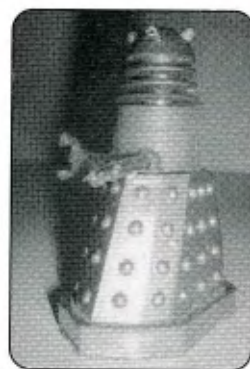


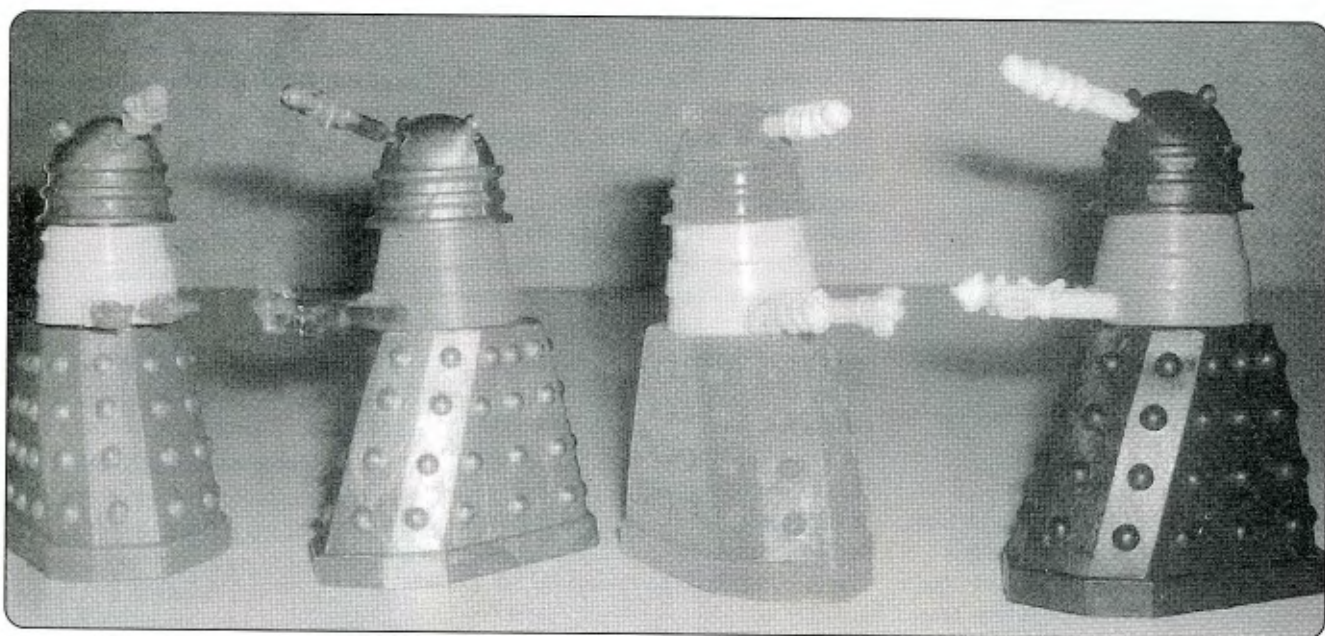


Cherilea Swoppet Daleks

by Matthew Thair and Steven Smith



Firstly I must thank Steven Smith who must have the most complete and large collection of Swoppet Daleks on the planet. It's like a mini invasion army. His diligent collecting has unearthed a huge amount of information previously unknown to **Plastic Warrior**. Also thanks to another Who collector, Mick Hall, for the two publicity/trade items shown in this article. Steve's collection can be seen on www.richardwho.com.



Like my earlier article on Cherilea Swoppet Knights, this article came from a desire to find out what was available in the range and the excitement of finding a huge amount of variation in what we had assumed was a single figure with minor colour variations. Here is a little insight into the subject by Steve Smith:

"The Daleks first appeared on our television screens on 21st December 1963 and were an instant hit. They sealed the success of Doctor Who and the series never looked back. By public demand the Daleks returned in a second story in the run-up to Christmas 1964 ('The Dalek Invasion of Earth'), even though the Daleks had been killed off at the end of the first series ... the Daleks could not be exterminated!

As early as December 1964 discussions were underway to bring the Daleks to the Big Screen in colour, and the first Dalek film premiered in London's Oxford Street on 24th June 1965. And so the scene was set for Dalekmania: Dalek Christmas 1965.

For those of us old enough to remember, it can never be forgotten. If it could be marketed with a Dalek on it, or in the shape of a Dalek, then it was produced: slippers, punchbags, pencils, spinning tops, wallpaper, snowstorms ... the list was seemingly endless. Cherilea stepped in with a competitively-priced Dalek toy, available loose over the counter at Woolworths for one shilling, and it was an immediate hit with the children, desperate to build up Dalek armies as cheaply as possible."



We believe that the designer for these figures was Cherrington as the style fits and the release date of the mid-1960s is prior to the arrival of Ally Gee. These figures sit very comfortably with the other first series Swoppets from Cherilea, the arms are exactly what you would expect from this period of production. We have no evidence of window boxed items with other items included but Mick Hall has some interesting advertisements showing boxes with Daleks on and a possible single box illustration. Like other figures of this period it is safe to assume that they were supplied in the generic counter display boxes like the other Swoppet ranges.

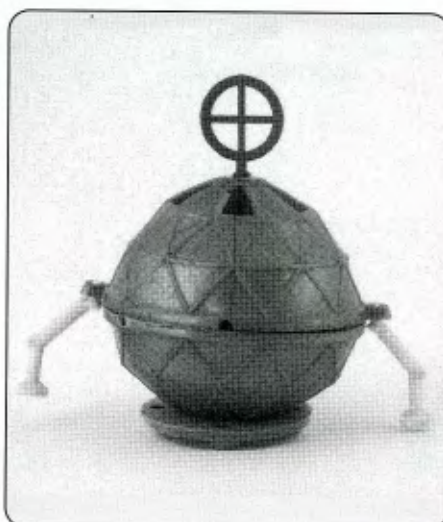
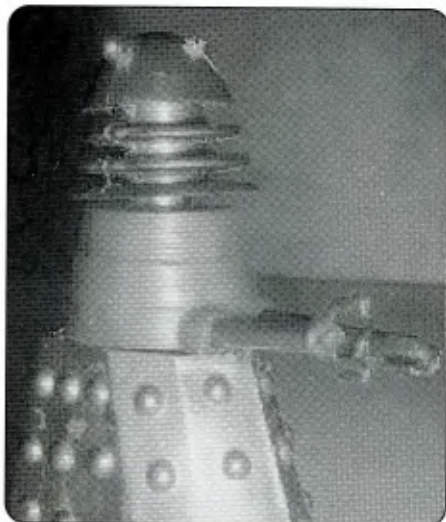
Cherilea first released the Dalek in the mid to late 1960s. The basic model was a representation of the TV Dalek. This came in three pieces: the top that is plain with the two lights and three raised bands going round it; the bottom which has angled panels with four raised bobbles per panel. The base holds the plug that the middle ring and the head attach to: this is in a matching colour to the top. The middle ring is in a contrasting colour and rotates. The ring has a raised band and the holes for the arms are on the lowest section. The ring sits a little forward of centre on the bottom body section. The body was available in black, silver, gold, blue silver, light green and light blue. The rings were produced in light blue, red, green, yellow, orange and black. All these colours do vary in shade.



The eye that fits into a smaller hole in the head section has a finer arm than the body attachments. This comes in two types, one with an eye and three rings and one with an eye and two rings.

The body arms come in three common types but there looks to be more than one mould. This would fit with many other weapons from other makers where many shots of the same item come on a single sprue. This is to make the mould cost effective but does lead to minor variations of the items. The three are an arm very similar to the eye-piece, being a round top with three rings behind. The second is a blaster arm with four ridges at the end with a single ring behind. The third is similar to the second but with only two ridges at the end and these are slightly wider on some versions. The third also comes in an open format with the two ridges being hollow. This arm always reminds me of a food mixer attachment so it must be the cook Dalek.

The second body type is the one shown in the **PW** Cherilea Special. The bottom half of the body is the same as the other version and the ring is also consistent. The difference is in the head: this has larger lights and makes the complete model a little taller than its TV counterpart. It has three rings under the top piece and a thinner middle so that there is a deep overhang on the rings. This we are lead to believe was a movie version from the first film with Peter Cushing. This has turned up in only three body colours: silver, silver-blue and gold. Another interesting point is that the 'movie' version turns up with faults on the head, which could be a reason there are two types. If the original was the 'movie' version it would fit that the later version was in direct consequence to a moulding issue. The last explanation of the different versions is that one was made at the Kirkham factory (where the Action Man toys were made) and the other was made in Blackpool (the soldier factory). If anyone has a definitive answer to this, please let us know.



Another special feature of this variation was the pincer arm. Another slight variation available in this version is a mottled plastic version of the weapon arms. This again is similar to the multi-coloured plastic used on the Cherilea Swoppet Knights and on Hilco figures.

As far as rare colours are concerned there are the usual 'odd' colours where any colour plastic was used at the factory and not the designated colours due to an oversight or delivery problems. This has come up time and time again when speaking to employees of the various toy companies of the time. This does mean that these are the most difficult colours to find: grey centre sections and white arms are in this bracket.

Of the standard colours in the bodies, light blue is far and away the scarcest, and grey the commonest. Of the centre sections and arms, yellow and orange turn up most often; black and light blue are more sought-after.

Also available was a spaceship that came with the Swoppet spacemen. This is very similar to the Mechanoids from Doctor Who. We are not sure that it was meant to be used in this way as the parts also fit together to make a crude Lunar Module. The body was made in two halves with a triangle pattern on the surface. It has a hole at the top to take an aerial; this is a circle with a cross in it. The body came in silver but other colours have been seen and seem to match the Dalek colour variations. The body has two rings half way up which can take two of the legs if you want a Mechanoid. At the base of the globe is a circular platform with four holes to take the legs. If all the legs are fitted to the piece you get the Lunar Module. The legs are tubular with a 'knee' half way down and a pod foot. Lastly a ladder came with this item, further fuelling the idea that this was a Lunar Module and not a Doctor Who piece. As with all Cherilea articles, if someone knows of a boxed example or any additional information, please let us know.

One again, with some investigation, Cherilea comes up trumps with great ideas and a wide and imaginative use of the moulding. It always astounds me to discover the depth and variation produced in the underrated Swoppet range from Cherilea. What a shame they did not produce any other Doctor Who figures.



PLASTIC DALEK FIGURES

CHERILEA TOYS of Kirkham, Lancashire have brought out a model replica of the "Dalek." These are in various colours, and are obtainable at stores and retail shops at 1s. each. The great feature of this line is, that at the low price of 1s. armies of Daleks in varied colours can be arranged with tremendous play-value to children.



Manufacturer: **CHERILEA TOYS LTD.,**
Sunny Bank Mill,
KIRKHAM, Lincs. *Tel:* KIRKHAM 3073-4