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The movie that 'came and went'

Published on Friday, February 29, 2008

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One of the final scenes in "Cayman Went"

The cast and crew of the independent movie "Cayman Went" are getting ready to leave Cayman Brac at the end of this week, but they will leave behind an island that has been buzzing with the excitement of being a part of the movie business for the past two weeks.

A story about Cayman Brac, with environmental protection as a major theme, "Cayman Went" has been shot on location since the crew arrived in mid-February, filming scenes around the island, many of them including local Brackers as extras or even with small speaking parts.

"This is the talk of the town and will be for a while," said local businessman Elvis McKeever, who has a small part in one scene shot on Public Beach (look for the guy cooking at the grill).

"Everyone is excited - they're all stopping and looking at what's going on. This is a real good



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story and a good promotion for the Brac," he said. But where did the idea for a movie here come from?

According to Jim Ritterhoff, one of the partners of Cayman Went LLC, the company making the movie, it all began with a few stories and a lot of laughs one night at the Captain's Table Restaurant back in 2002.

Mr Ritterhoff is also a partner of New York marketing and entertainment company, Chowder, and he was on the Brac at the time to shoot part of a television commercial for the Department of Tourism.

That night, he got to chatting with Moses Kirkconnell (now Sister Islands MLA), who told him about some of the hilarious things that happened on the Brac, particularly in the diving community, and they joked about making a television show like Cheers (a popular sitcom) set on the Brac.

Well, that conversation was the spark that inspired Mr Ritterhoff to write the outline for "Cayman Went" when he got home, and later the first draft of the script for a project that has taken six years to come to fruition.

Despite its slow start, production is now intense, and the man with the responsibility for making sure it all goes smoothly is Producer Gil Wadsworth.

Having been on the Brac since early November, Mr Wadsworth has become a familiar face on the island. As well as scouting out locations and generally preparing for the two weeks of filming, he also found local people to appear in the movie.

Mr McKeever he met, where else, but at the Captain's Table, and Garston Grant, the owner of CB Rent-a-Car, who plays the chef at a bar in the movie, he "discovered" when he went to arrange insurance for the rental cars.

"I never did any acting before but I think I can do it okay," he admitted a few days before acting his big scene on Thursday. Not only does he have a part, but his business will also feature in Cayman Went.

In return, Mr Grant said he offered the crew special deals and supported the project wherever he could.

Local dive operation Indepth Watersports features prominently in the movie, and owner Craig Burhart and staff member Carl Nash appear as underwater doubles for two of the main characters.

"It's nice that Cayman Brac can get recognition for having some of the best diving in the Caribbean and for us to be able to showcase some of the beauty of the island," said Mr Burhart.

"It's the biggest thrill to be able to interact with so many industry professionals – these are some of the best in the industry – and they're all so enthralled by the island. I expect all of them to return.

"Because of the excellent standard of photography, when this movie is done it will show the Brac at its best, and people who see the movie will want to come here," he added.

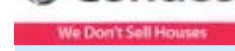
Meanwhile, the very presence of the film crew has been a boon to businesses across the island, especially hotel accommodation and rental cars.

Lenny Neckerman said he and his staff at the Captain's Table have been up at 4:00 am each morning to deliver breakfast to a crew by 5:30 am, as well as lunch mid-day. In the evening, they serve dinner to the group - and drinks at the bar to people coming out to see the stars and meet with the crew.

"Gil has done everything he can to get local people involved," said Mr Neckerman, noting that Brackers of all ages have been given small parts in the movie, from senior citizen Harvey Pierson, known to most as the General, to 11-year-old Jacob Scott.

"There's a guy with a real strong will to get things done," said Mr McKeever of Mr Wadsworth. "He's a fun guy to talk to – down to earth and smooth as ice."

"I am so pleased that the people of the Brac have had this great experience," said Mr Kirkconnell. "This is nothing but good for this island, and I hope everyone from 'Cayman



Went' enjoyed their time on the Brac as much as we enjoyed having them here."

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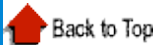
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