



Smithsonian
National Museum of Natural History

Guide to the Robert F. Heizer papers, 1943-1978

James R. Glenn

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Collection Overview

Repository:	National Anthropological Archives
Title:	Robert F. Heizer papers
Date:	1943-1978 (bulk 1955-1970)
Identifier:	NAA.1980-44
Creator:	Evans, Clifford, Jr. (Correspondent) Contreras, Eduardo (Author) Cook de Leonard, Carmen (Correspondent) Kubler, George (Correspondent) Payne, Melvin M. (Correspondent) Healy, P. F. (Author) Bushnell, Geoffrey (Correspondent) Heizer, Robert F. (Robert Fleming), 1915-1979 (Creator) Carmichael, Leonard, 1898-1973 (Correspondent) Coe, Michael Douglas (Correspondent) Drucker, Philip, 1911-1982 (Author) Coe, William R. (Correspondent) Bernal, Ignacio (Correspondent) Clewlow, C. William (Author) Stirling, Matthew Williams, 1896-1975 (Correspondent) Squier, Robert J. (Correspondent) Squier, Robert J. (Author) Rainey, Froelich G. (Froelich Gladstone), 1907-1992 (Correspondent) Wuchopi, Robert (Correspondent) Williams, Howel (Correspondent) Stuckenrath, Robert (Correspondent) Stirling, Matthew Williams, 1896-1975 (Photographer)
Extent:	16.75 Linear feet
Language:	English .

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

The papers were donated to the National Anthropological Archives by the terms of Dr. Heizer's will and placed in the archives in 1979. An addition to the collection was donated by Thomas R. Hester in 1980.

Related Materials

The National Anthropological Archives holds Photo Lot 77-59, Photograph of Robert F. Heizer at Palenque.

Papers relating to other aspects of Heizer's career are at the Bancroft Library of the University of California at Berkeley.

Preferred Citation

Robert F. Heizer papers, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution

Restrictions

The Robert F. Heizer papers are open for research.

Access to the Robert F. Heizer paper requires an appointment.

Conditions Governing Use

Contact the repository for terms of use.

Biographical Note

Robert Fleming Heizer was an anthropologist best known for his archeological work in California and Nevada and ethnographic work in California. A University of California PhD (1941), he was on the staff at Berkeley from 1946 to 1976, when he assumed an emeritus status. For many years he headed the Archeological Survey in California. In 1955, Heizer extended his work into Mexican archeology with an expedition to La Venta that was led by him, Philip Drucker, of the Bureau of American Ethnology, and Robert J. Squires. The expedition was sponsored by the National Geographic Society, the Smithsonian, and the University of California. Its purpose was to follow up with large-scale excavations the preliminary work of Matthew Williams Stirling of 1941 and Stirling and Waldo Rudolph Wedel of 1943.

Controversies concerning the chronology of the site led to Heizer's return to La Venta between 1967 and 1969. His interest in Middle American archeology continued in the meantime and afterward until his death.

Scope and Contents

Robert F. Heizer was an anthropologist best known for his archeological work in California and Nevada and ethnographic work in California. A University of California Ph.D. (1941), he was on the Berkeley staff from 1946 to 1976, when he gained emeritus status. For many years he headed the Archeological Survey in California.

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In 1957, Heizer began work at a site just west of the great pyramid at Cuicuilco. Involved was an investigation of a group of mounds threatened by lava quarrying. The site proved to be one of long occupation, back to around 2000 B.C. With James A. Bennyhoff, Heizer worked at the site in 1957, 1958, 1959, 1960, and 1962.

Virtually the entire collection of Heizer's papers in the National Anthropological Archives concerns the work at La Venta, the material relating to Cuicuilco representing a small miscellany. There are a few additional materials that concern Heizer's other activities, particularly in Middle America. Included are documents of an administrative nature concerning arrangements, management, and publications. There are also materials that came directly from the field work and studies of museum specimens. Also present are materials that concern controversies over Olmec chronology.

Heizer also collected notes, notebooks, photographs, cartographic material, and manuscripts from some of his colleagues and assistants on the La Venta expeditions. Included among these are materials of C. William Clewlow, Eduardo Contreras, Philip Drucker, and P.F. Healy. There are manuscripts of writings and reprints of publications from some of these and from students of Heizer. The photographic collections, considerable

amounts of which are unidentified, include field negatives and prints of LaVenta, many other Olmec sites, and other archeological sites in Mexico and Middle America. There are also photographs collected from other archeologists, including Stirling.

Correspondents include James A. Bennyhoff, Ignacio Bernal, Geoffrey Bushnell, Leonard Carmichael, Michael D. Coe, William R. Coe, Carmen C. de Leonard, Philip Drucker, Clifford Evans, George Kubler, Melvin M. Payne, Froelich G. Rainey, Anna O. Shepard, Robert J. Squier, Matthew W. Stirling, Robert Stuckenrath, Howel Williams, and Robert Wuchopi.

Please note that the contents of the collection and the language and terminology used reflect the context and culture of the time of its creation. As an historical document, its contents may be at odds with contemporary views and terminology and considered offensive today. The information within this collection does not reflect the views of the Smithsonian Institution or National Anthropological Archives, but is available in its original form to facilitate research.

Arrangement

(1) Correspondence, 1954-1973; (2) notebooks, 1955-1968; (3) subject file, ca. 1954-1970; (4) writings, 1956-1974; (5) printed and processed material, ca. 1950s-1970s; (6) miscellany, 1955-1978; (7) maps and other cartographic material, 1955-1968; (8) drawings, n.d.; (9) photograph albums with negatives, n.d.; (10) photographs arranged by site, 1955-1969; (11) photographs of expeditions, 1955, 1967-1969; (12) miscellaneous photographs, n.d.; (13) slides, 1943-1971; (14) illustrations for Bureau of American Ethnology Bulletin 170, ca. 1957

Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

Archeology -- Olmec -- Mexico -- La Venta -- Middle America
Olmec (archaeological culture)

Cultures:

Olmec (archaeological culture)

Types of Materials:

Letters
Maps
Notebooks
Notes
Photographic slides
Photographs
Printed materials
Processed materials
Writings