



Daniels, Fisher & Company

From dry goods store to prestigious department store, William Daniels and William Garrett Fisher partnered in 1872 to create Daniels, Fisher & Company. Thirty-nine years later, Daniels' son, Major William Cooke Daniels, built a significant addition to the original three-story dry goods store that included five stories and a corner tower. The Daniels & Fisher (D&F) Department Store became a firmly established downtown shopping destination.



Denver's First Skyscraper

Built in 1911 and designed by architect F.G. Sterner, the D&F Tower was the tallest structure west of the Mississippi, at a height of 393 feet. Visitors to the 21st floor used to be able to see 200 miles in any direction. The building is of the Italian Renaissance style and is constructed of brick, stone and terra cotta.



Inspired by Italian Architecture

Inspired by a trip to Italy, Major William Cooke Daniels based the design of the D&F Tower on St. Mark's Campanile, the bell tower of St. Mark's Basilica in Venice. The Venetian landmark collapsed in 1902 after standing for centuries. Coincidentally, its reconstruction was finished in 1912, a year after the D&F Tower was dedicated.



The End of an Era

In 1958, the May Company, founded in Leadville in 1877, merged with the D&F Company. The D&F Department Store and Tower were vacated in lieu of the new May-D&F store located at Courthouse Square (Zeckendorf Plaza). The iconic building and tower would be left vacant for two decades before its future was determined.



Urban Redevelopment

When urban renewal/redevelopment swept across Denver and the nation between the 1950s and 1970s, the D&F Department Store and Tower fell prey to its rampant demolition. Denver's Skyline redevelopment plan included demolition of the store and tower. Dedicated advocates loudly voiced concern over the loss of this landmark and the tower was spared and sold to a private developer for commercial use, but the store was ultimately razed.



A New Life

Still standing as a stalwart piece of Denver history, the D&F Tower underwent sensitive rehabilitations in the 1970s and 1980s for commercial use. Since then, the building has been used for offices and other commercial purposes. It is one of downtown Denver's most recognizable icons, with its four lit clock faces rising 250 feet from the street and measuring 16 feet in diameter. The building is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, is a contributing building to the Downtown Denver Historic District, and is a Denver Landmark.