Mizner Trivia
by Susan Gillis and Donald Curl 2008

Much malarkey has been published over the years about Addison Mizner, his brother Wilson, and the entire Boca Raton development. Much of this misinformation can be accounted for by two publications: Alva Johnston’s *The Legendary Mizners*, which first appeared in the 1940s in *New Yorker* magazine, and Theodore Pratt’s *The Story of Boca Raton*, c.1953. The hotel’s own publication *Once Upon a Time*, which appeared in several editions, was based on these two books. Although Johnston and Pratt both did a great deal of research according to Dr. Donald Curl, noted Mizner authority and Boca Raton historian, “When they believed the facts interfered with an interesting tale, the facts suffered.” The truth about this amazing artist and the Boca Raton’s most thrilling era are in fact, fascinating enough.

TRUE OR FALSE
Addison Mizner was an untrained, derivative, reactionary architect of bad repute within his profession.

**False** - Mizner received his architectural training as an apprentice, rather than in an architectural school - customary at the time. In his day he was well recognized by his fellow architects and was featured in reputable architectural publications.

Mizner painted what is now the Boca Raton Resort and Club pink, because it reflected the color of the dawn.

**False** - The hotel was painted pink by the third owners, the Schines, according to Hildegarde Schine.

Addison Mizner designed the historic section of the Boca Raton Resort and Club called the Cloister today.

**True and False** - The two historic sections of the current hotel comprise the original Cloister Inn, the easternmost section of the hotel, and the Boca Raton Club, the addition commissioned by second owner Clarence Geist and designed by New York architects Schultze and Weaver.

Today when you enter the courtyard and main lobby of the Boca Raton Resort and Club, you are walking through the part of the hotel originally designed by Addison Mizner.

**False** - Today’s “main lobby” was originally designed by Schultze & Weaver and opened in December of 1929.

Mizner’s “cloister,” of the Cloister Inn is a beautiful loggia which overlooks Lake Boca Raton. The columns which line the cloister appear “top heavy” because they were installed upside down.

**False** - The columns are simply Gothic in style.
In his rush to complete the Cloister Inn, Mizner’s engineer had to advise him he required floor plans first.
**True**

The “slave girl” sculpture which sits in the fountain at the center of the main courtyard at the resort was acquired by Mizner from a small Tuscan town.
**False** - The fountain was a part of the 1929 Schultze and Weaver addition; Mizner probably never even saw it.

Addison Mizner was responsible for the design of Mizner Park, Mizner Lake Estates, and Addison’s Restaurant.
**True and False** - The former are modern projects named in his honor; Mizner did design the Administration Buildings, home of Addison’s Restaurant.

Mizner “invented” Boca Raton.
**False** - Boca Raton was a tiny farming community founded in the 1890s. However, Mizner’s development plans certainly put the tiny town “on the map.”

Mizner was appointed city planner by the Boca Raton Town Council.
**True**

Mizner “left out” the kitchen in his designs for the homes in Old Floresta.
**False** - All ten original models featured kitchens.

Addison Mizner was an aesthete who appreciated fine wine, fine food, fine art, and fine people.
**True**

For further information visit the Boca Raton Historical Society website at www.bocahistory.org and check out the Mizner’s Dream exhibit under the exhibits link.