

**An Inventory of the James A. Michener Papers,  
Twenty-fifth Anniversary and Rededication Celebration,  
James A. Michener Library,  
University of Northern Colorado,  
October 3, 1997**

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

**Collection number:** SC1-66

**Title:** An Inventory of the James A. Michener Papers, Twenty-fifth Anniversary and Rededication Celebration, James A. Michener Library, University of Northern Colorado, October 3, 1997

**Author:** Inventory prepared by Shirley Soenksen on 2007 April 5; revised 2008 May 22; slightly revised on 2010 May 25.

**Dates:** 1997

**Creator or Collector:** Archival Services staff and others

**Size:** .1 linear feet

**Language:** English

**Abstract:**

This collection includes materials related to the Twenty-fifth Anniversary and Rededication Celebration of the James A. Michener Library at the University of Northern Colorado on October 3, 1997.

**Scope and Content Note:**

This collection includes materials related to the Twenty-fifth Anniversary and Rededication Celebration of the James A. Michener Library at the University of Northern Colorado on October 3, 1997.

**Historical Note:**

Plans to build a new library on the campus of what was then Colorado State College began in 1966. Although ground was broken in January 1969, completion of the building was delayed by six months due to a fire. Library staff began moving from Carter Hall to the new library in May 1971.

The James A. Michener Library was originally dedicated on October 27, 1972 with over 1,000 people in attendance. During his dedication speech, Mr. Michener discussed the "future of libraries and of the amazing potentials for the dissemination of information to users wherever they might be. These visions provided rich challenges for the new library which carries his name."

A library committee was formed in October 2006 to make plans to celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the James A. Michener Library and to rededicate the building. The committee met from November 1986 through September 1997. Committee members spent many hours investigating various possibilities for activities, such as an essay contest, a film festival, an interactive video, a concert by the Greeley Philharmonic Orchestra, a field trip to Centennial sites, have Trustees designate 1997-98 "Year of the Libraries," sell T-shirts or other Michener memorabilia, and mount Mr. Michener's own description of his Centennial donation on the internet.

After considering several options, the committee decided on the following activities: a Friends luncheon, a banquet and a reception with music; the purchase of a Michener bust by the Friends of the UNC Libraries; have the Friends of the UNC Libraries purchase a bust of Michener; and sell copies of James A. Michener's *This Noble Land* with a bookplate for \$100 per copy as well as the video, "A Revolution in Access," for \$15 per copy.

A Rededication Reception and Ceremony was scheduled in the afternoon of Friday, October 3, 1997 in the Mari Michener Gallery of the James A. Michener Library. Presentations were given by UNC President Howard Skinner; Library Dean Gary M. Pitkin; and Charles Rhine and Frank Roberts, Reference Librarians and co-authors of *James A. Michener: a Checklist of His Works, with a Selected, Annotated Bibliography*. The video "A Revolution in Access" was shown. James Riesberg, President of the Friends of the UNC Libraries, presented a bust of James A. Michener by Beth Perry Schoen to the UNC Libraries. Over 250 individuals attended the reception and rededication while over 400 people attended the banquet that evening.

The banquet in the evening began with a reception. Co-hosts of the banquet were Library Dean Gary M. Pitkin and Richard and Chris Monfort with Pitkin acting as moderator during the evening's events. UNC President Howard Skinner welcomed everyone. The guest speaker for the evening was David Groseclose, author of *James A. Michener: a Bibliography*. During the festivities, Library Dean Gary M. Pitkin surprised everyone when he announced that the James A. Michener Library would be the designated repository for all of the James A. Michener papers, including his manuscripts and research notes, personal papers, correspondence, furniture from Michener's study, and other items. Pitkin had another surprise for the audience when he announced that Mr. Michener had created a \$100,000 endowment for the CUBRES program. John Kings, Michener's longtime editorial assistant and friend, read from some of Michener's favorite works and discussed his association with Michener while researching and writing the novel *Centennial*. The UNC Choir provided the musical entertainment during the evening. Copies of *This Noble Land* with a commemorative bookplate signed by James A. Michener were available for purchase.

Committee members included: Mary Linscome, UNC Libraries, Chair; Gloria Lebowtiz, UNC Libraries; Charles Rhine, UNC Libraries; Colleen Griffin, UNC Libraries; Shirley Soenksen, UNC Libraries; Eve Measner, UNC Libraries; Ron Camp, UNC Academic Technology Services; Pam Davis, UNC Foundation; Ken McConnellogue, UNC News & Publications; Lori Rapp, UNC News & Publications; and Georgette Vigil, Alumni Relations.

#### Sources Consulted:

*Bibliotech*, Vol. 9, No. 1, Fall, 1996  
*Bibliotech*, Vol. 9, No. 2, Spring, 1997  
*Bibliotech*, Vol. 10, No. 1, Fall, 1997  
*Bibliotech*, Vol. 10, No. 2, Spring, 1998  
RG13 S13 F3-1, "Rededication & 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. 10/3/1997

#### **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 1 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 1, 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.

**Arrangement (required for multiple level collections):**

This collection is organized into a single series:

Series 1: Twenty-fifth Anniversary and Rededication Celebration, 1997

**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](mailto:library.archives@unco.edu) or 970-351-2854 for further information.

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**Acquisition Information (if applicable):**

Material collected by Archival Services staff and others in 1997.

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

Historical documentation relating to the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and Rededication of the James A. Michener Library is on file in Archives, RG13 S13 F3-1, "Rededication & 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. 10/3/1997."

For photographs taken during the celebration, see: RG SC 1-52, Thomas M. Bost Photograph Collection.

For information on the Beth Perry Schoen bust of James A. Michener, see: SC 1-10, Beth Perry Schoen Collection.

**Subjects:**

Michener, James A. (James Albert), 1907-1997

Michener, James A. (James Albert), 1907- 1997 -- Interviews.

University of Northern Colorado. Libraries. James A. Michener Library -- History.

Pitkin, Gary M., 1947-

Rapp, Lori

Henderson, Donovan

Bost, Tom, 1939-2002

Schoen, Beth Perry

## **Inventory:**

### **Box 1**

Folder 1 -- A Revolution in Access [videorecording].  
1997 *A Revolution in Access* [videorecording]. 1997.

Folder 2 -- "A Revolution in Access" Transcript: 1st Draft.  
"A Revolution in Access" Transcript: 1st Draft.

Folder 3 -- "A Revolution in Access" Transcript: 11th Draft  
"A Revolution in Access" Transcript: 11th Draft.

Folder 4 -- Rededication Reception and Ceremony. Program  
Rededication Reception and Ceremony. Program.

Folder 5 -- Rededication Program. 4 copies  
Rededication Program. 4 copies.

Folder 6 -- Michener Interviews by Lori Rapp  
Michener Interviews by Lori Rapp.

Folder 7 -- Clippings  
Henderson, Donovan. "UNC Archives to House Famed Author's Papers." Photocopy. *Greeley Tribune*, Oct. 4, 1997, pp. A1, A12.

Henderson, Donovan. "Michener Fans Turn Out for Library Rededication." Photocopy. *Greeley Tribune*, Oct. 4, 1997, pp. A1, A12.

Rapp, Lori. "Broadening Horizons." Photocopy. *Greeley Tribune, Preview*, Oct. 2, 1997, p. 3.

Folder 8 -- Photographs  
Photographs

Folder 9 -- "A Revolution in Access." Edits  
"A Revolution in Access" Transcript: Edit 1.