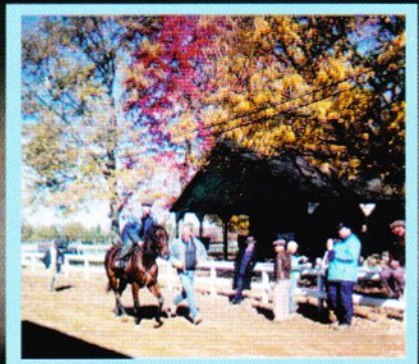


# SEABISCUIT



*Behind-the-scenes  
in Saratoga Springs*





Portrait of Tobey Maguire as SEABISCUIT jockey Red Pollard courtesy of Universal Studios and [www.empirefilms.com](http://www.empirefilms.com). Smaller behind-the-scenes images of Maguire and co-star Chris Cooper (who portrays trainer Tom Smith) provided by Saratoga film extra Joe Cavallo.



# SEABISCUIT

*Behind-the-scenes in Saratoga Springs*

Long before cameras started rolling on the SEABISCUIT set at the Saratoga Race Course and the Canfield Casino in Congress Park last autumn, Linda Toohey had already been working hard behind-the-scenes on the Universal Studios/DreamWorks' project.

**Feature by  
Ann Hauprich**

As Director of the Saratoga County Film Commission and a member of the Association of Film Commissioners International, Toohey played a lead role in the real life drama of preparing Spa City turf for the arrival of the film's cast and crew. While far too modest to take a bow for her performance in the Advance Planning Department, Toohey deserves a standing ovation for her part in paving the way for the arrival of the Hollywood entourage which included co-stars Jeff Bridges, Chris Cooper and Tobey Maguire.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12





Photographer Antonio Bucca caught up with Saratoga County Film Commission Director Linda Toohey as she reviewed some of the pictures she compiled for Universal Studios. Smaller behind-the-scenes photos of SEABISCUIT co-stars Elizabeth Banks, Jeff Bridges, Chris Cooper and Tobey Maguire on pages 10 - 13 provided by Saratoga film extra Joe Cavallo. To read all about the local man's adventures on the set, turn to page 14.



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Jeff Bridges plays Seabiscuit's owner Charles Howard in the new movie. In real life Howard was a highly successful Buick salesman who drove an auto like the one used during a scene with actress Elizabeth Banks who portrays Howard's wife, Marcella. That's Saratoga extra Joe Cavallo (see story page 14) in the foreground. Photo of Bridges with horse courtesy of Universal Studios and [www.empirefilms.com](http://www.empirefilms.com).

Although all 225 or so SEABISCUIT cast and crew members did not arrive in Saratoga until late October, Toohey began preparations several months earlier.

It was March of 2002 when Toohey first received a call informing her that a film adaptation of Laura Hillenbrand's bestselling book "Seabiscuit: An American Legend" about the down-and-out race horse that took three men and the nation on the ride of a lifetime during the Depression was being planned.

Written and directed by Gary Ross and co-produced by Kathleen Kennedy, Frank Marshall and Robin Bissell, the movie co-stars Bridges as the thoroughbred's owner, Charles Howard, with Cooper cast as trainer Tom Smith and a very thin Maguire portraying jockey Red Pollard.

Actress Elizabeth Banks plays Howard's wife, Marcella.

Convinced that Saratoga would be a perfect setting in which to film parts of the rags to riches story, Toohey began the painstaking task of convincing the movie's location scouts they could bet on "The City of Health, History and Horses" to meet their diverse location and accommodation needs.

Selling points included the fact that Saratoga boasts a vintage thoroughbred race course with a variety of rural settings (from the rustic to the palatial) within a five-minute drive from the vibrant downtown core. The presence of nearby Oklahoma training track and scenic Congress Park -- complete with fountains, gardens and the historic Canfield Casino -- just off Broadway was another lure.

It didn't hurt that Robert Redford had starred in two now classic films in which parts of Saratoga County had served as backdrops for some memorable scenes ("The Way We

Were" in 1972 and "The Horse Whisperer" in 1997) and that parts of "Billy Bathgate" -- co-starring Dustin Hoffman and Nicole Kidman -- had been filmed in The Spa City around 1990.

Those experiences helped earned the Saratoga County Film Commission a reputation for being both knowledgeable and flexible. The fact that Saratoga (dubbed "Hollywood Northeast" by many in the industry) also offers full-time assistance to production companies at no additional cost was perceived as another "plus." Complimentary scouting and photography services helped to sweeten the deal.

While those services might sound simple, the scouting for possible SEABISCUIT locations resulted in Toohey, who is also the Executive Vice-President of the Saratoga County Chamber of Commerce, taking thousands of photographs of everything the



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region had to offer in terms of scenery and buildings.

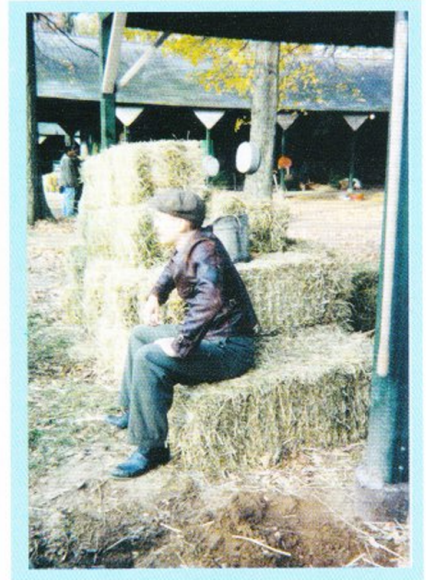
"Scouting for film locations is one of the few parts of the industry where back to basics is preferred over technology. Movie makers don't want to receive digital images via email; they want volumes of location picture files taken with a 35 mm camera and presented in a highly specialized way. They are not sold by glitz, but by the product itself."

Over the next few weeks, Toohey logged hundreds of miles not just snapping photos of barns and backstretch scenes, but at times winding up on remote -- even desolate -- terrain. One day, she unwittingly happened upon a bumpy dirt road and overgrown fields she didn't previously know existed.

Everywhere she went on behalf of the film commission during March and April, the former editor and publisher carried both a notepad and camera, snapping pictures of subjects from every conceivable angle and distance and sometimes, with different lighting.

"Directors, producers and set-designers are incredibly detail-oriented . . . I tried to capture every nook and cranny of places like The Canfield Casino and The Clubhouse at the track on film so they could see, in advance, exactly what we had here."

The photos were subsequently cut and pasted on boards the old-fashioned way to



create incredibly detailed panoramic views.

In July 2002, Toohey was asked to investigate what the availability of rooms at four downtown hotels and the Casino would be during the autumn months in case the cast and crew were to be dispatched to The Spa City.

Ultimately, all parties stayed in hotels in downtown Saratoga Springs (at the Holiday Inn, The Prime Hotel and Saratoga Arms.)

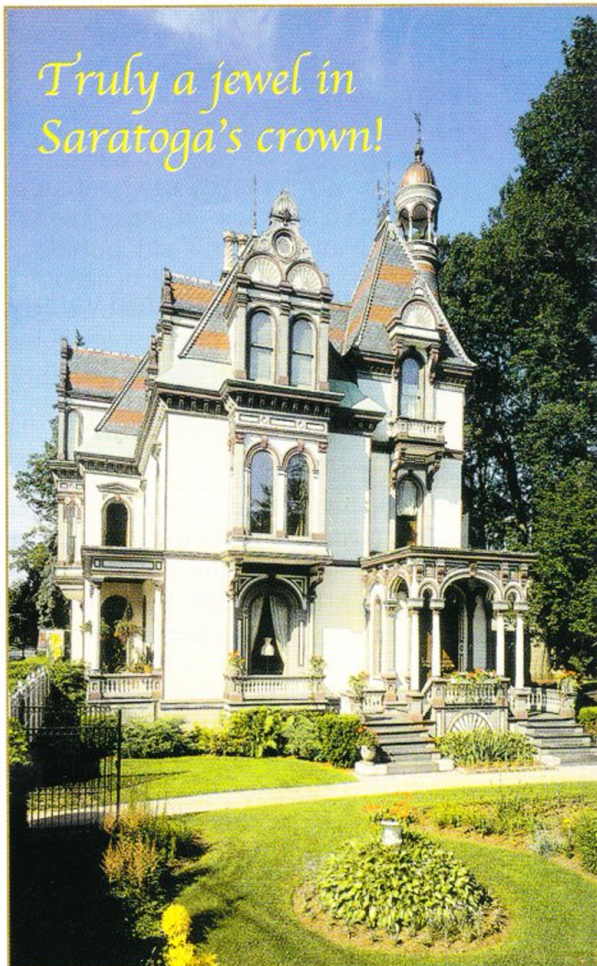
On August 12, 2002 -- at the height of the 2002 Saratoga Racing Season -- Toohey took time to give SEABISCUIT producers, directors, designers and art directors a guided tour of the prospective Saratoga County filming locations.

Over the next few weeks, Toohey was asked to perform a broad variety of tasks and services from researching costume and prop rental possibilities to securing warehouse space

and ironing out any potential scheduling conflicts with the Canfield Casino, a frequent setting for weddings and other galas.

By Labor Day Toohey was calling major hotels in downtown Saratoga Springs to inventory space for October and November. Next came meetings with police and fire chiefs and Public Safety Commissioner and the business of securing the necessary permits for the various filming locations.

Continued on page 89



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### National Museum of Racing to host gala SEABISCUIT premiere

The East Coast Premiere of Universal Studios' SEABISCUIT will be held at the National Museum of Racing and Regal Cinemas on Wednesday, July 23.

Timed to coincide with the opening of the Saratoga Racing Season, the gala evening will begin at 5:30 p.m. with a cocktail reception and buffet dinner at the racing museum. This will be followed by the 8 p.m. premiere of the movie at the Regal Cinemas inside the nearby Wilton Mall.

It is important to note that one cannot simply opt to show up at the theater for the showing. The ticket covers everything -- there's no separate price for the "premiere". Reservations at \$150 per person for the reception, dinner, and premiere are limited. Call 584-0400 for reservations.

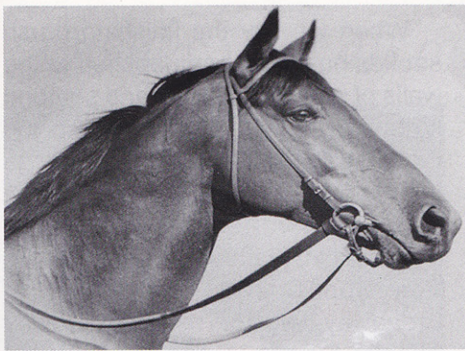


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Tobey Maguire, Chris Cooper and Jeff Bridges co-star as Seabiscuit's legendary jockey, trainer and owner. Photographs courtesy Universal Pictures and [www.empiremovies.com](http://www.empiremovies.com). Inset (bottom right) shows movie director Gary Ross with Jeff Bridges on the set of SEABISCUIT. Above is a picture of the real thoroughbred who inspired the film that debuts this summer.



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 13

Toohey was also charged with putting out a call for extras and corresponding with food vendors, caterers, late night bars and restaurants, launderers and dry cleaners, health spas and fitness centers, clothing stores, local theaters . . . you name it, she did it!

Explains Toohey: "Once the Saratoga County Film Commission convinced (Universal Studios and DreamWorks) to use Saratoga to film some of the SEABISCUIT scenes, our next effort was to ensure that they patronized our Chamber of Commerce members while in Saratoga."

It was a good thing, too, as the financial stakes were high. It is estimated that during the several days the cast and crew were here, they pumped an estimated \$2-million into the local economy.

Prior to coming to Saratoga in October, the cast and crew of SEABISCUIT had filmed scenes in California. When filming wrapped up here in early November, they journeyed to Kentucky.

What few had anticipated was just how cold it would be in Saratoga County in late October. As temperatures plunged to unseasonably cold levels, many of the out-of-towners found themselves dashing out to purchase winter coats, hats, scarves, gloves and footwear.

At press time, the two hour and 20-minute epic had not yet debuted, but Toohey was confident as soon as she caught her first behind-the-scenes glimpse of some scenes that the SEABISCUIT movie was destined to be a blockbuster.

Describing the credentials of producer Kathleen Kennedy and writer/director Gary Ross as "impeccable", Toohey says it was clear from the get go that this venture, partially funded by Steven Spielberg's DreamWorks, was bound for cinematic glory.

"Everyone involved in the project worked incredibly long hours and there was the highest degree of excitement -- and professionalism -- on the set," notes Toohey.

"Of all the projects I've been involved with during my 23 years with the Film Commission, this is the one I feel most strongly will make it to the Academy Awards. It is, without a doubt, the best movie ever shot in Saratoga. SEABISCUIT is a winner!"

Any bets on how long it will be till they begin filming one on that OTHER unlikely thoroughbred from The Funny Cide of the Track?



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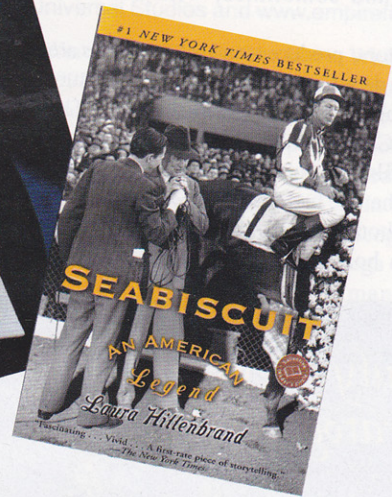
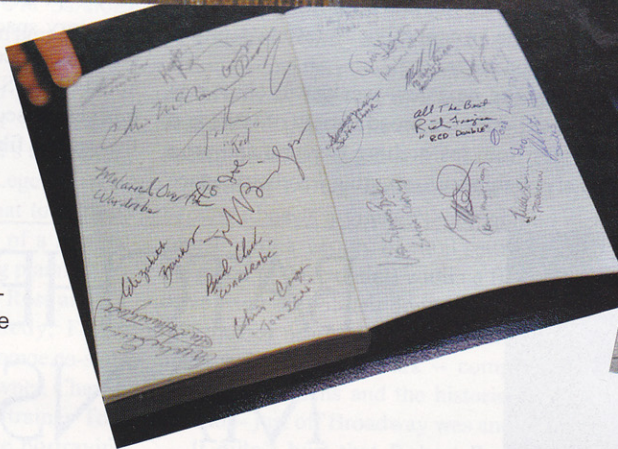


# Extra! Extra!

Read all about  
this extra-  
determined  
SEABISCUIT  
extra!



Photographs of Joe Cavallo on Wilton Mall carousel and with autographed book by Laura Hillenbrand taken by Ann Hauprich. Photo of the extra (in fedora) with others on the Saratoga set of the new SEABISCUIT movie provided by Joe Cavallo. For more on Cavallo's behind-the-scenes adventures, please visit [www.saratogaliving.com](http://www.saratogaliving.com).



In Italian, Joe Cavallo's last name means "horse." And, if he were of the thoroughbred variety, this Cavallo would surely beat the odds and find his way inside The Winner's Circle.

If there's one thing the Saratoga SEABISCUIT extra will be remembered for by the film's cast, crew and fellow extras, it's how he persevered until he secured the autograph of each and every major player on the local set.

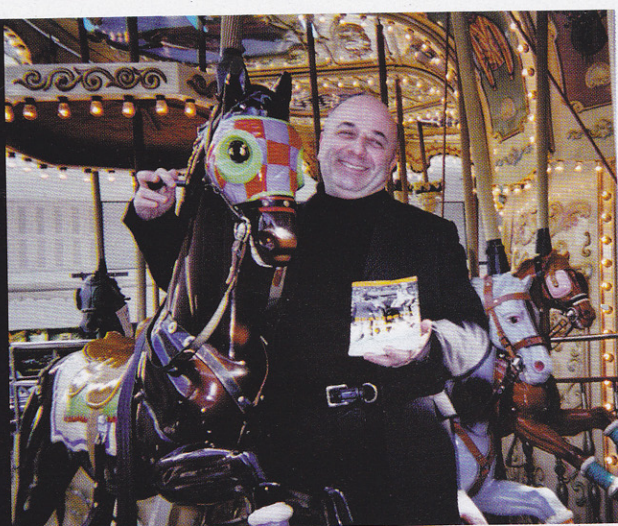


The Saratoga resident, who had to shave a moustache that had been his trademark for 20 years in order to be cast as an extra last fall, succeeded in securing the autographs of SEABISCUIT co-stars Elizabeth Banks, Jeff Bridges, Chris Cooper and Tobey Maguire and other celebrated figures on the Saratoga set.

Each person signed the inside covers of Cavallo's personal copy of "Seabiscuit: An American Legend" by Laura Hillenbrand. When the last autograph -- that of Maguire, who portrays Seabiscuit jockey Red Pollard -- was inscribed, Cavallo had garnished a rare collection that many, himself included, would describe as priceless.

Cavallo looks upon the signatures inside the book much the same as he regards the rarest gems enclosed inside cases at the Glennpeter Jewelers shop where he is employed.

*Go, Joe! You can bet he had to race to get the best "Seabiscuit" celebrity autograph collection yet!*



Cavallo's adventures as an extra-special extra began when local casting liaison Lisa Burke crossed his path because their children were going to a school formal together.

"Lisa mentioned what she was doing for SEABISCUIT and I told her I'd always wanted to be in the movies. So, as what I thought was a joke, she told me to stand against a wall in my house and she snapped a picture of me. When I got a call a few days later telling me I'd been chosen as an extra, I thought they were kidding; I couldn't believe it."

Before long, the happily married father of three was being outfitted in 1930s attire that included vintage trousers, complete with button pants with loops and suspenders, topped by a three-quarter length coat and a fedora. When the moustache that had taken him 20 years to perfect was shaved, Cavallo truly looked the part he was cast to play.

During his first day on the set, California jockey Rick Frazier (who plays Maguire's double) was filmed in an equine action scene. "Next they shot Tobey riding the horse while Jeff Bridges (who portrays Seabiscuit's owner Charles Howard) and Elizabeth Banks (who plays his wife Marcella) checked the horse out..."

It's the day when Seabiscuit is "discovered" by his future owner and from where Cavallo was standing, it was "a truly authentic Saratoga scene" that moviegoers will no doubt come to regard as a pivotal moment in the Universal Studios/DreamWorks production.

Cavallo's job during that shoot was to walk up to the rail with a 1935 racing form just as the horse was going by with Tobey in the saddle.

The next morning, they shot the character Red Pollard being dragged by a horse across the Oklahoma track.

"The afternoon shoot -- which took about four hours -- concentrated on Red lying on the ground with a broken leg. In that scene, my job was to rush up to the injured jockey from a distance of 10 to 15 feet away and then quickly back off as this 1936 Packard ambulance comes flying down the lane."

The vehicle used for the ambulance was bought and restored for about \$30,000 by a Connecticut family.

The next day, Cavallo recalls, temperatures dipped to unseasonably cold levels with the result that he and fellow extras "froze our butts off."

It was, he says, so cold during the shoot that many were pleading for space heaters

when Hall of Fame jockey Chris McCarron took a seat among the extras and "just hung out without complaining."

After that, it was somehow easier to bear the frigid air, Cavallo asserts.

Most days, he says, everyone on the set put in long days -- not just from dawn to dusk, but long after darkness fell.

One scene filmed late at night left an indelible imprint on Cavallo's memory.

"What they were trying to do was recreate the ambiance of daylight in the early morning hours. They brought in tons of smoke and the guy who was spraying it kept adding more smoke, more smoke . . . until they filled the whole track with it. It was an incredible shot. It looked just like it does in those late August, early September, mornings at the track."

Cavallo should know. He worked at the track when he was a kid and vividly recalls that there was a big fog hanging over everything, as if the sun had risen, but he couldn't really see anything yet. And slowly, as it started to get lighter outside he could hear the faint sound of hoofbeats in the distance.

Producer Kathleen Kennedy was there and she asked me: "Is this how it was?"

It was -- and will now be part of film history -- along with Joe Cavallo.

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