

## SHOOT ALBERTA

by Linda Kupecek

Local heroes are in the spotlight... through appointments... through achievements... through awards... and in symposiums.

Lorne MacPherson of the Alberta Motion Picture Development Corporation (AMPDC) has announced the appointment of Helen Hammond to the board. Hammond, an executive with Foster Consulting, replaces Lucille Wagner. As well, two new industry professionals have been named to the AMPDC advisory committee: Anne Wheeler and Pete White.

The AMPDC has approved several new development loans to qualifying producers: Astral Bellevue Pathé for *Draw* (now in post-production after a September shoot in Alberta); Eda Lishman for *The Unseelie*, a theatrical feature; Primedia (with ITV) for a 13-part television series, *The Little Vampire*; Michael Douglas (with co-producer Dick Nielsen) for a feature television movie based on the stage play, *Talking Dirty*; and Kicking Horse Productions (Arvi Liimatainen with Peter Campbell) for a television pilot, *The Burlesque Show*.

"We're hoping that two or three (of the AMPDC-assisted projects) will go into production in 1984," says MacPherson, noting the mostly likely possibilities: Wendy Wacko's *Striker's Mountain*; Filmline's *Temptations of Big Bear*; Maxine Samuels' *John Ware*; and *The Saint Game*, to be directed by Eric Till. Cash loans to date total \$100,000.

"We're just barely touching the principal of the three million," says MacPherson. "We've been able to support the industry in Alberta in the last year and a half as much as we can without dissipating the Fund."

Pete White of Edmonton is the screenwriter on *The Temptations of Big Bear*, a six-hour mini-series based on the Rudy Wiebe novel. Filmline Productions of Montreal via executive producer Michael Spencer plan a 1984 Alberta shoot. Ralph Thomas (*Ticket to Heaven* and *The Terry Fox Story*) will direct. The Aspen Parkland in northern

## Webb of Sydney

MONTREAL - Sydney Film Festival director Rod Webb will visit Montreal Mar. 7-8 to select features and shorts for his non-competitive festival (June 8-24). Webb will also select shorts for the competitive Melbourne Film Festival (June 22-July 3).

Alberta will be the major location. White is now working on the first draft of episode five.

White began a first career as a songwriter, then moved into his second career as screenwriter. Now, with eight years of writing film behind him, he (formerly of Kicking Horse Productions) is again a freelance.

"*Big Bear* is different from most other western series in that it is a story written from history not television," he says. By the time the scripting portion has been completed, White will have invested 15-18 months of research and writing. "One of the wonderful side benefits of projects like *Big Bear* is that, if it goes, it will buy me the time to research and write my own projects," says White. "Producers don't understand how long it takes to do it well... I get a call

from New York asking me to write a period piece for HBO in 30 days!

"I'm interested in becoming the best writer that I can," he says, adding, "without going broke in the process."

Edmonton producer Don Archbold reports that his home-grown series, *Rock and Roll Video*, has been sold in the U.K. to Richard Price Television Associates. A situation comedy which includes rock videos in its format, *Rock and Roll Video* was aired nationally for ten weeks on CBC, and will rock back onto the air in March.

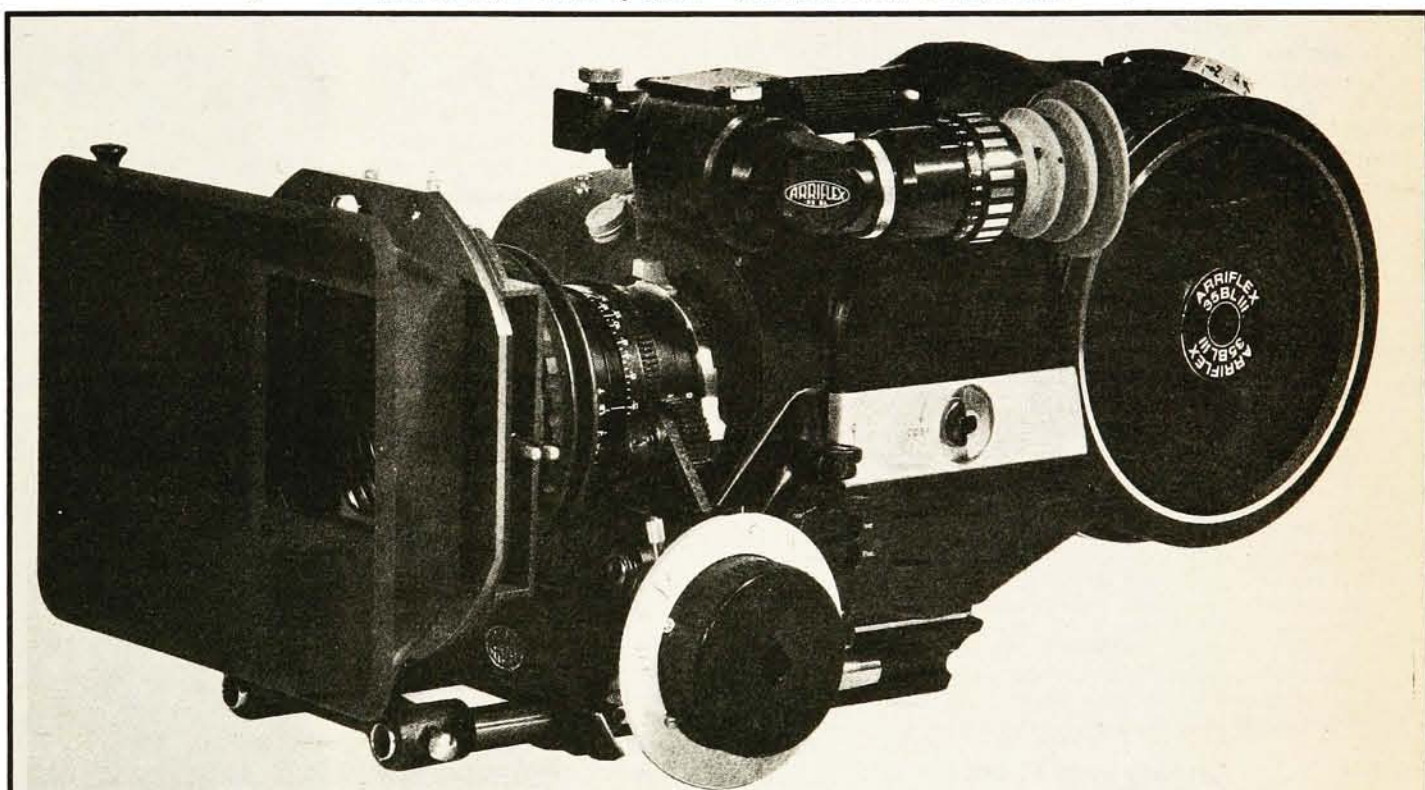
The non-union production, sponsored by Atari, was shot totally in Alberta on a moderate to low budget. Set in various small towns in Alberta, *Rock and Roll Video* was produced and directed by Archbold, and created and written by Arch-

bold with partner Randy Broadhead.

Atlantis Films of Toronto will shoot three half-hour films, two in the Edmonton area, and one in Saskatchewan, in March and April. *One's a Heifer, John Cat*, and *Cages* will be part of a series titled Canadian Stories 1984, produced in cooperation with the NFB Montreal... Moving from the literate to the explicit, Playboy Productions recently completed a three-day shoot in Calgary... CFCN Television in Calgary has picked up a number of national awards: a Can-Pro Gold Award (Entertainment series) for *Home Cookin'*, a Can-Pro Gold Award (Sports Series) for *Stamper Go-Round*, and a Children's Broadcast Institute Award for *The Missing Bear Caper*... Many Calgary actors could be seen in *Chautauqua Girl*, which aired on Jan. 8 on CBC. The two-hour

film, shot on location in the Calgary area, is reported to be the second most popular drama ever produced by CBC, drawing 2.6 million Canadian viewers into the world of the 1920's Chautauqua tent. It also marks a major positive venture by the CBC into Alberta, shooting and casting significantly on location. Two point six million viewers must approve.

And, finally, "Symposium '84, Local Heroes," will be held in Edmonton February 14-17, in conjunction with the 10th Annual AMPDC Awards. "Local Heroes" will focus on the value of indigenous drama and will feature screenings of recent dramatic shorts from across Canada, and screenings, forums and receptions with foreign directors, including, Britain's Peter Duffell (*Experience Preferred But Not Essential*), Oz's Richard Brennan (*Starstruck*), and Canada's Paul Almond (*Ups and Downs*).



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