



**Developing
My Life**
William Zeckendorf Jr.
Joan Duncan Oliver

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- A glimpse inside the high-stakes world of real estate development, from finding a property to securing financing, to hiring an architect, to constructing the building, to seeing it profitably occupied
- A history of New York in the 1970s and 1980s, from the person responsible for its changing cityscape
- A candid and sincere assessment of the author’s successes and failures, his public triumphs and equally public setbacks

In 1986, the *New York Times* called William Zeckendorf Jr. “Manhattan’s most active real-estate developer,” a judgment borne out by Zeckendorf’s fascinating memoir. The second generation of a legendary family of developers, “Bill” Zeckendorf was a developer with a social conscience, not only putting up buildings but opening neglected parts of the city and transforming whole communities. Among the projects Zeckendorf chronicles in detail—and with rich documentary illustrations—are the Columbia, which set off a building boom on the Upper West Side; the four-acre Worldwide Plaza, a landmark in West Midtown; Queens West, the first residential project on the waterfront in Queens; the enormous Ronald Reagan Office Building and International Trade Center in Washington, D.C.; and numerous projects in Santa Fe, his beloved second home.

Real estate developer **William Zeckendorf Jr.** was known for challenging projects — enormous mixed-use developments but also hotels, office buildings, apartment towers, and cultural facilities — that improved the lives and streetscapes of their communities. Born in 1929, Zeckendorf founded Zeckendorf Company in 1972 and went on to build a string of successful projects in New York, Washington, D.C., and Santa Fe. He died at his home in Santa Fe in 2014.

Joan Duncan Oliver is an award-winning journalist, author, and editor. She lives in New York City.

