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The Land Of Oz (Images Of Modern America)



Synopsis

In 1966, North Carolina tourism moguls Grover, Harry, and Spencer Robbins began exploring ways to utilize their new ski facilities atop Beech Mountain during the summer. They brought in their associate Jack Pentes to come up with an idea. As a long-time fan of The Wizard of Oz, Pentes planned and developed the Land of Oz theme park, opening in June 1970. The park did not resemble the famous 1939 MGM movie or the Oz as depicted in L. Frank Baum's book. Instead, Pentes interpreted his own vision of Oz, with a comical Wicked Witch and a wizard who did not turn out to be a fake. The Land of Oz closed after its 1980 operating season and was left to deteriorate. Since 1990, however, its remnants have been secured and restored. The property is now available for special events, and a giant Oz celebration takes place each autumn.

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Customer Reviews

What an awesome book! I have waited years to see something like this. Ever since I learned about The Land of Oz theme park in the "Wizard of Oz Collector's Treasury" by Jay Scarfone and William Stillman, I've wanted to learn more about it. The book gives a detailed history of the park through historic photographs, showing just how amazing it would've been to experience it. The book is perfect for Oz collectors, people interested in theme parks, or people curious about the park.

As with all of the 'storybook' & 'fairy tale' amusement parks of the last Century, the Land of Oz amusement park was too convenient for a rapidly changing 20th century. Yet, that's not to say it

was without its challenges. Instead of mourning the Emerald City of Beech Mountain's woes and pitfalls, Hollis takes readers down the yellow brick road from the ticket counter through the forest of styrofoam faced trees and on to the Wizard's theater, where sojourners wave goodbye to Dorothy as she and her little dog too escape Oz in route back to Kansas. In other words, Hollis all but re-enacts as one of Dorothy's companions (maybe the Scarecrow, perhaps?) and gives the reader a play-by-play account of what we 'would' have experienced if visiting the park during its 10-year run. More importantly, this is the greatest of all testimonies about the Land of Oz, a park- albeit non-functioning since 1980, that continues to draw thousands annually with its autumn pilgrimage. Finally, visitors now have a true literary resource to engage their motivation without solely relying on the excuse to venture atop of Beech Mountain to just have a look around. Might I add the images in this collection are as intriguing as the read itself. Highly recommended.

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