
**The making of an AGS educational film:
from design to production**

GORDON FADER¹, CHARLES DOUCET²,
AND GEORGE JORDAN³

*1. Geological Survey of Canada (Atlantic), Box 1006, Dartmouth,
NS, B2Y 4A2 <gordon.fader@ns.sympatico.ca> ¶ 2. Moonglow
Productions, 1318 Main St. Dartmouth, NS, B2Z1B2 ¶
3. Sonovox Ltd., 25 Summit St., Dartmouth, NS, B2Y 2Z9.*

In our high technology world, one of the most effective ways of communicating science to the non-scientist is through visual media. This can be accomplished by the production of videos/documentary films that are of relatively short duration, preferably about 30 minutes, and of international, national or regional interest. For over twenty years, the Atlantic Geoscience Society has focused on producing videos that satisfy a demand for regional content; not an easy task considering the escalating expense of such productions. The latest, now nearing completion, is about the geological origins and modern history of Halifax Harbour that was conceived over a decade ago.

During the eighties and early nineties, new geological research and technological advances in sea bed mapping revealed some fascinating information about the geological evolution of the great Harbour of Halifax and its role in the settlement of eastern Canada. The bedrock forming the Harbour originated as deep water sediments off Africa. This bedrock, constituting the Meguma terrane, was molded by the last glaciation and that part forming the present Harbour was subsequently flooded during the post glacial rise in sea level. Today's Harbour reflects human activities such as dredging, ship anchoring, use as a disposal site for sewage and other pollutants, numerous shipwrecks, the Halifax Explosion and the footings of old railroad bridges to name a few. Any one of these topics could fill an entire hour of the video, so the challenge has been to present a balanced story while maintaining the interest of the viewer.

We will present the making of the 26 minutes' video from the prospective of the writer, the producer and the narrator. Also, we will discuss the important topics of funding, design concepts, graphics, animation, interviews, filming, production techniques, and the story board. Other concerns, often overlooked, are the need to inject some humour, difficulties caused by bad weather especially when filming on a limited budget, equipment problems, the concept of trespassing, economic repercussions, good timing and luck. And as an added bonus, we plan to screen a short promotional clip.