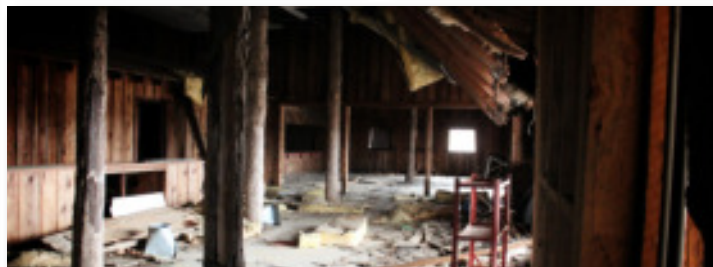
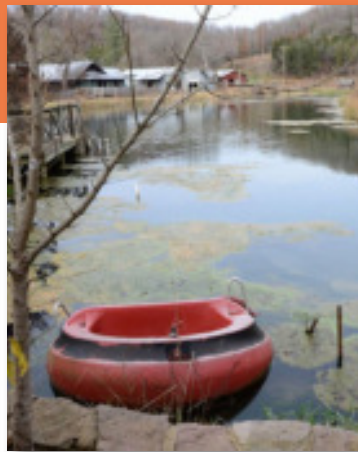


# Dogpatch USA, Harrison Arkansas



Arkansans have always been sensitive about being portrayed as hillbillies, so the concept of a theme park based on such a stereotype was questionable at the time the Dogpatch USA was imagined.

Opened in 1968 and based on the comic strip "Lil and Abner" by Al Capp and set in a fictional village called Dogpatch, the theme park is located in Northwest Arkansas between the cities of Harrison and Jasper in an area known today as Marble Falls.

For those of us who remember the joy Dogpatch brought to so many, it is simply heartbreaking to see the treasure in such a condition. Gone are the children running and playing, the roller coasters and rides and the once mighty Wild Water Rampage

slide is now just a tired tower of a memory.

"You have a different feeling when you have an emotional attachment to a location," says Kirkendall. Many of the members of Abandoned Arkansas also serve as Dogpatch USA volunteers and are committed to helping its restoration become a reality.

Eddy Sisson says that group efforts have really shifted to more involvement in the hands on labor of these historic places.

"We are more than documentarians we are Preservationists," says Sisson.

Dogpatch USA was a commercial success in its early years. Investors tried to parlay that success into a sister park, "Marble Falls," planned with a ski resort

and convention center. The venture failed and led to the park's closure in 1993. The property fell into disrepair.

In August 2014, the park was purchased by Bud Pelsor and a business partner, who announced plans to restore the park and eventually re-open it. Beginning in December 2014, Pelsor opened the park to visitors for several events; these were the first occasions on which the park was open to visitors since its 1993 closing.

Mr. Pelsor has big plans in the works to clean up the park and restore what he can. A few of his ideas are restocking the trout farm, building a new restaurant, a Dogpatch museum and other nature related industries are just a few of the ideas he has as well for the neglected area.

## The Good 'Ol Days...

