

SHOOT ALBERTA

by Linda Kupecek

*Natty Gann*, a Lobell-Bergman production, lensed in the Crowsnest Pass area Sept. 8 to 30, then moved back to Squamish, British Columbia, for the balance of the shoot.

Set in the Great Depression, *Natty Gann* traces a young girl's search for her father, as she befriends human and animal in a cross-country trek. Jeremy Kagan directs the script written by Jeanne Rosenberg.

Calgary-based Les Kimber (*Superman III*, *Finders Keepers*) is production manager, with Doug MacLeod, another veteran of those two shoots, as location manager. Edmonton-based Linda Jeffery-Ludlow handled production accounting in the Alberta production office in the town of Blairmore, while Calgary actor Jack Ackroyd was one of the few Alberta actors cast by Lynne Carrow.

William Marsden, director of the Film Industry Development Office for Alberta Economic Development, returned from the set with a favorable review: "The scenery was great and the weather was cooperative."

Meanwhile, *Birds of Prey*, a low-budget *film noir* for the

Montesi-Haynes Company, has moved its start date in Edmonton to Oct. 7.

*Snowballs*, the low-budget ski-ramp blizzarded by schedule and personnel changes and a damaging law suit, is still moving ahead, although with some major alterations.

The Ryckman Films production started shooting at Sunshine Ski Village in the spring, then went into enforced hiatus due to a number of problems (the nature of which vary according to the source) including weather difficulties, as well as schedule conflicts for the major cast.

However, co-producer Mike Baker reports that the film will resume shooting (perhaps in early November) at the CFCN studio space in the converted ATCO warehouse in Calgary, with second unit ski sequences slated for December.

Scheduling has been a problem, particularly since, according to Baker, the company is seeking a replacement for director Ray Arsenault.

Also, the film company is launching a countersuit against

Sunshine Ski Village, which had announced its own suit against Ryckman Films (for nonpayment) in a storm of negative publicity.

Not only has the budget been expanded to \$1.2 million, but now Ryckman Films intends to expand both its personnel (merging with financier John Gordon) and its office space. Meanwhile, the production is climbing back to the ski trail, dependent on negotiations and scheduling.

*Next Year Country*, a half-hour drama written by Don Truckey (*Rough Justice*) is shooting in and around Calgary, and is the first production undertaken by new CBC television drama producer Lawrie Seligman. Randy Bradshaw directs the script, which is hoped to be the first of a series of half-hours coming out of the Calgary station.

Consolidated Theatre Services in Calgary stocks almost one million movie posters, a film buff's dream. The staff of four oversees the 10,000 different posters in stock, plus stills and trailers, the most comprehensive supply in western Canada... Telefilm executive director Andre Lamy and west coast rep Donna Wong Juliani have recently visited the film communities in both Edmonton and Calgary, trying to encourage local producers to tap Telefilm dollars. The meetings and receptions were organized by AMPA... The Calgary Society of Independent Filmmakers premiered *Passion for Philanthropy*, a collaboration between Douglas Berquist and Nowell Berg, in September... Jim Bertram is the new business manager of the Banff Television Festival... Both Bette Chadwick of the Other Agency Casting Limited in Edmonton, and Diane Rogers (once with the Other Agency, now a freelancer) in Calgary, have been casting new projects: Chadwick has been busy with *Bridge to Terabithia*, a one-hour drama for PBS, in association with Allacom and Kicking Horse Productions, to be directed by Eric Till; *Wildcat*, a pilot for Tinsel Media and Atlantis Films; and the above-mentioned *Birds of Prey*. Rogers has been casting beer commercials and *Next Year Country*... Meanwhile, the economy has boomeranged into television. CFAC Television is running a teleplay competition which offers as first prize a possible production of the winning script, payment for same being... a typewriter.

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