Addition Binder April 25, 1991 Oversize

FF5 Remodel and Addition Binder June 13, 1991 Oversize

### Scope and Contents note

Cover has two photographs labeled Pioneer Elementary. It is unclear why these two photographs are included other than Pioneer Elementary was a project of L. Gale Able & Associates.

FF5 Ahera Management Plan 1988 Oversize

FF6 Architectural Building Product Binder 1988

**Pioneer Elementary**

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FF7 Detail Specifications and Diagrams 1991

FF8 Correspondence June 13, 1991

FF9 Note Sheet Feb. 12, 1992

**Pioneer Elementary 1991-1992**

**Correspondence 1991-1992**

FF10 General 1991-1992

FF11 Clock Synchronization June 25, 1992

FF12 Building Permit Feb. 24, Feb. 27, March 5, 1992

FF13 Plan Review Building Permit Feb. 24, 1992

**Drawings/Diagrams 1991-1992**

FF14 S.D. Drawings Sept. 30, 1991

FF15 Diagrams, Work Completion, Inspection Report, and Addendum Dec. 1991-Feb. 1992

FF16 Multiuse Room Revision Nov. 13, 1991

**Request and Data**

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FF17 Plumbing [1991-1992]

FF18 Documents and Design Diagrams 1988, 1992

FF19 Diagrams and Specifications to Gerald Phipps, Inc. Jan. 23, 1992

FF20 Diagrams, Specifications, Charts 1991-1992

FF21 Work Details and Diagrams [1991]

FF22 Supplemental Drawings [1991-1992]

FF23 Supplemental Drawings [1991-1992]

**Request and Data 1991-1992**

FF24 1991

FF25 Jan.-Feb. 1992

FF26 March-May 1992

**Change Orders 1991-1992**

FF27 July-Dec. 1991

**Builders Hardware, Inc.**

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FF28 Jan.-March 1992

FF29 April 1992

FF30 July 1992

**Builders Hardware, Inc. 1991-1992**

FF31 Letter of Transmittal Sept. 19, 1991

FF32 Receipt Sept. 19, 1991

FF33 Specifications of Work Undated

**Specifications Detail Sheets 1983-1984**

FF34 Rossmiller Residence-Lanterns Undated

FF35 Allens Beverages Undated

FF36 Lawrence Covell Stove Undated

FF37 Index to Specifications Undated

FF38 Original Sheets 1983

**Jet Aviation**

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FF39 Standard for "S" (Spec) Details Undated

FF40 Retail Fixtures 1984

FF41 Roof Undated

FF42 Color Schedule Undated

FF43 Doors Undated

FF44 Fireplace Undated

FF45 Windows Undated

FF46 Cabinetry Undated

FF47 Framing Undated

**Jet Aviation 1986-1987**

FF48 No. 8707 Specifications 1987

FF49 No. 8707 Specifications 1987

FF50 No. 8707 Drawings 1987

FF51 Addenda 1987

Forms

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FF52 Newspaper Articles March 27, 1986

**Forms Undated**

FF53 Blank Vellum Sheets for L. Gale Abels & Associates/Architects Undated

FF54 Job Progress Undated

**Printed Materials 1974-1987**

FF55 Newspaper Articles [1974-1983]

FF56 Prestressed Concrete Institutional Journal 1987

**Printed Images 1985**

**Scope and Contents note**

Originally organized together in brown accordion file.

FF57 Airport and Federal Government Title Sheet 1985

FF58 Commercial 1985

FF59 Rosmiller Residence 1985

**Drawings 1957-1993**

**Map-case**

Residential

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Oversized  
file folders

**Residential 1964-1985**

FF60 Mr. & Mrs. Douglas Hunt-Main Floor Plan Feb. 2, 1964

FF60 William Schemmel 1966

FF60 Elizabeth W. Morgan 1967

FF60 Faith Witter 1967

FF60 Ross W. Troutfetter 1967

FF60 Henry Goodnow Mountain Cabin 1967

FF60 Luis Eades 1967

FF61 Dean Valentine 1967

FF61 Tennis Mahoney 1968

FF61 Richard Rossmiller p. 1-20 1981

FF62 Richard Rossmiller p. 21-37 1981

FF63 Richard Rossmiller p. 40-59 1981

Residential

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FF64 Richard Rossmiller, p. 70-81 1981

FF65 Richard Rossmiller, p. E1-E6, A-B 1981

FF66 Roger W. Dougherty 1981-1983

FF66 Dr. Douglas McKinnon 1982

FF67 James Simon 1982

FF67 Kenneth Garry 1983

FF67 Michael Kutner 1983

FF67 Nathan Shwartz 1984

FF68 William Marine 1984

FF68 Zumbrenen Family 1984

FF68 Michael Carter Residence 1985

FF69 Room Undated

FF69 View of Entrance Undated

FF69 View from Broadway Undated

Commercial

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FF69 Rudolph Haas, Jr. Undated

FF69 Ted Kelley Undated

FF69 Drawing Undated

**Commercial 1966-1993**

FF70 Hill Construction 1966

FF70 Frederick Waterman Lot 1966

FF71 Dr. Ellen Tye, Medical Arts Building 1967

FF71 Rovert Tisserat 1968

FF71 Nomad Theatre 1968

FF72 Olson-Willyard Insurance 1968

FF72 George Woodman Storage Building 1968

FF73 Goose Creek-Valmont Plaza 1968

FF73 Valmont Plaza 1978

FF74 Goose Creek Clinic/Goose Creek Office 1979

## Airplanes

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FF75 Bar Rail Bracket Detail Nov. 16, 1981

FF75 Kinko's Remodel 1982

FF75 Mattson's on the Hill 1982

FF76 Boulder Enterprise, Inc. (BEI) 1984-1993

FF77 Lawrence Coval, Shop at Tabor Center 1984

FF77 Decorative Iron Grill Undated

FF77 Gate Undated

### **Airplanes 1957-1990**

FF78 Section of Typical Rib 1957

FF78 Aileron and Flap Section Jan. 14, 1959

FF78 Airplane Jan. 14, 1959

FF78 Fuselage Plan View Jan. 14, 1990

FF78 Plan of Horizontal Tail Jan. 14, 1990

FF78 Twin Pusher Revisited Jan. 16, 1990

## Airplanes

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FF78 Abels Standard Plane Undated

FF78 N23GA Plane Undated

FF78 Plane Section Plan Undated

FF78 F.B. Maidson Undated

FF78 Plane Cross Section Undated

FF78 Framing Plan Undated

FF78 Shear and Bending Graph Undated

FF78 Airfoil Undated

FF78 Wing Cross Section Undated

FF78 Airplane Undated

FF78 Airplane Undated

FF78 Airplane Undated

FF78 Airplane Undated

FF78 Airplane Undated

## Airports

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FF78 Airplane Undated

FF79 Airplane on Cardboard Undated

### **Airports [1967]-1984**

FF80 Hangar Nov. 1, 1968

FF80 Wave Flights 1968

FF80 Hangar Site Study Feb. 23, 1978

FF80 Boulder Airport, Hangar March 20, 1978

FF80 Boulder Airport, Hangar #2 May 4, 1978

FF81 Centennial Airport [1967]

FF81 Aero Associates-Jeffco Airport 1982-1983

FF82 Arapahoe County Airport Control Tower 1984

FF83 Arapahoe County Airport Control Tower 1984

FF84 Arapahoe County Airport Control Tower 1984

FF85 Hangar Prototype Undated

## Sailplane and Pegasus

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FF85 Ryer "Court" Airport "Condo" Undated

FF85 Diagram Undated

### **Sailplane and Pegasus 1959-1968**

FF86 Hangar Jan. 29, 1968

FF86 Pegasus Jan. 14, 1959

FF86 Pegasus, Preliminary Fuselage Layout Undated

FF86 Preliminary Design Undated

FF86 Pegasus Cross-Sections Undated

FF86 Pegasus Undated

### **Maps 1976**

FF87 Waverly West Glider Port Site Plan Oct. 1976

FF88 Unidentified Undated

### **Photographs**