

State of California — The Resources Agency
 DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
PRIMARY RECORD

Primary # _____
 HRI # _____
 Trinomial _____
 NRHP Status Code _____

Other Listings _____
 Review Code _____ Reviewer _____ Date _____

Page 1 of 3 Resource name(s) or number (assigned by recorder) *Sunnylands*

P1. Other Identifier:

- *P2. Location: Not for Publication Unrestricted
 *a. County *Riverside*
 *b. USGS 7.5' Quad _____ Date: _____
 *c. Address *71-800 Frank Sinatra Drive* City *Rancho Mirage* Zip *92270*
 *e. Other Locational Data: Assessor's Parcel Number Block: Lot:

***P3a. Description:** (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries.)

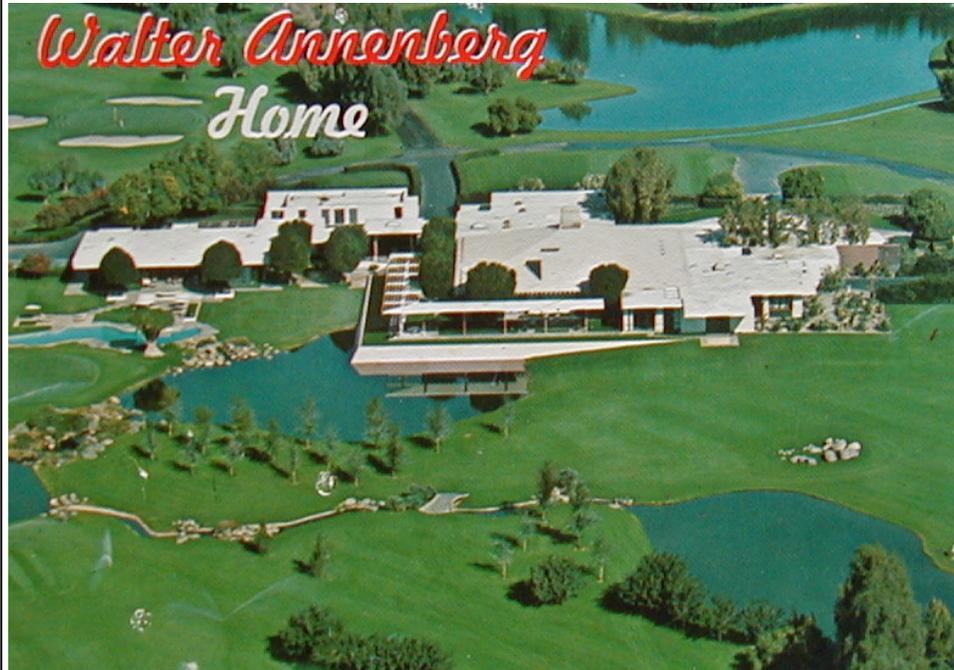
Architects A. Quincy Jones and Frederick Emmons designed the Sunnylands Residence of Ambassador and Mrs. Walter H. Annenberg in 1963. Constructed on 250 acres of raw desert near the intersection of Wonder Palms Road and Rio Del Sol (now Frank Sinatra and Bob Hope Drives), the 32,000 square foot house was completed in 1965. Most exterior surfaces are medium-smooth stucco with square, painted concrete block used for some walls and also for the battered walls that descend into a lake and the swimming pool. Most windows are stretch from ceiling to floor. The primary roof element is a "monitor," a raised cupola of open fretwork that rises out of a Mayan/Japanese-inspired pyramid roof to illuminate the square atrium in the living room. The remaining roof area is flat. The sloping portion of the roof and exterior walls are painted pink in homage to the color of the mountains seen during summer sunsets. The roofline and color repeat where the outdoor terrace slopes down into the swimming pool. Beneath the 6,400 square foot atrium, a square egg crate frame supported by four star-shaped posts lowers the ceiling to a less intimidating height. Within the square, bordered by the inlaid pink marble floor, is a planter surrounding a Rodin statue. Beneath the enormous atrium space are several walls of Mexican lava rock designed to

(See Continuation Sheet 3 of 3.)

***P3b. Resource Attributes:** (list attributes and codes) *HP2. Single-family Property*

***P4. Resources Present:** Building Structure Object Site District Element of District Other

P5a. Photo



P5b. Description of Photo: (view and date)

*Birdseye view.
 Postcard image circa 1970.*

***P6. Date Constructed/Age and Sources:** historic
1963/ Source: Palm Springs Modern

***P7. Owner and Address:**
*Walter Annenberg
 150 N Radnor Chester Road #A200
 St. Davids, Pennsylvania 19087*

***P8. Recorded by:**
*P. Moruzzi, T. Grimes, L. Heumann
 Leslie Heumann and Associates
 600 N. Sierra Bonita Ave.
 Los Angeles, CA 90036*

***P9. Date Recorded:**
September 23, 2002

***P10. Survey Type:**
Intensive Survey .

***P11. Report Citation:** (Cite survey report and other sources, or enter "none")
None.

- *Attachments:** None Location Map Sketch Map Continuation Sheet Building, Structure, and Object Record
 Archaeological Record District Record Linear Feature Record Milling Station Record Rock Art Record
 Artifact Record Photograph Record Other (list)

BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

*Resource Name or #: *Sunnylands*

B1. Historic Name: *Sunnylands*

B2. Common Name: *Same*

B3. Original Use: *Single-family Residence*

B4. Present Use: *Single-family Residence*

*B5. Architectural Style: *Modern*

*B6. Construction History: (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations): *Constructed in 1963.*

Note: No building permits exist prior to incorporation of the City of Rancho Mirage in 1973. May 18, 2001. 484 square foot memorial pavilion at Sunnylands. Value: \$200,000.

*B7. Moved? No Yes Unknown Date: _____ Original Location: _____

*B8. Related Features:
None.

B9a. Architect: *A. Quincy Jones and Frederick E. Emmons*

b. Builder: *Unknown*

*B10. Significance: Theme *Country Club Era*

Area *Rancho Mirage*

Period of Significance: *1951 - 1973* Property Type: *Single-family Residence* Applicable Criteria: *A, B, C*

(Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as defined by theme, period, and geographic scope. Also address integrity)

Sunnylands is one of the most important properties in Rancho Mirage, significant historically, for its association with Ambassador and Mrs. Walter H. Annenberg and their numerous high profile guests from around the world and for the Annenbergs' contributions to the development of Rancho Mirage. It is equally significant architecturally, for its Modern design by a highly respected southern California architectural firm and a nationally prominent interior design team. In 1963, architects A. Quincy Jones and Frederick E. Emmons collaborated with interior designers William Haines and Ted Graber in designing Sunnylands for the Annenbergs. Author Adele Cygelman in Palm Springs Modern states, "Every element of the structure, including the billowing tentlike ceiling has a firm but silent aspect, animated by the presence of its inhabitants."

Archibald Quincy Jones FAIA grew up in Southern California, receiving his degree in architecture from the University of Washington in 1936. From 1950-1969, he practiced in partnership with Frederick E. Emmons. Jones' major projects include Case Study House #24 and the innovative Modern tract houses designed for developer Joseph L. Eichler in northern and

(See Continuation Sheet 3 of 3.)

B11. Additional Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) _____

*B12. References:

*Alan Hess and Andrew Danish, Palm Springs Weekend, Chronicle Books, 2001.
Adele Cygelman, Palm Springs Modern, New York, Rizzoli International Publications, 1999. pp. 180-189.
Cory Bruckner, A. Quincy Jones, New York, Phaidon Press, 2002.
City of Rancho Mirage Building Permits.
www.cnn.com/2002/US/Northeast/10/01/obit.annenberg.ap/*

B13. Remarks:

Sketch Map

*B14. Evaluator: *Peter Moruzzi, Teresa Grimes, Leslie Heumann*

*Date of Evaluation: *September 23, 2002*

(This space reserved for official comments.)

***P3a. Description (continued):**

Annenberg's vast art collection. Interior designers Billy Haines and Ted Graber worked closely with the architects in planning the house, dividing the atrium into various sitting areas and custom-making all of the furniture for the house. A hallway to the right of the atrium leads down to the dining room, projection room, pool cabanas, and the guest suites. To the left lie the master wing and offices. The driveway leads into the motor court, which is surrounded by ficus trees. Here, a coffered egg crate porte cochere runs through the entrance into the atrium. A system of nine lakes that provides watering holes for egrets and ducks winds through Sunnylands. Noted golf course architect Dick Wilson designed the nine-green, eighteen tee, six thousand yard private golf course that surrounds the house. The house, furnishings, and grounds have been meticulously maintained since construction.

***B10. Significance (continued):**

southern California. A recipient of numerous honors, the firm received the prestigious Firm of the Year Award of the American Institute of Architects in 1969. Jones taught at the University of Southern California for many years and served as the Dean of the School of Fine Arts. Author Cory Buckner in her biography, A. Quincy Jones, says "Jones raised the level of the tract house in California from the simple stucco box to a structure of beauty and logic surrounded by gardens and integrated into the landscape. He introduced new materials and also a new way of living within the built environment, and his work bridged the gap between custom-built and developer-built homes. The exquisite detailing and siting of Jones's houses, churches, civic and university buildings make them quintessential embodiments of mid-century American architecture." In the desert, Jones teamed with Paul R. Williams in the acclaimed remodel of the Town and Country restaurant in Palm Springs in 1948. Sunnylands was the final project Jones completed in Rancho Mirage.

For Jones and Emmons, Sunnylands presented an opportunity to design a monumental Modern building on a virtually unlimited budget that incorporated many of the design tenets to which they both subscribed. Exhibited on a vastly greater scale than any residence on which either had ever worked were the open floor plan, soaring ceilings, glass walls, indoor-outdoor elements, and mostly unadorned exterior surfaces that were hallmarks of Modernism.

Walter Annenberg (1908-2002) came to national prominence as the publisher of the Philadelphia Inquirer and other periodicals, founding Seventeen magazine in 1944 and TV Guide in 1953 and acquiring numerous other communications properties in a variety of media under the umbrella of his company, Triangle Publications. An avid art collector and generous philanthropist, Annenberg donated millions of dollars of artwork to museums and to the nation and endowed the communications schools at the University of Southern California and the University of Pennsylvania that bear his name, among many other munificent gifts. He was an important player in the Republican Party, and was appointed ambassador to the United Kingdom by President Nixon in 1969. Leonore Annenberg, his second wife, served as White House protocol chief for Ronald and Nancy Reagan. Capping a lifetime of honors, Walter Annenberg was awarded the Medal of Freedom and the Alfred Dupont Award for pioneering education via television. Although the Annenbergs' primary residence was in Pennsylvania, they were regular residents of their Rancho Mirage estate, hosting dignitaries such as Presidents Eisenhower, Nixon, Reagan, George H. W. Bush, and Clinton, as well as Queen Elizabeth, Prince Philip, Princess Margaret, and Prince Charles at their desert home. In addition, the Annenbergs have substantially contributed to a number of Coachella Valley organizations including Rancho Mirage's Eisenhower Medical Center, where a building bears their name.

Sunnylands appears eligible for separate listing in the National Register of Historic Places (a "3S" National Register Status Code). In addition, the property would be eligible for designation under an existing or proposed local ordinance. Under National Register Criterion A, Sunnylands represents the significant contributions made to the broad patterns of Rancho Mirage's history by the Annenbergs, specifically, the property's role in the maturation and increased stature of Rancho Mirage. Under Criterion B, Sunnylands appears eligible for its association with the internationally prominent Annenbergs. Under Criterion C, Sunnylands is architecturally significant as a virtually original and intact example of Jones and Emmons Modern design built on an extraordinarily vast scale.