

GUEST PRODUCTION

2008-2009 was a busy year for guest production in Nova Scotia. Chester based production company Big Motion Pictures filmed the Canada-UK co-production *Sea Wolf*. The project was a mini-series developed for German television, adapted from the novel by Jack London. Fox Searchlight Pictures filmed portions of its film *Amelia* in Wolfville and Halifax. Sony filmed a remake of the 1979 *Ice Castles*, co-produced with Nova Scotia's Magic Rock Productions. *No Remorse*, the seventh installment of the CBS produced Jesse Stone series, joined other guest television productions including *Breaking Point* for the Discovery Channel UK. In addition, 14 animated series used the expertise of our local companies including *George of the Jungle*, *Razzberry Jazzberry Jam*, and *Speed Racer* to name a few.

PROFILE: WINDSOR, NS

Windsor, Nova Scotia is well known for many things. The birthplace of hockey, home to historic museums and quaint streetscapes – but who would have guessed that it is also one of the most film friendly locations Nova Scotia has to offer.

Located a mere 35 minutes drive away from Halifax, Windsor has a history of attracting television and film projects such as *The Memory Keeper's Daughter*, *The Tenth Circle*, *Plain Truth* and most recently a remake of the 1970s classic *Ice Castles*.

However, it isn't just the locations that attract film producers time and time again. It's also the people. Windsor's Director of Community Development, Tourism and Recreation, Vanessa Roberts is a perfect example of this.

"Our residents enjoy the excitement of seeing the community transformed into Maine or Pennsylvania. Windsor's proximity to Halifax and its mix of new and period facades attracts directors, producers and location managers to our community," she says.

With locations such as the idyllic campus of private school King's-Edgehill, quaint churches, grand Victorian homes and acres of farmland – Windsor offers an expanse of choices. Roberts also speaks highly about the film crew personnel she often works with.

"The location managers that I know are very professional and respectful. I love working with these folks. Windsor also works very closely with Film Nova Scotia. The Windsor Town Council and staff certainly believe that we must work together to attract productions to Nova Scotia. These productions may not come to Windsor, and that's okay, because we have residents that work in the film industry and local businesses that receive contracts. By working together, we all win," she comments.

According to Roberts, the economic boost generated by a production coming to town is undeniable. She says catering services buy locally, local accommodations are utilized and local convenience stores, restaurants and lounges receive patronage from cast and crew.



"I have found that production companies and staff make every effort to shop local whenever possible, and I believe that this is one of the main reasons that films are welcomed in Windsor. Plus, it's always exciting to see celebrities strolling your streets; residents being offered small parts or extras in film; or just being able to watch and learn how movies are made," she says.

The list of celebrities that have visited Windsor is long and the town boasts a good story or two within its folds. Roberts notes that during the filming of *Songs in Ordinary Time* with Sissy Spacek and Beau Bridges, Mr. Bridges and his family visited Windsor's Mermaid Theatre of Nova Scotia. Consequently, Mr. Bridges partnered with Mermaid's Artistic Director, Jim Morrow, and narrated *Guess How Much I Love You* in 2007.

It is positive experiences like these that have resulted in a glowing and favorable relationship between the Town of Windsor and the local film industry in Nova Scotia.

Even the Mayor of Windsor, Paul Beazley, is hoping to make his big breakthrough performance.

"I think I can safely say that much of what makes Windsor so attractive to producers is the tremendous reception and support they receive from the Town. However, I'm still waiting to secure a leading role for a vibrant, but maturing, small-town Mayor," he comments.