

**Climbing the sprockets -**

# Shooting

**- of the film ladder**

## whatever's in sight!

By **BOB PENNYCOOK**

Even though he spends his working hours behind the lens of a camera, filming movies, he still enjoys a night out, watching those same films in the cinema.

"After all, there's nothing like seeing your name up on the screen 20 feet high and 40 feet long," said Mississauga resident Harry Makin.

Mr. Makin is a freelance cinematographer whose credits read like a who's who of the Canadian feature film industry.

His most recent movie effort was the filming of the Toronto-made movie *It Seemed Like a Good Idea at the Time* starring Anthony Newley and Issac Hayes.

Other credits include *My Pleasure is my Business*, with Xaviera Hollander, *A Quiet Day in Belfast*, the *Neptune*

Factor, as well as the television programs, the *National Dream*, *Police Surgeon* and *Swiss Family Robinson*.

"Being a free lancer is a difficult business," he said, "you never know where your next job will come from.

"But I guess I've been lucky."

Since the film industry in Canada is small compared to that in the United States, production companies can't afford to hire full time cinematographers and work mainly with the free lancers.

### CAMERAMAN

"But you always manage to put a little money away for those winter months when you know business will be slow," he laughed.

The cinematographer is perhaps one of the least recognized, yet one of the most important people involved with a movie.

Known as a director of photography or a cameraman, the cinematographer is responsible for lining up the overall camera shots on each "take" of the movie.

"You start by sitting with the director and discussing the budget and the types of shots that could be used, keeping in mind budget limitations.

"For example, if you're filming an army battle scene in a small budget movie, you won't be able to pay for all the extra actors, so you decide on shots that will incorporate only a few people."

The movie is then filmed scene by scene, and at the end of each day's shooting, the

previous day's shots are screened.

"That way we can decide where we went wrong and where we can improve," said Mr. Makin.

Once the filming of the movie is complete, the cinematographer's job is finished.

"Then, once the music, sound effects and editing of the movie is complete, the cinematographer is again brought in to touch up the film in frames that are too dark or too light," he said.

### EXCITEMENT

"The best part of my job is that I'm there at the height of all the excitement.

"I enter the scene once the mechanics of organizing the movie are complete, and I'm finished before the editing work starts."

Mr. Makin started his career in Winnipeg as a commercial artist and still photographer. He applied to the CBC in that city and was hired first as a still photographer, then as a news and documentary cameraman.

"And that switch was difficult to make without any training."

But his expertise in the area grew, and he was loaned to the External Affairs Department as a director of film operations, and sent to Africa for two years to set up a radio and television film

department in Ghana.

He returned to the Toronto CBC where he filmed many Canadian television programs before setting out on his own in 1969 as a free-lancer.

And he hasn't looked back since then.

"I've never refused to

film a movie but I would if I didn't think the film had a chance in the theatres," he said, "or if the script was poor and the people hard to work with."

But he hasn't encountered problems yet in the fledgling Canadian film industry.

"More movies are being produced in Canada now than ever before," he said.

"Maybe once the industry grows, Canadian talent will stop being drained into the United States and we'll be able to produce more first class products in this country."

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Camera at the ready, Mississauga resident Harry Makin films a scene in the movie A Quiet Day in Belfast, filmed in Toronto a few years ago. Mr. Makin is a freelance cinematographer.

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