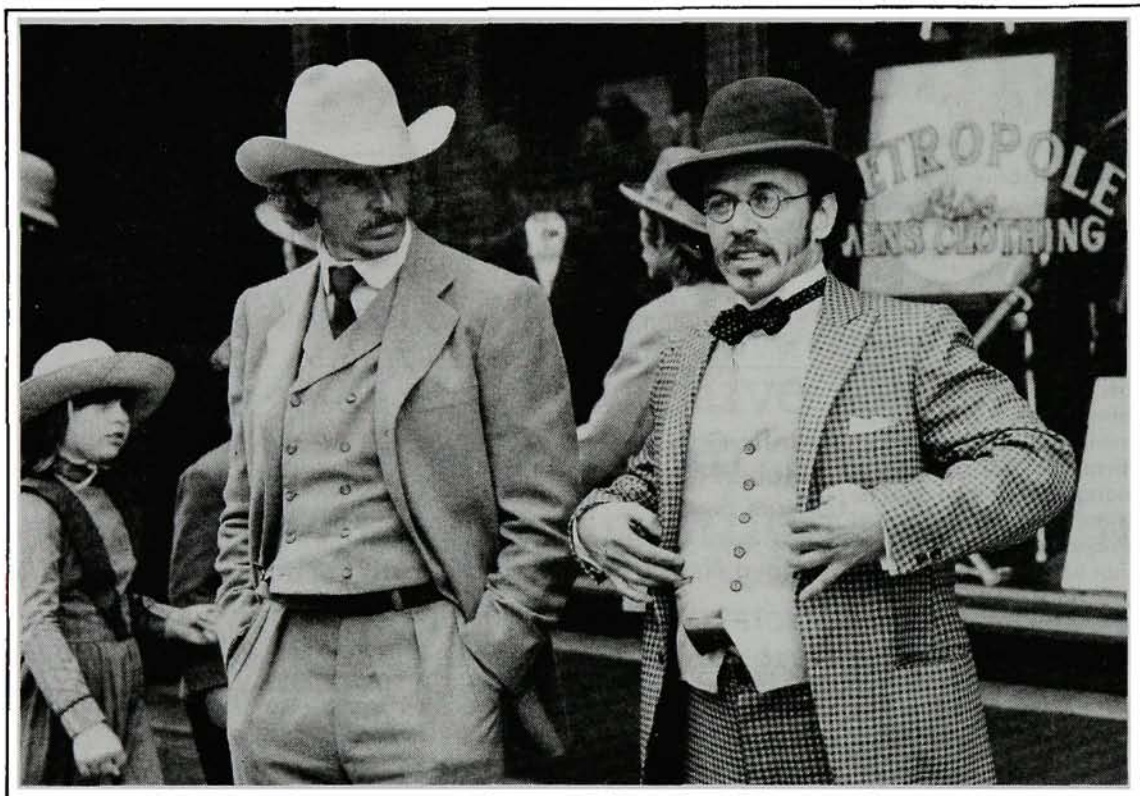


IN PROGRESS...



Dressed to kill? Here, Bruce Dern as **Harry Tracy**, with Michael C. Gwynne (right).

Harry Tracy – Desperado

Harry Tracy — Desperado moved into Heritage Park in Calgary for a week of shooting in November. This western starring Bruce Dern, Helen Shaver, Michael Gwynne and Gordon Lightfoot is based on the story of Harry Tracy, the last of the Hole-in-the-Wall Gang. William Graham directed the \$8 million Ronald I. Cohen Production — which traversed B.C. and Alberta, moving between twelve locations, from Port Alberni to Long Beach to Cathedral Grove to Victoria to Britannia Beach to Squamish to Mission to Calgary to Canmore to Jasper, and finally, to Barkerville. By the time the production pulled into Calgary, the weeks of working and travelling unusual terrain in uneven weather was beginning to take its toll on the energetic company.

Unit publicist Julia Frittaion faded perceptibly during a telephone conversation,

as she fought waves of dizziness. A bug was going through the company, she explained. Bruce Dern was also feeling under the weather that day, and would be unavailable for interviews. A visit to the set revealed the company was gamely carrying on despite its travels and travails.

Heritage Park is a reconstructed turn-of-the-century town located on the banks of the Glenmore Reservoir in south west Calgary. This park, with its tree-lined walkways, restored and transplanted homes, and period train stations, has attracted a number of film and television productions.

However, western film personnel are accustomed to eastern companies breezing into town to shoot a movie, bringing with them everything but the coffee and the horses. It was therefore a pleasant surprise to discover that Vancouver-

based Desperado Productions was travelling with an almost totally western cast and crew.

A conversation with casting director Lynne Carrow (a striking young woman with a straightforward, sympathetic air) revealed that the entire cast, with the exception of Dern, Shaver, Gwynne, and Lightfoot, were from B.C. and Alberta.

"I'm from Alberta, so I knew there was talent here that hadn't necessarily been presented before," she said. Carrow was helped in her quest by Bette Chadwick (of The Other Agency Casting Ltd.) in Edmonton, Larry Parish in Calgary, and by the director himself, American William Graham.

"The director was receptive to using unknowns," Carrow reported. And a look at Graham's past history revealed he has opened that first door for many promi-

IN PROGRESS...

ment actors; Frederick Forrest, Powers Boothe, Jan Smithers, Tommy Lee Jones, and Bruce Dern himself.

The Albertans cast in principal roles include Frank Turner, Jim DeFelice, Jack Ackroyd, Jim Roberts, Fred Diehl and Dennis Robinson. B.C. actors were cast in the remaining principal roles.

On location the lunch hour had ended, and a walkie-talkie message summoned Carrow to another part of the town. Period-garbed extras lined the street, and horses and carriages rattled past, preparing for the afternoon's work in the crisp winter air. It was a strange combination of electronic gadgets, ski-jackets and toques, riders, handguns, and turn-of-the-century matrons.

Set-up for a scene with Bruce Dern and Michael Gwynne (playing the reporter who trails Tracy on his escapades) was in progress in front of the "bank." (This building was apparently constructed especially for the film — in order to be blown up!)

The ski-jackets scurried about on major missions, while the circa 1900 coats and dresses waited patiently against the walls of the corner store, or on the veranda of the stately Wainwright Hotel.

Jim DeFelice was one of those in abeyance on the veranda. Perhaps best known for his work as a screenwriter on **Why Shoot the Teacher?**, DeFelice had recently returned from an engagement as an actor on **Grey Fox**. He pointed out the similarities in the two films, in terms of theme and period, and their overlapping paths in B.C. In **Harry Tracy — Desperado**, DeFelice had "a nice comic role" as the banker. But just then a voice at his shoulder informed him the day's scenes were switched, and he disappeared hastily in search of his script.

In an earlier conversation, Jack Ackroyd revealed that he had been cast as the homesteader Ely Porter, a good dramatic role with a strong scene with Dern. This career coup for Ackroyd (a prominent stage actor), also set some sort of precedent in terms of geography: the company flew Ackroyd to Port Alberni from Calgary for his scene.

When asked if he had encountered any 'geographic' discrimination on the set, he replied: "Heavens, no! People on the set thought I was from California!"

Edmonton actor Dennis Robinson, dressed as a lawman with badge and holstered gun, wandered past, preparing for his first day of shooting as the sheriff of Hell's Gate.

Frank Turner (**Silence of the North**, **Grey Fox**) Fred Diehl (producer/actor) and Jim Roberts (**McPherson**, **Death Hunt**, and **Powderheads**) were not on the set that day.

Through the rattle of carriages and clatter of horses, a familiar figure dominated the street intersection where some of the background action was being carefully choreographed. John Scott, head wrangler, surveyed the scene from his horse. Scott, Calgary-based rancher/wrangler/stuntman, is in constant demand for both Canadian and U.S. productions. He had been with the shoot

from the beginning, while covering **Grey Fox** and the ill-fated **Pure Escape** with his other wranglers. For **Desperado**, he contributed fifteen wranglers and five drivers. He commented: "It's going to be a good picture."

Cy Barry of the Prop Box, had moved directly from **Touch the Wind** to work as a set dresser on **Desperado**. Barry was cheerfully optimistic on the Alberta film scene, maintaining, "Good things are in the wind."

Meanwhile, carriages and wagons continued to clatter through the streets. The crew and director huddled near the reconstructed bank as walkie-talkies granted instructions from mittened hands across the set. Extras lounged on wooden sidewalks in the cold winter sun. One, dressed like a dandy, was asked if he had a speaking role: "No, a fainting role," replied the bank-teller-to-be.

Occasionally, between blasts of the bullhorn, Dern and Gwynne appeared for another take of their brief scene.

A tally of the cast list was encouraging regarding the use of Alberta personnel: six Alberta actors were cast in principal roles, with twenty-one listed. It was less encouraging for actresses: out of twenty-one roles, only five were for women. The crew list, too, was less encouraging; although new Calgarian Trudy Work (as production secretary) joined Scott, Barry, wranglers and drivers from Alberta.

Could this be the beginning of a trend? A B.C.-based film, employing a primarily western team, with a refreshing absence of the usual geographic discrimination?

In the future, will companies from the west pile onto planes for the east, loaded with cameras, total crew and cast, land in Toronto to film, and, as an afterthought, toss a few bones of extra work to the hungry hordes?

A delicious thought, isn't it?

Linda Kupecek

Film Arts Film Arts

461 Church Street · Toronto
Ontario · Canada

Telephones:
962-0181
962-0182

Harry Tracy — Desperado

p.c. Desperado Productions Inc. (1980) **exec.p.** Sid & Marty Krofft **p.** Ron Cohen **co-p.** Alan Simmonds **d.** William A. Graham **sc.** David Lee Henry **d.o.p.** Allen Daviau **p.design.** Karen Bromley **p.man.** Bob Gray **cont.** Christine Wilson **a.d.** Scott Maitland (1st), Bruce Moriarty (2nd), Bruce Cody (2nd), Chris Whiteside (3rd) **cam.op.** Rod Parkhurst, Kurt Peterson (1st asst.) **focus puller** Theo Eglseder **sd.** Rod Haykin **boom** Omero Pataracchia **unit man.** Keith Large **loc.man.** Gordon Mark, Hagan Deggs **art d.** Michael Bolton, David Davis (1st asst.), Dai Moran (2nd asst.) **set design.** David Jacquest **best boys** Della Johnston Dick Fahl-

man **set dec.** Jacques Bredette **p.design.ap-prent.** Jill Stokvis **prop master** Doug Madison **best boy props** Frank Parker **cost.design.** Olga Dimitrov **ward.** Jim Opsal, Veronica Pleuman (asst.) **Dern's dresser** Marc O'Hara **make-up** Linda Brown, Linda Gill (asst.) **hair** Roger Dalglish **sp.efx.** John Frazier, Lee Routley (asst.) **key grip** David Humphreys **gaf.** Hal Trussell **crane op.** Ken Rich **wrangler/gang boss** John Scott **wrangler** Reg Glass **construc.man.** Kenny Chang **lead carpt.** Don Gervais **scenic artist** Gunther Bartlik **p.co-ord.** Cathy Howard **p.sec.** Trudy Work **p.a.** John Graham **p.co.** Jak King **asst.acc't.** Susan King **acc't.sec.** Lorraine Baird **cast.** Claire Walker, Lynne Carrow (asst.) **stills** John Shannon **unit pub.** Julia Frittayon **i.p.** Bruce Dern, William Graham, Alan Shaver, Gordon Lightfoot