

Telewhovians rejoice at travelling exhibition

Who needs Trekkies when you've got Telewhovians, otherwise known as members of the Kasterborus Club. Or in plain language, fans of Dr. Who.

Who?

That's right.

Dr. Who is the witty title character in a tacky-looking but mysteriously captivating British serial that also happens to be the longest-running sci-fi show in history — almost 24 years now.

Although your average Canadian knows beans about it, the show (which airs Fridays at 10 p.m. on Cable 3) has amassed a major cult-style following of 110 million viewers in 60 countries.

Every week Who fans tune in to watch the sixth (soon to be seventh) Dr. Who dash around in his ship, the Tardis, all over the cosmos — and back and forth in time — defeating evil characters with intergalactic street smarts and bringing truth, decency and a pleasant British accent to obscure corners of the universe.

Cheap look

If you're figuring that such a loyal group must be attracted to fancy-schmancy special effects, forget it. The look of the show is, to put it charitably, cheap. Props are improvised out of inner tubes, old shoes or hot water bottles.

And Who himself has a long shelf life. According to the story line, the hero has a few extra lifetimes to spare — a feature that has made it possible for new actors to take up the role without bothering about physical resemblance.

All of this, of course, is part of Dr. Who's peculiar charm for fans, who have their own 50,000-member fan club and newsletter, and who will soon be flocking (well, busing,



On Air
Doreen
Martens

actually) down to Fargo to experience the Whovian lifestyle for themselves.

Police have agreed to block off the street in front of Prairie Public TV's offices in Fargo July 22 to accommodate a huge BBC exhibition trailer in the midst of a 185-city tour.

Devoted to Who memorabilia, the exhibit comes with show personalities and enough gadgetry to send your average Who fan soaring to Betelgeuse and back.

According to PPTV's Allan Dregseth, visitors to the exhibit first get to walk through a "Tardis", an acronym for Time And Relative Dimensions In Space. Technically, Dr. Who's Tardis should be able to change its shape to fit in anywhere, but on a trip to Earth suffered a broken chameleon circuit and was forever locked into the shape of a British police call box.

Then there's a mockup of the ship's control panel, and a long series of special effects displays featuring various monsters and creepies from the show.

There's Gastropod-Nestor, for example, a giant nasty "dissolved" by the sixth Dr. Who. And Mutt, "a disfigured insect-like mutation." And Sontarans, creatures who feed on energy and are really strong, except for their vulnerable point — the probic vent at the base of their necks. Yecch.

A guest from the series, not yet

announced, will be on hand to host question-and-answer sessions and sign autographs.

Those attending will also get to tour the '48 Whomobile which is filled with Who artifacts, view special video documentaries on the show and, naturally, pick up Who T-shirts, mugs, bumper stickers and so forth.

Dregseth expects a good turnout, especially among club members, who get a discount off the \$7.50 admission. A bus tour organized from Winnipeg is already half full. And why not? If you've watched the Doctor travel light years to "save the Earth" once more, what's a few kilometres?

SHORT WAVES . . . Speaking of PPTV, the station recently switched on a new \$100,000 transmitter. It's hoped the equipment will eliminate those awful lines that sometimes screw up the picture in spring and summer. . . . Well, nobody can say TV mogul Ted Turner doesn't think big. His latest project involves inviting all countries recognized by the United Nations to contribute pieces to a global newscast to debut in October. To be broadcast over Turner's Cable News Network Sundays at midnight, the show would include reports from news organizations on subjects the groups "determined to be important", and would be anchored from the United Nations in New York. This could get wild. But Turner may not have such a bad idea, in view of calls for a "new world information order" on the part of developing nations who feel they are either unfairly stereotyped or simply ignored by the Western-based news organizations that dominate the world media.