

E A S T E R N W A V E

by Chris Majka

Somehow, despite all my efforts to the contrary, I suddenly noticed that the summer is almost over and, as usual, despite secret vows I took in the bleak, cold, dark moments of a March sleet storm, I've not spent even half the time in the sunshine and on the beach that I absolutely, solemnly, swore I would. My plans for a relaxed and unhurried summer somehow never materialized. Oh, well... there's always next summer...

The filmmakers I've talked to in the past while are even paler than I. At NIFCO, this could be due either to lack of sunshine or to a heavy coating of plaster dust, as renovations and expansion to the *NIFCO mansion* proceed apace. These renovations have a rather complicated history. The film unit at Memorial University has, during the past year, gone over entirely to video and they have therefore mothballed their considerable collection of film production and post-production equipment. Fears were expressed that it would simply get sold out of the province and this valuable resource would simply disappear.

Fortunately a solution was worked out — NIFCO has now become official custodian of this film equipment for a trial period of two years. It includes an excellent animation stand, a film sound dubbing system, cameras, steenbecks, etc. Obviously a resource worth having. However, the proviso that came with this gift was that the NIFCO premises be upgraded to accommodate it. With this in mind, the summer has been spent rewiring, gyrocing, building an extension on the back of the building and digging up the basement. NIFCO's Elizabeth Hagen told me she was feeling better about the premises now that the windows have frames again and the walls are more or less entire, but that renovations would go on well into the fall.

All this has seemingly not disrupted the steady stream of filmmaking at NIFCO. Jim Maunder has been working on a sound mix for his combination live action and animation film called *Zuchinni*. Ed Riche, whose name and film I have misspelled in this column, is in the final stages of work on *Roland's Progress* and De-

bbie McGee' editing of *The New Poverty* has been interrupted by her having a baby. Congratulations Debbie!

Elsewhere in Newfoundland, Ken Pittman's production of *Finding Mary March* has just wrapped. Ken being a sensible sort, has vanished for a well-deserved vacation and was unavailable for comment. In the meantime, rumour has it that all went very well on the shoot.

Also in production in Newfoundland is a film with the working title of *Pelts*. NIFCO's stalwart Derek Norton is directing this one for the National Film Board of Canada and it's a multiperspective view of Canada's fur trade. It will look at the history, and present state, of the fur industry from the perspective of the Montreal fur market and its commercial furriers; the native hunters and trappers; and the animal rights groups. This documentary is nearing the final stages of production with shooting having been completed this spring and summer in Montreal, Vancouver and the Yukon. Shooting will continue this fall and winter at a P.E.I. fur farm.

In New Brunswick, Fredericton's Capitol Films have finished and released their 82-minute, 35mm feature called *Tuesday Wednesday*. It is a drama about a man who, while drinking and driving, hits and kills a child. The film follows him as he leaves prison and tries to make amends with the family of the dead child and the community. Directed by Capitol shaker and mover Jon Pedersen it stars John Alexander and Liz Dufresne, both of Toronto, and a local Oromocto girl, Penny Belmont. Pedersen took the film to the Montreal World Film Festival where it was shown twice in the Panorama Canada section of the festival. Capitol Films has its eyes open for future projects.

Besides being the home of Capitol Films, Fredericton is also the headquarters of the Conservation Council of New Brunswick (CCNB) an organization that readers of this column may not be well acquainted with. The CCNB, however, is well-known in environmental circles. In the past year it has mounted a major campaign dealing with ground-

water pollution — perhaps one of the most crucially important environmental issues. This interest led CCMB's David Coon to approach Fredericton filmmaker Kevin Matthews about doing a film on the subject and Matthews in turn talked to the NFB. The result is that production is in the very early stages on a half-hour film with the working title of *Groundwater Pollution* which will be produced by the NFB's Atlantic Studios.

A documentary of New Brunswick politician and raconteur Louis Robichaud by Hermangiel Chaisson is also being done for the NFB.

In Nova Scotia the Atlantic studio of the NFB is also busy with production beginning on a documentary on black women in the province. It is being co-directed by Sylvia Hamilton (who also researched and wrote) and Montreal indie filmmaker Claire Prato.

Hubert Schurman from Nova Scotia's Land of Milk and Honey, the Annapolis Valley, has released two films in co-

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