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## West Wing Tour Guide

### EISENHOWER EXECUTIVE OFFICE BUILDING

- Design: Supervising Architect of the Treasury, Alfred Mullet
  - The architects' style was unpopular at the time and he was widely criticized.
  - In financial trouble and poor health, he killed himself at the age of 56 in 1890.
- French Second Empire architecture style.
- 2 miles of corridor and 900 exterior columns.
- Former State, Navy, and War Department Building.
- Construction began in 1871 & lasted 17 years.
- Formerly OEOP, renamed by Clinton in 1999, rededicated by Bush in 2002.
- Houses Indian Treaty Room and Office of the Vice President (former Office of Secretary of Navy).
- Theodore and Franklin D. Roosevelt, William Howard Taft, Dwight D. Eisenhower, Lyndon B. Johnson, Gerald Ford, and George H. W. Bush all had offices in this building before becoming President.
- Japanese emissaries met here with Secretary of State Cordell Hull after the bombing of Pearl Harbor.

### WEST EXECUTIVE AVENUE

- When President travels by motorcade, he leaves South Grounds driveway.
- VPOTUS and other visiting cabinet members arrive on West Exec.

### WEST WING INTRODUCTION

- Constructed 1902 under Theodore Roosevelt.
  - Wanted a place to work in peace & quiet.
- Two major expansions 1909 (TR) and 1934 (FDR).
- Office of the President and immediate staff.
  - Over 100 in WW
  - Over 60 in EW
  - Remaining 2000 EOP employees in EEOB and NEOB

### Jumbo Pictures

- Taken by WH photographers.
- Five photographers in department, headed by Pete Souza.
- They take thousands of photos every day.
- Change jumbos 1-2 times a month, depending on Presidential activities.
- President Obama is the first president to use digital photography for all photos and the first to display them in this manner on the walls of the White House.

### WEST WING BASEMENT

- Vice President's Hallway (His Office is on First Floor)
  - Jumbos are all of Vice President Biden instead of the President.
- Statue recreation of the historic Raising the Flag on Iwo Jima photograph in the WW Basement

Lobby.

- Houses:

- Staff Secretary, Photo Office, Homeland Security, Secret Service, Director of Speechwriting, NSC Staff

## **WHITE HOUSE MESS**

### **Mess Hallway**

- Each military branch is responsible for a facet of the WH (Air Force runs AF1, Marines run Marine 1, Army handles ground transport, Navy does WH Mess & Camp David- formerly known as Shangri-La)
- Nautical themed hallway.
- Mess gong behind desk is originally from USS Constitution.

### *Freedom Tower*

- Depicts the new Freedom Tower in NYC, and the USS New York, the ship built with steel salvaged from the fallen World Trade Center.

### **Mess History**

- U.S. Navy stewards have been responsible for Presidential food service since 1880, when President Hayes used the U.S.S. *Despatch* as the first Presidential yacht
- WH Mess was established in 1951 by President Truman

### **Current Mess**

- Used by commissioned officers by reservation only
- Exec. dining room: assistants to the President and Cabinet members
- Staff dining room: all commissioned officers
- Ward room: by reservation - group setting

## **SITUATION ROOM**

- Est. 1962 (JFK) after Bay of Pigs crisis
- Secure room where POTUS has intel briefings
- Multiple conference rooms and 2 entrances
- Secure video teleconference capability
- Operational 24 hours/day, 7 days a week. Responsible for always being able to get in touch with POTUS and VPOTUS
- Direct link to communication channels of State, DOD, CIA.

## **ROSE GARDEN and WW 1st FLOOR HALLWAY**

### **West Colonnade**

- Famous 45 second walk from Residence to WW daily.
- Colonnade created by FDR so handicap accessible.
- WH one of the first buildings in America to be handicap accessible.
- East Colonnade is indoors- runs from the East Wing to the Residence.

### **Rose Garden**

- Ellen A. Wilson, first wife of WW, created first Rose Garden, 1913
- Redesigned in 1961 for President and Mrs. JFK.
- Rose Garden was the location of the 2009 “Beer Summit”, where POTUS met with Prof. Henry Louis Gates and Sgt. James Crowley to discuss their recent racial controversy.
- The President often gives remarks from the Rose Garden.
- Rose Garden Weddings:
  - June 12, 1971: Tricia Nixon (daughter of President Nixon)
  - May 28, 1994: Anthony Rodham (brother of Hillary Clinton)

### **South Lawn**

- Presidential arrivals and departures on Marine One.
- The swing set & playground is located behind the oval office to the right.
- Truman Balcony, established by Truman 1948.
  - The stars on the ceiling of the Oval Office have 8 points instead of 5. They were going to fix them, but had spent too much money on the Truman Balcony construction and have since left them.
- Woodrow Wilson kept a flock of sheep on the White House lawn during World War I as a symbol of support for the troops. An auction for their wool raised 52K for the Red Cross.
- Jimmy Carter's daughter Amy, had a treehouse on the South Lawn.

### **1st Floor Hallway**

- Only 3 jumbos do not change: Bin Laden raid, McKayla Maroney, Jacob Philadelphia "I want to know if my hair is just like yours"

### **CABINET ROOM**

- President must be physically in room to use.
- Used for meetings with: Cabinet, NSC, MoCs Heads of State
- SCIF (Sensitive Compartmented Information Facility) – point out the box for phones.
- Mahogany table – will seat 24 – Gift from President Nixon 1970.
- President has some discretion when creating Cabinet rank officials.

### **Chairs**

- Each Cabinet member assigned chair (can purchase upon completion).
- POTUS's chair is tallest, has red button on table: President can alert stewards w/out breaching security.
- Positioned at table according to date dept. was established.
  - Secretary of State sits on President's right
  - VP sits opposite President
  - Sec. Treasury sits on VP's right
  - Attorney General sits on VP's left
  - Senior Staff sits on outside border
- Chairs bear brass plates indicating cabinet position and dates of service.
  - VP Cheney three plates: VP, Defense (41), Chief of Staff (Ford)
  - Rumsfeld five plates: Economic Advisory & Counselor (Cabinet ranks under Nixon), CoS (Ford), oldest and youngest SoDefense (Ford and 43)

### **Cabinet Art**

- Each President selects art to decorate the room.
- One of the few paintings of George Washington not wearing a wig.
- President Bush chose:
  - Marble busts: Washington & B. Franklin
  - Portraits: TR, Jefferson, Eisenhower, Washington
  - Painting of signing of Declaration of Independence

### **Outer Oval**

**Watch Meeting - Dec. 31st 1862 - Waiting For the Hour** by William Tolman Carlton, oil on canvas, 1863

- Gift of the Republican National Finance Committee, 1972
- This painting depicts slaves waiting on December 31, 1862 for the stroke of midnight, the moment at which Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation was to take effect.
- The focal point of the dramatically lit room is the watch held at the center of the composition, its

anchor-shaped fob a Christian symbol of hope.

- This work was probably a study for the currently lost original given to Abraham Lincoln by William Lloyd Garrison as a representative of an abolitionist group

## **OVAL OFFICE**

### **Overview**

- First Oval Office built in 1909 in center of south side of WW (Taft).
- 1934 moved to current location by FDR to overlook Rose Garden.
- Each President decorates office according to own taste
  - President Obama- First President to have wallpaper
  - Has apples on table- symbol of health
- Constants: White marble mantel, Presidential seal in plaster on ceiling, two flags behind President's desk (U.S. and President's flag).
- President's formal workspace; spends most of day here in meetings.
- Door on the left is the secretary/ personal aid (see peephole), door on the right is the President's private dining room and office w/ computer
- Seating: If looking at fireplace (which works!)- President sits on right and visiting head of state sits on left.

Why is the Oval Office Oval?

- Built to match the oval rooms in the residence, including blue room.
- Oval rooms date back to Washington, who favored them for hosting receptions so that his guests could stand in a circle around him and everyone was equal distance from him, a symbol of Democracy.

### **Sculptures**

Bronco Buster by Frederic Remington

- An original cast - a gift of Miss Virginia Hatfield and Mrs. Louis Hatfield Stickney during the Carter Administration
- Bronze sculpture made in 1895 by Remington- who was declared legally blind before he died in 1909
- First and most popular Remington sculpture- of a Western frontier cowboy fighting to stay on a rearing bronco, with a stirrup swinging free, a quirt in one hand and a fistful of mane and reins in the other.

Busts

- Abraham Lincoln - by George Henry Story - oil on canvas, c.1915
- Dwight D. Eisenhower - by Nison Tregor, bronze bust, 1957
- MLK -- first non-head of state to have a bust in the Oval Office
- Winston Churchill (Bush admin.) was first foreign head of state

### **Resolute Desk**

- Made from timbers of HMS Resolute.
  - Abandoned at sea during British expedition 1854.
  - Recovered by US whaling ship; refurbished and returned to Queen Victoria 1855.
- Queen Victoria gave desk to President Hayes in 1880.
- Every President has used the desk in some capacity (not always in the Oval) except LBJ, Nixon, and Gerald Ford.
- Lyndon B. Johnson was too tall for the desk, and Ronald Reagan raised the desk by 2 inches to accommodate taller owners.
- Presidential Seal on Desk
  - Vanity panel created under FDR to hide wheelchair (eagle faces left towards arrow)
  - Until 1945, eagle could face either way (arrows or olive branch)

- 1945 Truman signed Executive Order requiring eagle to face olive branch as a sign of peace (right)

### **Oval Office Art**

Statue of Liberty Painting by Norman Rockwell

- Given as a holiday gift during Clinton Admin by Steven Spielberg
- Clintons wanted to keep the painting, but were told they have to buy it-worth millions of dollars-so it stayed.

The Avenue in the Rain by Frederick Childe Hassam

- Depicts 5<sup>th</sup> Ave in NYC 5 weeks before the US declared war on Germany.

Emancipation Proclamation

- President Obama's Oval contains one of the few original copies of the Emancipation Proclamation signed by Abraham Lincoln.

### **Oval Office Rug**

- Each President is able to design their own rug, 30'5" by 23'5"
- Rug Designed by Obama contains some of his favorite quotes:
  - "The Only Thing We Have to Fear is Fear Itself"
- President Franklin D. Roosevelt
  - "The Arc of the Moral Universe is Long, But it Bends Towards Justice"
- Martin Luther King Jr.
  - "Government of the People, By the People, For the People"
- President Abraham Lincoln
  - "No Problem of Human Destiny is Beyond Human Beings"
- President John F. Kennedy
  - "The Welfare of Each of Us is Dependent Fundamentally Upon the Welfare of All of Us"
- President Theodore Roosevelt

### **Offices down the hall on First Floor WW**

- Chief of Staff and two Deputy Chiefs, Vice President, 2 Senior Advisors, National Security Advisor, Press Secretary, Communications Director, Deputy Communications Director

### **Second Floor WW Offices**

- Leg. Affairs, WH Counsel, Senior Advisor, DPC, NEC, Cabinet Affairs, IGA, OPE

### **ROOSEVELT ROOM**

- Occupies the original site of the president's office when the West Wing was built in 1902. Seven years later, the room became a part of two waiting rooms when the West Wing was expanded and the Oval Office was built.
- The skylight (built in 1934- when Oval Office was moved and it became a conference room) is fake- there is a floor above it.
- Used for high-level staff meetings and conferences.
- Named by FDR as "Fish Room" because of fishing mementos placed by FDR and continued by JFK.
  - FDR installed aquarium, JFK mounted sailfish he caught in Acapulco.
- 1696 Nixon named to honor; TR (role in constructing WW) and FDR (expanded WW).
- The armoire has a large screen for Presentations.

Nobel Peace Prize- in glass case left of fireplace

- Awarded to TR in 1906 for mediation of Russo-Japanese War peace settlement.

- First Nobel Peace Prize awarded to an American.
- TR Association presented medal to President Reagan as a gift to WH on 125th anniversary of TR's birth.
- TR, Wilson, and Obama only Presidents to win NPP while in office.

Congressional Medal of Honor- next to door- on left when looking in

- Awarded posthumously in 2001 to TR.
- Honors TR's efforts in Spanish-American War's Battle of San Juan Hill.

Flags

- Service flags: U.S. Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Coast Guard
- Also, President's (navy blue) and VP's (white)
- On each branch's flag, streamer representing wars, campaigns, engagements, Presidential citations.
- U.S. Army has most

*Rough Rider*- by Tade Styka over mantle

- Portrait of TR

## **LOWER PRESS HALLWAY**

### **George Catlin Paintings**

- George Catlin (1796-1872) journeyed west five times in the 1830s to paint the Plains Indians and their way of life.
- Catlin was the first artist to record the Plains Indians in their own territories.
- Catlin lobbied the U.S. government for patronage throughout his career, hoping Congress would purchase the Indian Gallery as a legacy for future generations.
- Disappointed in this goal, Catlin went bankrupt in 1852. A Philadelphia industrialist paid Catlin's debts and acquired the Indian Gallery, and soon after Catlin's death, the paintings were donated to the Smithsonian.
- Today Catlin's Indian Gallery is recognized as a great cultural treasure, offering rare insight into native cultures and a crucial chapter in American history.
- His portraits are on display at the National Portrait Gallery.
- These paintings have been on loan from National Gallery of Art since Reagan Admin.

### **So You Want to See the President**

- By Norman Rockwell
- Four-panel illustration drawn for the November 13, 1943 *Saturday Evening Post*
- Steve Early, FDR's Press Sec, facilitated Rockwell's 3-day visit
- Rockwell sketched actual WW lobby visitors waiting to see POTUS (including Miss America).
- Artist placed himself in all four panels, find him!
- Rockwell gave to Early as gift of appreciation.
- Early died, family found sketches in attic, Early's Grandson loaned to WH in 1978.
- Frames made from bird's eye maple from Rockwell front yard.
- 1978 appraised \$12,000, now considered priceless.
- No prints ever made of sketches.
- NEVER to be loaned out or to go on tour.

## **WEST WING LOBBY**

- Waiting area for visitors who have appointments w/President or staff, including heads of state.
- Nixon created current WW lobby when est. separate press room.
- Mrs. Clinton had ROTUS' desk created with computer inside.

## **Gallery Clock**



- Wood with Gilded gold, c.1810
- Made by Simon Willard, most prominent member in famous clock making Smith family.
- Type used in churches and public assembly buildings.
- 13 balls coming out of eagle's mouth represent the 13 colonies.
- Notice the number four has four bars instead of traditional Roman numeral- Willard felt the roman numeral 4 ruined the symmetry.

**Emigrant Scene** Attributed to William Henry Powell

- Depicts wagon train members receiving directions from Native American guide
- The picture took him several years to make- started at the age of 14
- There is disagreement about which side he began on because one side is much more detailed.
  - Did he start strong and get bored along the way or did he get more skilled and complex as he went along?

**Bookcase**

- Oldest piece of furniture in the White House- older than the White House!
- Mahogany, c.1770
- Contains bound copies of presidential documents
  - Speeches, proclamations, executive orders, etc.

**Washington Crossing the Delaware** by Emanuel Leutze this copy by Eastman Johnson

- Authorized reproduction of American Revolution scene- Original displayed in Metropolitan Museum of Art, NY
- Washington crossed the Delaware on Christmas Day 1776
- Historical inaccuracies exist but purpose of painting is symbolic representation of "cycle of freedom"
  - Washington crossed the Delaware at night
  - No flag
  - Delaware River didn't have icebergs- it had some ice but was not frozen over
  - Women would not have been rowing the boat
  - Washington was afraid of water and would not have been standing. He was also 44 years old at the time of the crossing
  - They crossed on flat bottom boats
  - Horses and cannons were probably taken across the River on ferry boats and other watercrafts after Washington made it across
  - The section of the river they crossed was 300 yards wide

**Vernal Falls, Yosemite** by Thomas Hill (1829-1908)

- Gift of the White House Historical Association, 1973
- Hill moved permanently to California in 1871, he became best known for his many landscapes of Yosemite Valley.

**Old Faithful** by Albert Bierstadt, 1881

**Cannonading on the Potomac October, 1861** By Wordsworth Thompson

- Depicts Battle of Balls Bluff- Civil War battle near Leesburg, VA
- The man in the red cape on the horse was a good friend of Abraham Lincoln's named Edward Dickinson Baker- he was killed during the battle and Lincoln later named one of his sons after him
- Also, there was a member of the Fife and Drum Corps who was injured multiple times during the battle- each time he was patched up and he got back to the action

**Ships (Official Title is listed on the frame)** By W.J Huggins

- Depicts the first naval engagement between the US and the British during the war of 1812

- W.J. Huggins was a popular English marine painter who lived from 1781-1845

***Shinnecock Hills, Long Island By William Merritt Chase***

***View of Gookin Falls, Rutland, Vermont – 1848 by Frederic Edwin Church***

**WEST WING ENTRANCE AND NORTH LAWN**

- Pennsylvania Avenue closed since 1995- Oklahoma City bombing
  - Now only open for pedestrians, Inaugural Parade
- A Marine stands guard at the North door to the West Wing whenever the President is in the West Wing.
- Press Stake Out: After an official (member of Congress, Senator, Head of State) meets with POTUS, can go in front of WW to tell reporters what was said in meeting
- There are “North” and “South” sides of the White House so that dignitaries do not enter or exit via a “back” or “front” door.

**Pebble Beach**

- It became the spot always used for stand-ups since it had the best view, but always muddy and they couldn't keep grass
- Started in 1998 - Clinton went to Africa; WH installed honeycomb grating and gravel to create Pebble Beach
- President Bush installed permanent stone to hide wires and create more permanent home for press
- Press shots from above WH are taken from buildings across Lafayette Park where tents are located

**Correspondents**

- TV cameras have designated spots for reporting throughout the day
- Each WH correspondent has unique view of WH behind them in broadcast
- Correspondents spend majority of day in press briefing room but use Pebble Beach for broadcasts and interviews

**PRESS BRIEFING ROOM**

- Created in 1969 by Nixon to accommodate the growing number of reporters assigned to the White House.
- In 2000, was renamed the "James S. Brady Press Briefing Room" in honor of James Brady, the press secretary who was shot and permanently disabled during an assassination attempt on President Ronald Reagan in 1981.
- Site originally housed FDR's swimming pool used for polio rehab- installed by the March of Dimes.
- Empty pool still underneath.
  - Deep end under podium, shallow end under camera crews.
- By 2000, 18 miles TV cable installed underground.
- Current theater-style seating arrangement.
  - Press Sec. assigns seating by organization name plates on chairs
- About 200 people cover WH - 60 regular WH correspondents
- Daily use:
  - 9:45 Press Gaggle, Pres. Sec. briefs reporters on upcoming events
  - Afternoon - on-camera briefing
- Behind the briefing room you can see the desks/ office space for press.

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