

## **An Inventory of the James A. Michener Papers, Potato Brumbaugh's Collection**

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

**Collection number:** SC1-74

**Title:** An Inventory of the James A. Michener Papers, Potato Brumbaugh's Collection

**Author:** Inventory prepared by Shirley Soenksen on 2006 October 3; revised on 2007 September 18; biographical information on Rob Haimson added on 2008 August 25; slightly revised on 2010 October 25.

**Dates:** 1980-2006

**Creator or Collector:** Haimson, Robert (Rob); Michener, James A. (James Albert), 1907-1997

**Size:** 4.5 linear feet

### **Abstract:**

The stained glass window and other items in this collection all came from the Potato Brumbaugh's Restaurant in Greeley, Colorado.

### **Scope and Content Note:**

The stained glass window and other items in this collection all came from the Potato Brumbaugh's Restaurant in Greeley, Colorado.

### **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 Haimson, Robert (Rob):**

Rob Haimson was born in Canandaigua, New York, grew up in northern Virginia, and graduated from high school in Bartlesville, Oklahoma. After receiving a B. S. in Geography and Management from Oklahoma State University in 1977, he worked for Steak and Ale Restaurants in Oklahoma, Texas, and Colorado from 1978 to 1981. He was managing partner and owner of Potato Brumbaugh's Restaurant in Greeley, Colorado from 1981 to 2006.

His professional activities have included teaching seminars for the National Restaurant Association, past chairman of the Colorado Restaurant Association board, and serving on the board of directors of the National Restaurant Association. Haimson received the Distinguished Service Award from the Colorado Restaurant Association in 2001 and the Governor's award for fine dining in Colorado from the.

**Historical Note:**

The owners of Potato Brumbaugh's Restaurant & Saloon received permission from James A. Michener to name their restaurant in honor of Potato Brumbaugh, a character in Michener's novel *Centennial*. The restaurant was located in Cottonwood Square at 2400 17<sup>th</sup> Street in Greeley, Colorado.

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

**Preferred Citation:** [Description of Item], James A. Michener Papers, Potato Brumbaugh's Collection (SC 1-74), Archival Services, James A. Michener Library, University of Northern Colorado, Greeley, Colorado.

**Acquisition Information (if applicable):**

Gift of Robert (Rob) Haimson on 2006 August 16 and 2006 September 25.

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

**Subjects:**

Michener, James A. (James Albert), 1907-1997  
Michener, James A. (James Albert), 1907-1997 -- Centennial.  
Potato Brumbaugh's Restaurant & Saloon (Greeley, CO).  
Haimson, Robert (Rob).  
Centennial -- Michener James A James Albert 1907-1997.

**Inventory:**

"Potato Brumbaugh."

Stained glass of Potato Brumbaugh that hung in a window in Potato Brumbaugh's Restaurant & Saloon in Greeley, Colorado.

Currently on display in the James A. Michener Permanent Exhibit located on the Mezzanine of the James A. Michener Library, University of Northern Colorado.

**Contents of Boxes 1-4 have been transferred to: SC 1-49, Oversize Shelving**

**Box 1**

Framed photocopy of a letter dated 1980 March 15 from James A. Michener to John C. Todd giving Todd permission to name a restaurant after Potato Brumbaugh, a character in Michener's novel Centennial. The original copy resides with John C. Todd Family.

**Box 2**

Framed Menu with James A. Michener's signature from Potato Brumbaugh's Restaurant & Saloon, Greeley, Colorado. The menu appears to be dated 1990 June 26 (date on menu is "26 VI 90").

**Box 3**

Framed photograph of Mari Michener with text. This photograph of Mari Michener sitting in front of the stained glass window featuring Potato Brumbaugh, a character in her husband's novel "Centennial," was taken while Mari Michener was at Potato Brumbaugh's Restaurant & Saloon, Greeley, Colorado in 1992. The photograph is inscribed "To Rob and Potato Brumbaugh's" and signed "Mari Sabusawa Michener."

**Box 4**

An 11" pewter plate engraved with a sketch of Potato Brumbaugh