

Herbert Pieper

Jefferson's Hidden Wonder Graduate Documentary Film

The Natural Bridge is a fantastic hidden story in the Blue Ridge Mountains. The 15-minute film will follow the cultural history of the Natural Bridge, starting with myth of how the Native Americans found the Natural Bridge, the founding fathers era of the bridge, then the current state of the Natural Bridge Park. The film opens with the narrator telling the Native American story of the mist dissipating from the bridge while showing the shots of the Monacan village and interviews. Some of the shots will include the barricade of the village, the tribe council hut, a normal living hut, and some of the trading and craft centers of the village. Then tell the natural events that caused the bridge by showing the caverns then the current gorge.

The first section will focus on the Monacan Indian people that found the bridge after fleeing a rival tribe and coming across the gorge on a misty morning. When the warriors knelt down and prayed the mist dissipated and the Bridge Appeared. The Monacan Indian tribe named it the Bridge of God. After the event the tribe continued to lived in the area. The film will show the culture and living habits of the Monacan Indians as well as have interview footage of historical researchers of the Natural Bridge.

The Second Section of the film will focus on how Thomas Jefferson bought around 157 acres of land that included the Natural Bridge from King George II of England for approximately 20 Shillings. While showing features of the Natural Bridge trail the film will go over how George Washing served the bridge and how it was a major tourist center for guest from Europe and friends of Thomas Jefferson. The shots will include the Natural Bridge, Salt caverns, creek shots, Mountain shots, and trail shots that surround the bridge.

The Third Sections of the film talks about the late 1800s and the peak of European travelers to the Natural Bridge. During this century The Natural Bridge was one of the Seven Natural Wonders of the World and the centerpiece for many forms of art from paintings to literature in novels.

The Final section of the Film is this talking about all the new features of the Natural Bridge hotel and caverns that will allow future generation to still come to see Thomas Jefferson Natural Wonder of the World. This section of the film will include shots of the hotel renovations and the community center that visitors would see when they come to visit.

The purpose of this film is to give the viewer a visual aid, as well as an in depth academic look into one of the most hidden secrets of Virginia and Virginia's History. This project is the product of the new History Department and Cinematic Art Departments new Historical Documentary Tracks aimed for producing public history. Documentaries, a form of public history, are currently the most watched form of digital media on Netflix and Hulu. This research his conducted on the principle of creating a work that can be view my a large audience and inform the public of the Natural Bridge while uphold the quality of research that would be found in a Graduate paper or text. The film will be summited to film festivals and after will be uploaded to the Natural Bridge historical societies webpage.

I wish to show a poster that will represent the different areas of the research in the film, as well a portion of the poster showing the importance of public history and finally have my film run on a near by laptop.