

Movies Filmed at SML Help Bring Tourists to the Lake

By Emily-Erin Robinson Monday, March 7th 2016

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Today is the 50th anniversary of Smith Mountain Lake being declared a full pond.

The picturesque setting has served as a backdrop for movies.

Our Katie Brooke spoke with the Chamber of Commerce about the lasting effect these movies have on the economy.

The 1991 film, "What About Bob" was the first to be shot on Smith Mountain Lake.

It's the tale of a successful psychotherapist who goes crazy after one of his patients track him down during his family vacation.

The movie named the lake, Lake Winnepesaukee, a fictional place.

But that doesn't stop people from realizing the actual location and wanting to visit it for themselves.

Annette Stamus Stul, the Marketing and Communications Manager for the Smith Mountain Lake Regional Chamber of Commerce said,

"We still get people coming in here now, 20 years later, or something like that, that ask about it."

The Smith Mountain Lake Regional Chamber of Commerce says it's movies like "What About Bob" and another, "Lake Effects", which airs to this day on the Hallmark Channel, that bring lots of traffic in.

Annette Stamus Stul added,

"The people that come here from all over the country, they're coming here to eat, coming here to stay, to rent boats, they come here and use all of our businesses."

And it's not just the actual movie filming that brings various people to the lake.

Annette Stul says multiple celebrities call the lake their second home.

As for who they are, Stul laughingly said,

"They would kill me if I let that out."