

= Leonore Annenberg =

Leonore Cohn Annenberg (February 20 , 1918 ? March 12 , 2009) , also known as Lee Annenberg , was an American businesswoman , government official , and philanthropist , noted for serving as Chief of Protocol of the United States from 1981 to 1982 . Annenberg was married to Walter Annenberg , who was an Ambassador to the United Kingdom and newspaper publishing magnate . She also served as the chairman and president of the Annenberg Foundation from 2002 until 2009 .

Born in New York City and raised in Los Angeles , she graduated from Stanford University . After her first two marriages ended in divorce , she married noted businessman Walter Annenberg , who was appointed U.S. Ambassador to the United Kingdom in 1969 under President Richard Nixon . In her role as the ambassador 's wife , Leonore directed a major renovation of the ambassador 's official residence . The Annenbergs contributed to Ronald Reagan 's 1980 presidential campaign and upon his inauguration , Leonore was named Chief of Protocol , placing her in charge of advising the president , vice president , and Secretary of State on matters relating to diplomatic protocol .

The Annenbergs became major philanthropists , donating money to education facilities , charitable causes , and the arts . Leonore served on many committees and boards as well . After her husband 's death in 2002 , she continued to donate money and succeeded him as chairman and president of the Annenberg Foundation .

= = Early life and family = =

Leonore Cohn was born into a Jewish family in New York City on February 20 , 1918 , to Maxwell and Clara Cohn . Nicknamed " Lee " , her father operated a textile business . She was seven years old when her mother died . She and her younger sister were raised in Fremont Place , an upper @-@ class neighborhood of Los Angeles , by her uncle Harry Cohn , the founder of Columbia Pictures . Leonore and her younger sister , Judith , attended the Page Boarding School for Girls in Pasadena . Harry Cohn 's wife , Rose , raised the girls as Christian Scientists .

Leonore Cohn graduated from Stanford University in 1940 with a B.A. After graduating , she married Beldon Katleman , whose family owned real estate and a national parking lot chain ; they had a daughter , Diane , but the marriage ended in divorce after a few years . In 1946 , she married Lewis Rosensteel , the multimillionaire founder of the Schenley liquor distillery , and they had a daughter named Elizabeth ; that marriage , too , ended in divorce .

She and Walter Annenberg , then editor of The Philadelphia Inquirer , met in 1950 at a party in Florida and the two were married the following year .

= = Ambassador 's wife = =

Upon her husband 's appointment as the United States Ambassador to the United Kingdom in 1969 , Mrs. Annenberg ordered a renovation of the thirty @-@ five room Winfield House , the ambassador 's official London residence . The total cost of the project was about US \$ 1 million and took six months to complete . While in London , Leonore founded the American Friends of Covent Garden , an organization designed to foster goodwill between the U.S. and Great Britain through musical expression .

= = Chief of Protocol = =

The Annenbergs contributed substantially to Ronald Reagan 's 1980 presidential campaign , and upon Reagan 's election in 1981 , Lee Annenberg was named as Chief of Protocol of the United States . This position placed her in charge of advising the President , Vice President , and Secretary of State on matters dealing with diplomatic protocol , and formally welcoming foreign dignitaries upon their arrival to the United States . Annenberg oversaw a staff of 60 who worked on myriad details , ranging from the choice of the state gifts that will be given to the guest , to the bathrooms the foreign delegation may visit . She said of her position , " It 's all about making your guests feel

respected and welcome " . Annenberg attracted some controversy during her tenure when she curtsied before the visiting Prince Charles upon arriving for a diplomatic visit , commentators saying it was unseemly in a republic which gained its independence from the same monarchy .

As Chief of Protocol , she achieved the rank of Ambassador . Friends of Ronald and Nancy Reagan , the Annenbergs hosted the Reagans annually at their Rancho Mirage , California estate , " Sunnylands " . Annenberg resigned her post in January 1982 , stating that she wanted to spend more time with her husband .

= = Philanthropy and committee work = =

After leaving her post at the State Department , Lee Annenberg began work to promote and enhance cultural appreciation in the United States . She and her husband continued to donate money to worthy causes as philanthropists . In 2001 , Annenberg was awarded the Andrew Carnegie Medal of Philanthropy . Upon being presented the award , she explained why she and her husband donated to causes as philanthropists :

" Walter and I believe that education is the foundation of a democratic society . When asked what motivates his philanthropic work , my husband has responded with a very powerful statement : ' I regard my philanthropic work as an investment in the future of America . It is the most effective way I can serve my country and help to ensure its benefits for the next generation . ' "

Mrs. Annenberg served many charitable organizations and on many committees . Stemming from her interest in and endowments to the arts , she was a trustee emerita and a member of the Acquisitions Committee of the Metropolitan Museum of Art , member of the Board of Trustees of the Philadelphia Museum of Art , one of the managing directors of The Metropolitan Opera , honorary trustee and former board president of the Palm Springs Art Museum , and a member of the American Philosophical Society . Mrs. Annenberg was chairwoman emerita of the Foundation of Art and Preservation in Embassies , and a member of the Committee for the Preservation of the White House .

She was also a member of the Distinguished Daughters of Pennsylvania and an active trustee emeritus of the University of Pennsylvania . She served on the governing boards of both Annenberg Schools for Communication . In 1993 , she and her husband , Walter , were awarded the National Medal of Arts . She was elected a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 2004 .

= = Later life = =

Walter Annenberg died on October 1 , 2002 , aged 94 . Lee Annenberg succeeded her husband as chairman and president of the Annenberg Foundation , an organization founded by her late husband which funds nonprofit organizations as well as education institutes and programs of the arts . She continued to donate money to worthy causes in the fields of science , education , and art until her death . In 2006 , she was ranked as the 382nd wealthiest person in the world by Forbes magazine , and the 488th in 2007 . Annenberg , in 2007 , was the 165th richest person in the United States , according to Forbes , with a net worth of 2 @. @ 5 billion dollars . Annenberg traveled to Washington , D.C. in May 2007 to attend the state dinner for Queen Elizabeth II , hosted by President George W. Bush . The following month , she accepted the prestigious Philadelphia Award , an honor given to those in the Philadelphia region who worked to better the area .

Most recently before her death , Annenberg became an honorary board member of the Richard Nixon Foundation and an honorary fellow of the Royal Academy of Arts .

= = Death = =

Lee Annenberg resided in Rancho Mirage , California prior to her death on March 12 , 2009 , aged 91 . According to a family spokesperson , Leonore Annenberg died at Eisenhower Medical Center of natural causes . At the time of her death , Annenberg had been in declining health .

At the announcement of her death , statements were issued by former President George H. W.

Bush and Barbara Bush , as well as former First Lady Nancy Reagan . Mrs. Reagan called Annenberg " a dear and longtime friend " and praised the Annenbergs ' philanthropic work as having " left an indelible print on education in the United States " .