

James A. Michener Papers
SC 1-72
Furniture and Furnishings from the James A. Michener Room,
James A. Michener Library, University of Northern Colorado

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

Collection number: SC1-72

Title: Furniture and Furnishings from the James A. Michener Room, James A. Michener Library, University of Northern Colorado

Author: Inventory prepared by Shirley Soenksen on 2006 July 28 from an inventory dated 1973 December 20; slightly revised 2011 July 1.

Dates: 1973

Creator or Collector: Michener, James A. (James Albert), 1907-1997

Size: 11 pieces of furniture and furnishings

Scope and Content Note:

This collection consists of furniture and furnishing given to the James A. Michener Library by James A. Michener. The collection includes items that would be found in an office, such as a lamp, desk, typewriter, typewriter table, chairs, tables, and other items.

These items were originally found in Room 113 on the first floor of the library and currently are housed in the Archival Services Department of the library. Room 113 was designed to be a replica of the office Michener used while he worked on the novel *Centennial*.

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.

Restrictions on Access: The collection is open for research.

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Acquisition Information (if applicable):

Gift of James A. Michener in 1973.

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

Subjects:

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

Inventory:

One adjustable electric desk lamp

One executive walnut office chair

One Fort Smith folding work table – six feet long, 29” high, 30” wide

One metal office waste receptacle

One office guest arm chair

One portable Olympia typewriter and case

One protective plastic floor pad

One solid walnut two pedestal desk, total 6 drawers, one reference leaf

One typewriter table.

Four pictures – one framed

Wooden book case ?