

Whorehouse Trivia

Marvin Zindler, the reporter who closed the real Chicken Ranch (and the role model for The Watchdog Melvin P. Thorpe in the show), still crusades nightly on Houston's ABC affiliate.

So powerful is the show's legacy that one of the few legal brothels in the country - located just outside Las Vegas - was named The Chicken Ranch in honor of the show. Billing itself as "The Best Little Whorehouse in the West," the current Chicken Ranch even features lamps and paintings that originally adorned the La Grange Chicken Ranch.

During the show's original Broadway run, three of New York's seven TV stations refused to run commercials with the show's title in them, making for a commercial that never once mentioned the product it was selling. Later, the New York City Transit Authority - bowing to pressure from the Catholic Archbishop - ordered the removal of bus ads proclaiming, "Have Fun at the Whorehouse!"

The real-life brothel got the name The Chicken Ranch during the depression because, when the men couldn't afford the \$3 cost of a visit to the house, the girls began accepting poultry as payment.

The real-life Miss Mona, Edna Milton, cashed in on her fame for years after the Chicken Ranch's closing. She ran a restaurant called the Chicken Ranch located in part of the original building that had been moved to Dallas with original furniture and decor painstakingly recreated. The menu, unsurprisingly, featured all chicken dishes. Later, Edna even appeared in a silent role in the original off-Broadway production of the show based on her life.

When the real-life Sheriff, Jim Fournoy, died in the early 80's, he was honored by the Governor of Texas for having solved every murder and bank robbery in Fayette County during his thirty-four-year term. Ironically, information gathered via The Chicken Ranch had helped solve many of those cases.

Women's Wear Daily, the fashion industry bible, credits

Whorehouse for sparking the Texas fashion craze of the early 80's with its cowboy hats, fringe jackets and high boots.

During its Broadway run, Whorehouse set the box office record for the best single week at the 46th Street Theatre (now the Richard Rodgers). No easy task at a theatre that housed the original Guys & Dolls, How To Succeed in Business Without Really Trying, Damn Yankees and more Tony-winning Best Musicals than any house on Broadway.

The first international company of the show opened in South Africa, where the government decided it could be performed only if a whole list of words - including bullshit, apeshit and tallywhacker - were deleted. An ingenious solution was found - whenever one of the offensive words was spoken, a bicycle horn was loudly honked.

The show's days as a lightning rod for controversy are evidently not over. Just two years ago, a student production of Whorehouse at Wentworth College outside Boston was cancelled by faculty, who deemed the title "dangerous for students."