



## Frequently Asked Questions

### Atrium:

1. **Are the paintings real?**
  - A. No. They are digital reproductions that were made by the Metropolitan Museum of Art, working with Walter & Lenore Annenberg to achieve colors that were the closest possible match to the originals.
2. **Are these the same doors that the Annenbergs and their guests used to enter the home?**
  - A. Yes.
3. **Is this the original color of the partition walls?**
  - A. Yes. The walls have been this celadon green color since 1966.

### Room of Memories:

1. **What is the significance of the sword?**
  - A. It was a thank-you gift to Walter & Leonore for their financial support of a program championed by Prince Charles called Operation Raleigh. The program targets Britain's youth and focuses on personal growth, leadership, and philanthropy. This particular sword was carried aboard the Flagship, "Eye of the Wind," which circumnavigated the world between April 9, 1978 and December 13, 1980.
2. **In reference to the Wyeth portrait of WHA – Is Walter wearing a fencing robe?**
  - A. No. He is wearing his own choir robe, which he acquired at the Ely Cathedral in East Anglia while living in London.
3. **How many children did the Annenbergs have?**
  - A. The Annenbergs did not have any children together but they both had children from their previous marriages. Walter had one son, Roger Annenberg and one daughter Wallis Annenberg from his marriage to Bernice Veronica Dunkleman.

Leonore had two daughters, Diane Deshong and Elizabeth Kabler. She had previously been married to Beldon Katleman and Lewis Rosenstiel.

### **Secretary's office:**

**1. Is the furniture original?**

A. Yes. The furniture was all designed by William Haines.

**2. In reference to the temple doors—What's the story behind these doors on the wall?**

A. The Indian silver temple doors were purchased by the Annenbergs in 1974. The lower recessed panels are decorated with chase-and-kill scenes before a crane-filled marsh. The significance of the imagery on the middle panels is unknown and is pending further research. The top panels showcase elephants and lions. All panels are enclosed by floral borders. The imagery on the doors was created by a technique called *repoussé* in which a malleable metal is shaped by hammering from the reverse side to create a design in low relief.

**3. In reference to the doorknobs—What are these doorknobs called?**

A. The doorknobs were made by Schlage and they are in the Calcutta model.

### **Walters' office:**

**1. Where did the pots come from?**

A. They are Chinese—part of the Annenbergs' Chinese export porcelain collection.

**2. Why is there a television here?**

A. Today, the room is sometimes used during retreats for staff or private meetings.

**3. In reference to the Mathelin painting—Is it real?**

A. Yes. *View of Élysée Palace* was painted in 1971 by Lucien Mathelin. It is oil on canvas. Known for his surrealism with ironical humor, Mathelin depicted Pompidou's residence as cheese which is a particular kind of French insult suggesting corruption. The painting was to hang in an exhibition titled *Arc Exhibit* at the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville (Museum of Modern Art) in Paris, but a French official insisted it and another painting (also by Mathelin) be removed because they were insulting. The paintings were removed and the remaining painters turned their canvases to the wall in protest. The painting was purchased by the Annenbergs the same year.

## **Master bedroom:**

### **1. Was the bedroom always this feminine?**

A. No. Leonore added feminine touches to the room after Walter passed away in 2002.

### **2. Is this where the Annenbergs' presidential guest slept?**

A. No. All the guests slept in the guest rooms during the Annenbergs' lifetime.

### **3. Did Obama sleep here?**

A. Yes. After the Annenbergs passed away, it was decided that the room could be used for presidential stays.

### **4. Did Walter and Leonore Annenberg die here?**

A. Walter died in 2002 at his Inwood home in Wynnewood, Pennsylvania. Leonore died seven years later in 2009 at Eisenhower Medical Center in Rancho Mirage. Both passed away of natural causes and are interred at Sunnylands.

## **Inwood Room:**

### **1. Was this always an indoor pool?**

A. No. This area has been many different spaces over the years. First, it was an outdoor patio. Then in the 1970s, local architect E. Stewart Williams designed an indoor swimming pool used by the Annenbergs for decades. Walter and Leonore also had a home in Pennsylvania called Inwood. When Leonore sold that house in 2007, she asked architect Frederick Fisher and Partners (who also designed the public Center & Gardens) to redesign this space. For the last two years of her life, she used this room as a special sitting area filled with her favorite antiques from her home in the East.

### **2. What was this room used for?**

A. The Inwood Room was designed in the later part of Leonore's life, and she loved to sit in there and look onto the grounds.

### **3. Why is there a Chinese screen in the room?**

A. The screen came to the desert with the antiques from the Pennsylvania house in 2007. The exported art piece was made in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The imagery depicted on the front of the screen is a continuous scene of figures in buildings and landscapes, all in polychrome colors on a medium red ground.

### **4. Who made the wallpaper?**

A. The artist is unknown; however, we do know that it is hand-painted silk wallpaper from China.

## Retreats:

### **1. Is Trump coming to Sunnylands?**

A. It is unclear if President Trump will come to Sunnylands. The Annenberg Foundation Trust at Sunnylands is non-partisan, and we welcome the president.

### **2. Who comes to the retreats?**

A. Invited experts on specific topics.

### **3. Who pays for the retreats?**

A. The Annenberg Foundation Trust at Sunnylands was endowed with funds to pay for the retreats.

### **4. Who pays for the presidential retreat?**

A. The White House and/or the State Department cover the costs of official visits that are hosted at Sunnylands. The Annenberg Foundation Trust at Sunnylands is a nonprofit foundation established for the purpose of hosting the president and other high-level leaders to advance world peace. The Trust covers the cost of maintaining the property and making it available for these purposes and to the public.

## Living room:

### **1. Where did the floor come from?**

A. Portugal. It is pink marble.

### **2. Why was a ruby stone used to carve the Jadeite?**

A. Rubies are harder than Jadeite and are able to carve the stone.

## Fireplace/living room and hexagonal table area:

### **1. Was the fireplace ever turned on?**

A. No.

### **2. Is the furniture original?**

A. Yes, but reupholstered over the years.

### **3. Why is the furniture so low? Were the Annenbergs short?**

A. This was a design choice and signature of William Haines furnishings. It was thought that it was more flattering and social.

### **4. In reference to the decorative boxes and small boxes seen throughout the house— What was kept inside the boxes?**

A. We believe that nothing was kept in the decorative boxes.

### **5. Why is there such a strong Asian influence in the home?**

- A. This was a design choice and signature of William Haines designs. He was heavily influenced by the Regency period in England, which was a period when Chinese motifs, also called Chinoiserie, were wildly popular.

## **Royal Sitting room:**

1. Did Princess Diana come to Sunnylands?
  - A. Princess Diana never came to Sunnylands, but the Annenbergs did attend her wedding to Prince Charles.
2. In reference to the Tang dynasty warrior funerary sculptures—Did the sculptures break? Why are they cut in half?
  - A. They were created in two pieces probably for ease in hand molding and firing or to facilitate transportation.

## **Kitchen:**

1. Did the Annenbergs ever enter the kitchen?
  - A. Rarely.
2. Do you use the Annenbergs' original china patterns?
  - A. Yes, for special occasions that reference the history of the house.
3. Why does the kitchen look like a commercial kitchen?
  - A. It was the style of formal homes to create a functional rather than a social kitchen.
4. Do the appliances still work?
  - A. Yes.

## **Dining room:**

1. Is this the original floor?
  - A. No. Changed in the 1970s when the billiard room converted to a dining room.
2. What was the most commonly used china pattern that the Annenbergs owned?
  - A. Flora Danica and Green Minton.
3. Are these china patterns used during retreats?
  - A. On occasion, yes.

## Upper terrace:

1. What type of trees are these?

A. Virginia Live Oak

2. What is this mosaic?

A. It was designed by William Haines, the tile pieces were imported from Italy and carefully placed by hand on the upper terrace to create the animal and plant designs.

3. How much does it cost to run this place? What is the daily operating budget?

A. The annual operating budget, including the cost of retreats, is \$16 million.

## Lower terrace:

1. Did the Annenbergs use the pool?

A. Yes.

2. In reference to *Square Wave*—What is this?

A. This is a kinetic sculpture made by Israelie artist Yaacov Agam.

3. Who can use the golf course?

A. The president, retreat guests and community groups have golfed here. Community groups have included Desert ARC, The First Tee of the Coachella Valley, a military group from Twenty-nine Palms, Special Olympics, and local high school golf teams.

## Yellow room:

1. Did the Reagans sleep in twin beds?

A. Yes.

2. Why are the jelly beans here?

A. Leonore decorated the rooms with jelly beans beginning in the Reagan era given President Reagan's love of jelly beans.

3. Who else slept in the room?

A. Previous guests include President Ronald and Nancy Reagan, President George H.W. and Barbara Bush, General Colin and Alma Powell, Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, President Richard and Pat Nixon, Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, Duke and Duchess of York, First Lady Hillary Clinton, Princess Margaret, and Mr. Steve Forbes.

B. A partial list is available on the credenza in each of the color-coded rooms.

4. Did Mrs. Annenberg make her own needlepoint pillows?

A. No. They were gifts or purchased.

## **Game room:**

**1. Can you elaborate on the Prince Charles chairs?**

A. Mementos from attending the investiture of Prince Charles as Prince of Wales.

**2. In reference to the Narwhal whale tusk—What is this?**

A. Tusk/tooth of a narwhal whale. Gifted to Walter by Jane and Justin Dart.

**3. In reference to the GeoChron wall clock—What is this?**

A. The GeoChron reflects the current time of day and mimics the sun's relation in the sky throughout the day. It was given by Frank Sinatra after Walter saw it at Frank's compound in Palm Springs when visiting for dinner. Five days later it arrived as a gift from Frank Sinatra, and so did the handymen to unpack it and hang it. It was a great conversational piece in the Game Room and was admired by guests as they arrived and departed. Walter chose the placement.

**4. Can people sit on the furniture?**

A. During retreats, yes.

**5. In reference to the Fleur Cowles paintings—What are these paintings?**

A. One painting (above the backgammon table) reflects a leopard peering through white-flowering vines, with a flower in its mouth on a red backdrop. The second painting is of a leopard head adorned with a crown of flowers and red-flowering vines on a red backdrop. Both were painted by Fleur Cowles, a friend of Leonore Annenberg.

## **Pink room:**

**1. Why does this room have a television and not the yellow room?**

A. It is set up to show you the modern amenities offered to the retreat guests.

**2. Why doesn't this room have a needlepoint pillow?**

A. Unfortunately the pillow in this room faded, but the quote on the pillow said, "Easy does it."

## **Rose Garden:**

**1. Why are only these first ladies represented in the rose garden?**

A. Chosen by the Annenbergs.

**2. Are these roses simply dedications or are there actual roses named after these people?**

A. The roses named after people (Bush, Reagan, Queen Elizabeth, etc.) were chosen based on Leonore's friendship with these people while other roses (Double Delight, First Prize, etc.) were chosen to reflect Leonore's desire to have a variety of color in the garden. Although chosen by the Annenbergs, the roses were named by official rose associations and not by Walter and Leonore.

**3. Why is there a toilet in the projector room?**

A. The accommodations were added to the room because the projectionist must stay in place during the screening of a movie so the movie runs without interruption.

**4. What kind of tree is this outside the Projection room?**

A. The smaller trees planted on the grass patch closer to the projection room are Crepe Myrtle (*Lythraceae*). The trees bordering the rose garden with purple blooms are Jacaranda (*Jacaranda acutifolia*).

## **Grounds:**

**1. How many holes are on the golf course?**

A. Nine, but the course has two sets of tee boxes that allow the course to be played as 18 or 27.

**2. Where is the first tee?**

A. The first tee is located on the south side of the lake with the waterfall.

**3. Can people fish on the lakes?**

A. Yes. The lakes are stocked with bluegill, large mouth bass, and catfish. The current policy is "catch and release."

**4. Do you use recycled water?**

A. We would love to use recycled/treated water, but the Coachella Valley Water District has not run the supply lines for that water in our area yet.

**5. Can anyone else be buried on the property?**

A. No. The Annenbergs created the cemetery for their own internment on their property.