

**An Inventory of the James A. Michener Papers
Home Collection: Mari Michener**

Repository: University of Northern Colorado, James A. Michener Library, Archival Services

Collection number: SC 1-31, Series 20

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Title: An Inventory of the James A. Michener Papers, Home Collection: Mari Michener

Author: Inventory prepared by Shirley Soenksen on 2006 September 18; slightly revised on 2010 March 12.

Dates: 1920s-

Creator or Collector: Michener, James A. (James Albert), 1907-1997; Michener, Mari Yoriko Sabusawa, 1920-1994

Size: 6 linear feet

Language: English; Japanese notations are in the "Health Notebook."

Abstract: This collection consists of items relating to Mari Yoriko Sabusawa Michener from her childhood to the present. Items in the collection include photograph albums, school notebooks, condolences sent to James A. Michener following Mari Michener's death on September 25, 1994 in Austin, Texas.

Scope and Content Note: This collection consists of items relating to Mari Yoriko Sabusawa Michener from her childhood to the present. Items in the collection include photograph albums, school notebooks, condolences sent to James A. Michener following Mari Michener's death on September 25, 1994 in Austin, Texas.

Biography of James A. Michener:

James Albert Michener was born in 1907 to unknown parents and raised as an orphan in the care of widow Mabel Michener of Doylestown, Pennsylvania. By the time he graduated from high school in 1925, he had visited 45 out of the 48 states. He was given a scholarship to Swarthmore, and after graduating summa cum laude in 1929, he traveled and continued his education at nine universities inside and outside the United States. During this time, he also taught in Pennsylvania, Colorado, and at the Harvard School of Education.

When he was not teaching, Michener worked as a textbook editor in New York, and he joined the British Merchant Marines. During WWII, he joined the Navy, making use of his experience in the British Merchant Marines to climb through the ranks to lieutenant and his knowledge of history to carry out sensitive assignments in the South Pacific. It was this experience that brought about *Tales of the South Pacific* in 1947, which won a Pulitzer Prize. Michener used this novel as the cornerstone of his writing career, publishing almost 50 books in the next 50 years, including *Sayonara*, *Hawaii*, *The Source*, *Iberia*, *Caravans*, *The Covenant*, *Sports in America*, and *Poland*.

In 1977, a four-part public television series called *The World of Michener* covered Israel, Hawaii, Spain, and Poland, just a few of the countries upon which his books have been based. Several other books have been turned into movies or miniseries, and two of his novels have been turned into musicals (most notably *South Pacific*, which won its own Pulitzer Prize).

During the time that he was publishing, however, Michener did not ignore the world around him. He ran for Congress in 1962 and held positions on several committees, including the Pennsylvania Constitutional Convention, the U.S. Postal Service stamp committee, and an

advisory position on a council for NASA. He also spoke often at congressional hearings and at functions of those organizations in which he held particular interest.

James A. Michener died at the age of 90 on October 16, 1997 in Texas, three years after his third wife, Mari Yoriko Sabusawa. He had no children.

Biography of Mari Yoriko Sabusawa Michener:

Mari Yoriko Sabusawa Michener was born on July 10, 1920 to Harry and Riki Sabusawa in Las Animas, Colorado. Her father Harry, a melon farmer, moved the family to California in 1925. During World War II the family was placed in a Japanese internment camp at the Santa Anita race track in California and then transferred to Granada Relocation Camp in Amache, Colorado.

Mari was released from Granada and attended Antioch College in Yellow Springs, Ohio. She studied "political science and international relations" at the college, graduating in 1945. After graduation she "analyzed Japanese propaganda for the Foreign Broadcast Intelligence Service." As a graduate student at the University of Chicago, Mari specialized in race relations in the school's graduate sociology program. Mari worked for the American Council of Race Relations and then became an assistant editor for the American Library Association Bulletin. Mari appears to have served in this position from September 1951 to November 1955. She met James A. Michener in Chicago in 1954 while working for the American Library Association.

She married James Albert Michener on October 23, 1955 in Chicago and was Michener's third wife.

Mari and James A. Michener donated art to the Huntington Art Gallery at the University of Texas at Austin.

She passed away of pancreatic cancer on September 25, 1994 in Austin, Texas. She left an estate of two million dollars to Antioch College.

Mari Michener and her husband are buried in Austin Memorial Park Cemetery.

Sources consulted:

Cory, John Mackenzie, "Memo to Members," *ALA Bulletin*, Vol. 45, No. 7, July-Aug. 1951, p. 238. Memo is dated 1951 July 16.

ALA Bulletin, Vol. 45, No. 8, September 1951, p. 267.

ALA Bulletin, Vol. 49, No. 10, Nov. 1955, p. 547.

Associated Press. "Mari Michener Dead at 74." *Greeley Tribune*, Sept. 26, 1974, p. A5.

Associated Press. "Estate of Michener's Wife Goes to Antioch." *Greeley Tribune*, Jan. 12, 1995, p. A2.

Requested through ILL: Pettingell, David. "From a Name...To a Number: Japanese-American Tells Story of Relocation." *Sun Journal (Lewiston, Maine)*, May 9, 1994, p. 8+.

Arrangement (required for multiple level collections):

This collection is organized into a single series.

Restrictions on Access: The collection is open for research.

Restrictions on Use: Copyright restrictions may apply. User is responsible for all copyright compliance. Please contact the UNC University Libraries Archival Services Department at library.archives@unco.edu or 970-351-2854 for further information.

Preferred Citation: [Description of Item], James A. Michener Papers, Home Collection: Mari Michener (SC 1-31, Series 20), Archival Services, James A. Michener Library, University of Northern Colorado, Greeley, Colorado.

Acquisition Information (if applicable):
Gift of James A, Michener in 1997.

Documentation relating to the acquisition is on file in Archives, RG 13 S1 F11-2.

Subjects:

Michener, James A. (James Albert), 1907-1997.
Michener, Mari Yoriko Sabusawa, 1920-1994.
Sabusawa, Mari Yoriko (Sawa, Mari), 1920-1994.
Sawa, Frank.

Inventory:

Collection	MSS #	Series	Box	Folder	Title
Home	SC 1-31	Series 20	1	Loose	Condolences
Home	SC 1-31	Series 20	2	Mari Michener's School Notebooks	Sawa, Mary. "Health Notebook." Las Animas, CO: Mary Sawa, n.d. Most of the notations are in Japanese; a few notations are in English.
Home	SC 1-31	Series 20	2	Mari Michener's School Notebooks	Sabusawa, Mary. "Social Science Seminar." n.p., n.d. This notebook may have been used while Mari Michener was a student at Antioch College.
Home	SC 1-31	Series 20	2	Mari Michener's School Notebooks	Sawa, Frank. "B.C.H.S. Book." n.p., n.d. Nothing is written in this notebook. B.C.H.S. is probably a reference to Bent County High School in Las Animas, Colorado.
Home	SC 1-31	Series 20	3	Mari Michener's Photo Album circa 1920/1930s	Michener, Mari. "Ye Photo Album." The photographs in this album were taken during the 1920s and 1930s with the bulk probably dating from 1927-1937/1938.

Collection	MSS #	Series	Box	Folder	Title
Home	SC 1-31	Series 20	4	Note, 1992	Note dated 1992 September 11 from Betty [Mooso] to Gary [Pitkin] regarding a conversation with Mari Michener. Transferred from SC 1-31, Unprocessed Box 84
Home	SC 1-31	Series 20	4	Transcript, 1992	"Thursday, August 6, 1992: Mari Michener visit to Michener Library with Becky Gilbert, Gil & Trudy Hause, and UNC Staff: George Jaramillo, Helen Reed, and Patty Frick." Transcript of conversation between Mari Michener and the audience. Transferred from SC 1-31, Unprocessed Box 84
Home	SC 1-31	Series 20	4	Memory Book, 1992	Pitkin, Gary and Rebecca Gilbert, Gil Hause, and Trudy Hause. "Memory Book." Greeley, CO: James A. Michener Library, University of Northern Colorado, 1992. This "Memory Book" of Mari Michener's visit to the James A. Michener Library at the University of Northern Colorado includes a letter dated 1992 September 24 from Gary M. Pitkin to Mrs. Mari Michener. Transferred from SC 1-31, Unprocessed Box 84