

New Travel Film

By Glenn Mays
Travel Editor
RALEIGH — North Carolina's new travel film, "North Carolina: A Special Kind of Splendor" is 28 minutes of scenic beauty, action, history, festivals and a host of other topics put into a neat package.

The finished product, however, doesn't show some of the unusual asides that producers and film makers experiences along the way.

"There were some trials and tribulations in making this film," said Grady Jefferys, co-producer of the film. "But all in all it was a real joy. I think anyone would have to be considered jaded if they did not enjoy putting North Carolina on film as we had the opportunity to do."

Some of the "trials" which Jefferys related could have turned into tragedies but ended on less than tragic notes.

Cinematographers Jere Snyder and Jim Cando of Take One Productions of Raleigh, who combined with Jefferys in putting together the film, will long remember some of their experiences as they crisscrossed the state at least ten times each in just a few short months.

While filming a sunset in a remote spot in North Carolina's mountains the camera fell over. Snyder managed to save the camera from any damage as it fell against a large boulder but it was at the expense of a broken finger. Despite being in the remote spot along he managed to get his equipment back to his van and continue his work.

On the other end of the state Snyder was filming Southport's annual king mackerel fishing tournament from a helicopter when his attention was diverted from his filming. "What are these little pieces of metal flying off the engine?" Snyder asked his pilot.

The pilot managed to bring the craft back to shore for an emergency landing, to find that the craft's transmission was breaking up.

Prior to that mishap, however, Snyder did get some footage of the tournament. One sequence, which eventually made it into the final product shows some fishermen proudly displaying some of their catch for the cameraman. But the unusual and regrettable sometimes happens.

One angler while displaying a large king mackerel saw his hopes for winning the tournament and its \$55,000 first prize literally slip from his hands. His fish, which he was holding high for the world to see, lurched and slipped back into the water and freedom. The angler avows that the fish was larger than any weighed in during the tournament.

Cando recalls vividly an event in eastern North Carolina which also involved some aerial shots being made from a helicopter.

"While we were filming a sequence, I was having to hang out the door of the helicopter," he explained. "The first thing I knew the door's window fell off."

Although he was somewhat startled, the filming sequence was finished and a search begun for the window.

"We looked for it for a little while," Cando said. "But we didn't find it. I'm still waiting to hear about some farmer in eastern North Carolina finding a piece of a helicopter."

Jefferys' wife, Marie, who was production coordinator for the film, also will long remember an experience which occurred during filming of a sequence of water rafting in the mountains.

As the raft heaved and pitched through a turbulent stretch of white water her glasses fell overboard in the froth. While the sequence was complete an hour or so later she decided to return to the spot just to

take a last look for her glasses. To her surprise the eyeglasses has washed out of the churning water and to the shore, unharmed by the ordeal.

To complete the film project, more than six and a half miles of film (roughly 35,000 feet) was shot to be finally edited down to just over 1,000 feet in the finished 28 - minute film.

Even with all the "trials" associated with filming Jefferys speaks enthusiastically about the people who helped to make it possible.

"One thing we learned on the project is that there are so many people who are doing so much to make interesting things happen all over the state," he said. "They participated so enthusiastically in this project and are making a fine contribution to the whole state."

Jefferys added that the film in some cases does not show all the work that was contributed.

"A 30 - second glimpse in the film may have involved two or three hours of filming," he explained. "And some people who participated didn't make it into the film at all. It was not that they were not worthy of inclusion but we just could not get all of them into a 28 - minute film."

"I think we could probably make another film with a whole new cast of characters with a different approach to North Carolina with the footage we did not use," he said.

Jefferys described the project as "a heckuva lot of fun but it was a lot of work too." The film project was completed in nine months in comparison to 14 months for the last state travel film, "The Goodliest Land," which was shot 14 years ago.

"There was a strong challenge to improve upon 'The Goodliest Land' both among ourselves and from many people across the state," Jefferys added. "I hope we have done that."

The producer said the project has taught him a lot more about North Carolina and her people.

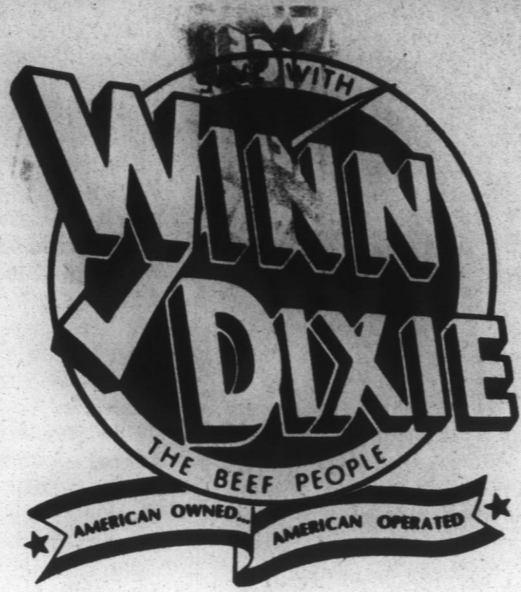
"We are more alike than we are different," he said. "From a fisherman along the coast to a fox hunter in the mountains and many in between we found that the philosophies are similar in each person's love for North Carolina and their desire to see it progress. It drove home an old feeling in a new way."

The film features several North Carolina personalities. Charles Kuralt does a segment on the four seasons in the state. Andy Griffith, who began his acting career as a member of the cast of "The Lost Colony", talks briefly about the nation's oldest outdoor drama and the history it involves.

Fisherman George Bedsworth of Morehead City describes the action of deep sea fishing and Allene Ash does a segment on white water rafting in the North Carolina mountains.

Musical score for the film was done by the North Carolina Symphony and the narration was done by Ernie Anderson, whose voice is well known in many national commercials and in network television.

The new film will be distributed worldwide upon request to groups, theatres, television stations, cable networks by Modern Talking Picture Service, Inc. in Washington, D.C. Inside the state copies of the film or video tapes of it will be available through the Travel and Tourism Division, 430 North Salisbury Street, Raleigh, N.C. 27611.



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