

ATLANTIC PROVINCES

— Chuck Lapp

Yes, Canada, there is an Atlantic Film-Makers' Co-Operative! Founding date: August 25, 1973. The organization that was just an idea thrown around a table at the Picadilly Tavern in Halifax a year ago is now a reality. There was a certain fervor in the discussion as 19 film-makers from around the Maritimes met in a lounge at the Dalhousie University Arts Centre and discussed the philosophy and structure of a film co-operative. The result of the meeting was the birth of an organization dedicated to making films through a co-operative effort.

Many of the film-makers had not met each other before. Some had come from the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, others were working with the National Film Board, and others had worked on their own or had gone to film school. All were familiar with the difficulties of making films in the Maritimes: the lack of equipment, rental agencies, and editing facilities; the high cost of renting and shipping equipment from Toronto or Montreal; the lack of funding agencies and Art Councils as exist in Quebec and Ontario; the absence of a film industry which can provide jobs and training as well as supporting a good system of labs; and generally a lack of an active film environment from which to learn and get feedback from others who are also involved in making films.

The Co-Operative is a partial answer to the problems of film-makers now working on the East Coast, but how much it helps will depend on how much funding it can get and how viable an organization it becomes. The Co-Operative is now preparing a portfolio of films for submission to the Canada Council to obtain funding for equipment and administration. Representatives of the group took part in a recent Canada Council film policy conference at New Richmond, Gaspé, and submitted their proposal for funding the Co-Op as a

pool of production equipment and a centre for production and editing. The Co-Op will be meeting to discuss the proposal with Canada Council representatives again around the middle of November.

At present, the Co-Op is negotiating with the Nova Scotia Recreation Department which is interested in setting up film workshops for the public. The program would utilize primarily Super-8 equipment and would include activities such as drawing on film and tours of film production facilities at the CBC and NFB.

The Co-Op now has a membership of approximately 25 film-makers, having its general meeting on September 22nd. A steering committee of 7 members was elected to conduct the business of the Co-Op until a board of directors can be elected. Members of the committee are: Niall Burnett from Charlottetown, P.E.I.; Don Duchene, Charles Lapp, Stefan Wodoslawsky, Ramona Macdonald, Arthur McKay and Sam Grana from Halifax. The group also appointed Charles Lapp as full-time co-ordinator.

The other big development in film-making on the East Coast is the establishment of the NFB production unit in Halifax. The NFB crew is shooting a documentary about the people of the Marguerite Valley, Cape Breton; and recently finished a shoot on PEI during the Queen's visit. Aside from the work of their own crew, the production office has been helping film-makers in the area by giving them some access to 16mm editing rooms and the use of Super-8 cameras plus stock under their student film program. The head of the production office, Rex Tasker, has stated that the policy of the NFB office in Halifax is to help developing film-makers in the Atlantic Provinces and he is willing to listen to ideas for films. 16mm equipment seems to be hard to come by, but Super-8 gear is available if he likes your idea.

WHO'S DOING WHAT?

Kent Martin — Charlottetown — recently finished a documentary about a fishing community at Rustico, P.E.I. Expect it soon on CBC.

John Cheesman — Saint John, N.B. — completed a 20-minute 16mm dramatic film originally funded under an O.F.Y. grant and finished under the auspices of the N.F.B.

Bill MacGillivray — Halifax — is working on a 2 1/2 minute animation film sponsored by the NFB; and recently received his line drawing test back from Montreal where the film will eventually be shot in 35mm.

Rick Hancox — formerly of Charlottetown — is now teaching film at Sheridan College in Toronto.

Fernand Dansereau — Bathurst, N.B. — is directing a 90-minute feature written by Michel Garneau for the National Film Board. The production will be shot in 1/2-inch video and broadcast over local television using a recently-developed device called a Time Base Corrector which makes 1/2-inch video compatible with 2-inch broadcast equipment.

Les Krizsan — Halifax — recently completed a documentary called *Sable Island* produced for the Audio Visual Department of Dalhousie University.

Martin Alford — Halifax — is directing a theatrical short based upon Helen Creighton's book *Bluenose Ghosts*. Ned Norwood is the cameraman and Rod MacEachern is assistant director. The film is being produced for the Nova Scotia Department of Tourism.

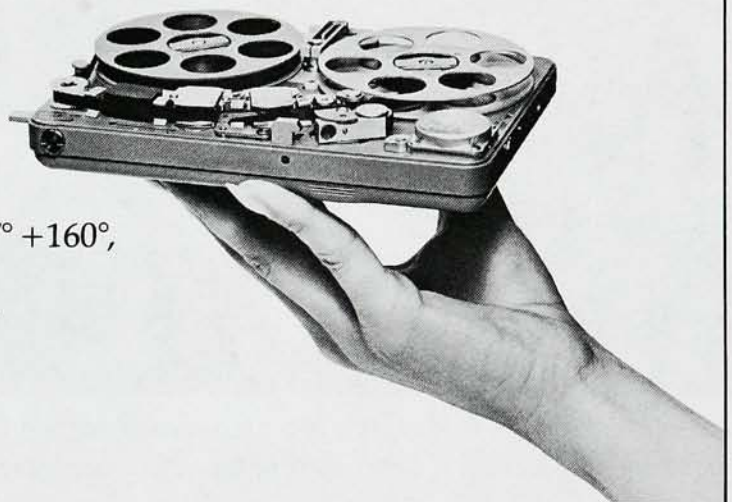
THE ATLANTIC FILM-MAKERS' CO-OP is looking for scripts to go into production immediately. Please send scripts to 1144 Tower Road, Halifax, Nova Scotia. ●

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