"I certainly never dreamed Doctor Who would go on this long," says Sydney Newman. "I'm enchanted that people are delighted by it."

Sydney Newman, the veteran creator of such classic British television series as Doctor Who and The Avengers, is determined to prove Trivial Pursuit wrong. The popular board game features the question, "Who created Doctor Who?" To Newman's chagrin, his name does not appear as the answer.

"When you flip the card over, it tells you Terry Nation," he observes. "Terry Nation created only some of the episodes involving the Daleks. I am now on my 15th letter to the game's owners trying to get them to rectify the mistake!"

While Trivial Pursuit may not choose to believe it, Newman actually created the Time Lord when he was head of drama at the BBC in 1962. Doctor Who was one of 726 different drama programs he oversaw each year.

Back then, as is true today, the BBC absolutely ruled the Saturday afternoon ratings with its massive sports coverage. In 1962, a children's series of classic dramas under the guidance of Newman's department followed the sports programming. The number of viewers, understandably, plummeted after each final score.

"It was brought to my attention that I could not dream up another children's series which wouldn't lose BBC the ratings. I dreamed up Doctor Who."

Newman identifies his life-long interest in science fiction as his main influence in creating the series. Born in Toronto on April Fool's Day, 1917, he vividly recalls spending his childhood years exploring the worlds of Jules Verne and H.G. Wells. As he grew older, his tastes broadened to include more contemporary authors like Arthur C. Clarke and Isaac Asimov.

Before Doctor Who, Newman created Out of This World, a series of science-fiction adaptations of the work of his favorite contemporary authors. Boris Karloff hosted each episode.

However, it was his childhood favorite, H.G. Wells, whose Time Machine inspired Doctor Who. Newman, who was impressed with the notion of a time machine, designed the Doctor's vessel to travel into the past, future and outer space, so episodes could have historic, science or science-fiction storylines.

"The trick was always the vehicle to carry the time machine," explains Newman. "I selected a police telephone box because it was the most common object in England. It was on every street corner. Every child, every adult, knew the police phones. That was the TARDIS.

As for the Doctor himself, Newman describes him as "everybody's grandfather—crotchety, complaining, slightly senile and occasionally very brilliant."

"I dreamed up this old man of 70 years of age who fled from a distant planet in a time/space machine. Being so old, he is somewhat senile and doesn't know how to operate his machine.

"He lands on Earth where he is picked up by two school teachers and a child on a foggy night. He leads them to his home, which is this box, and inside it is a vast spaceship. "They take off and the rest of the series dealt with these Earthlings trying to get back to Earth, the old man trying to get back to where he came from and no one knowing what to do."

Seeing that Patrick Troughton didn't want to portrayal of the Second Doctor as an incredibly old man, Newman suggested he act "like a Charlie Chaplin tramp from outer space."
Verity Lambert, one of the series' early producers, had to fight off both aliens and Sydney Newman in her defense of the Daleks.

how to operate the machine. They end up in ancient Rome, on the Moon, Mars or wherever."

No Monsters

Newman considers the companions as necessary touchstones for the audience to accept each adventure. "They were always up against things they didn't understand," he says. "It was through the experience of Doctor Who that they gain a greater understanding of what went on in the past and what's happening in the future.

"Many parents said it frightened their children, but I figured most fairy tales were frightening stories. The children knew this was fiction and fantasy."

The criticism nonetheless continued, often coming from within the BBC. Finally, Huw Wheldon, the director of all BBC programs back in the early 1960s, called an open meeting and put an end to the matter, by giving his testimony in support of the show. Newman fondly recalls him saying, "I have a four-year-old kid who puts a wastepaper basket on his head and runs around saying, 'Exterminate, exterminate.'" The issue was never raised again within the BBC.

Newman himself made it a policy to bar "bug-eyed monsters" or alien races that he deemed implausible. "To me," he explains, "that was cheap science fiction. One of the series' original intentions was to be as accurate as possible."

The Daleks nearly became one of the earliest victims of Newman's ban. By the time the Daleks came on the scene, Verity Lambert, Doctor Who's producer, was fully in charge of the show and Newman caught their first appearance on television. "I saw this thing come up and I was livid," Newman remembers. "I phoned Verity Lambert and bawled the hell out of her."

Lambert, however, wasn't about to bury her Daleks. Meeting Newman in person, she explained why the Daleks should remain on the series. Recalling their meeting, Newman says, "We had a terrific row. She explained that the Dalek was not a bug-eyed monster, but a human being of a very advanced society. The Dalek's brain was so large that their bodies were atrophied and they had to have these metal casings to support their brains."

"It was a pretty slim story she gave me! The ironic thing was that it was the Daleks that really captured the audience's imaginations," says Newman. "The Daleks are what made the Doctor Who series leap from being popular to extremely popular. All over the country, people talked about the Daleks, particularly the shows in which the Daleks captured London."

Lambert's contributions were not limited to the Daleks alone. She was responsible for casting the First Doctor, portrayed by William Hartnell, a decision Newman calls "just wonderful."

"For years, Bill Hartnell had played the part of a very nasty sergeant in the situation comedy, The Army Game," explains Newman. "He played the part of a real bull sergeant bawling everybody out."

"Making him an old man, the Doctor, was a good idea. It was such a wonderful change from what he had been playing before. He was a very well-known actor and it was a very oddball part for him to play. I loved him!"

New Doctors

After three years, Hartnell departed the role. While the Doctor underwent a regeneration, a process Newman doesn't recall creating but admits was necessary to explain the facelift, a new actor was sought for the Time Lord. Unlike the casting of Hartnell, Newman took an active role in choosing the First Doctor's replacement, Patrick Troughton (STARLOG #89).

"Patrick was a very interesting actor," comments Newman. "In fact, in some ways,

Although Newman banned bug-eyed monsters from the series, Barbara (Jacqueline Hill) still found herself on "The Web Planet," watching a Zarbi battle a Menoptera.

he had a reputation for being a considerably more serious actor than Bill Hartnell. Bill was largely identified with sitcoms and things like that. Patrick was performing Shakespeare and some pretty heavy roles. We picked him because he was a good actor and could play a character part."

Unfortunately, Troughton initially had trouble capturing the role, explaining to Newman, "I'm not Bill Hartnell!"

"I knew he couldn't play the part of a 760-year-old man," says Newman. "He didn't look it and he didn't want to play it. I devised that he play it like a Charlie Chaplin (continued on page 64)"
tramp from outer space. That’s why he has the kind of funny walk, shrug shoulders, baggy, baggy pants and large shoes. Oddly enough, he only got a real handle on the part when I explained it to him in that way.”

Newman prefers both Troughton’s and Hartnell’s interpretations of the Doctor, although he admits to being somewhat prejudiced. Newman does not approve of the present-day change in the Doctor’s character and personality.

“Frankly, I think the series is a bit of a bore,” he observes. “The Doctor has become pretty infallible. He’s too damn intelligent and too damn smart.

“What was lovely about the original Doctor Who is that he failed from time to time. He was slightly smile. Patrick Troughton was sort of innocent. Therefore, the Doctor made mistakes. The humans with him had intelligence. When you make the character god-like, nothing can go wrong except stupidity on the humans’ part. That, to me, is lousy drama.

“It’s like making a movie about someone who’s crazy. A crazy person can do anything he wants and get away with it. There is no drama in that.”

Newman also feels that the series has suffered because the characters rarely go back to the past. “That was part of the educational content—contemporary people living in the past, knowing what our history was like. I think they’ve gone in for too many dragonish characters from outer space.”

He was, however, surprised when the series was put on hiatus last year. “Actually, I’m quite mystified,” he reveals. “I don’t know what is in their minds!”

The Doctor Who fandom continued to support the show through its hiatus, and Newman is appreciative of the audience’s attention. “I’m delighted,” he remarks of Doctor Who fandom. “I’m enchanted that people are delighted by the show.

“I certainly never dreamed Doctor Who could go on this long. And the fact that it has pleased me enormously. It’s a miracle.”

Presently, Newman is in England trying to raise $4 million. “I am doing a six-hour miniseries, Bloomsbury: Private Passion, Public Good, based on Virginia Woolf, Leonard Woolf and John Maynard Keynes—this incredible group of English people were very influential in terms of the arts and economy of England and the world. I am also working on a Benjamin Britten opera for young people called The Little Suite.”

While these projects may sound far removed from the science-fiction shows Sydney Newman is noted for creating, he has actually built his reputation in England on doing very earnest, serious drama. He says of Doctor Who and The Avengers, “These two series, to use the Yiddish word, were kibbitzes on my part. They were fun.” Pausing for a moment, he adds, “They were the wilder side of me to send up the world.”

Barrett

(continued from page 18)

al, we have Cocoon on the walls everywhere. He has grown up as a regular kid. We’ve tried to raise him without the idea about Star Trek and Dad and that kind of thing. Up until now, other kids didn’t understand so it wasn’t too difficult. But as he grows older, they’re going to understand much more and it’s going to be more difficult to deal with.

“I was never recognized in public. It’s 20 years later, I’m 20 pounds heavier and no one knows me. Gene has become known but he’s not a household name so we can get out and go pretty much as we like, except at a convention.

“I remember several episodes at the early conventions where they had to have a human wedge bring you through. The fans would murder to get at you, and that kind of fervor isn’t around unless Leonard walks down a hall somewhere. It’s tiring when everyone is coming up to you. You don’t want to offend anyone because they’re all so friendly, nice about it, but it’s wonderful. They usually want to say, ‘I love you,’ and how can you ignore that?”

The devotion people have towards Star Trek remains unabated and continues to surprise Barrett wherever she goes. Shortly after wrapping her role in the new film, she visited the magic kingdom called Industrial Light & Magic. “I was up in San Francisco at a STARLOG convention and I took that opportunity to go and see ILM. They were so nice and gracious and they showed me the new Enterprise. It sat there and they threw 29 switches and I wish you could see this thing. One of the things I heard was that they didn’t like the ship because they couldn’t light it. But it looks gorgeous! It’s about 12-13 feet. And on the left-hand side, there is something I don’t recall ever seeing photographed before, a forest and the gardens where you can get your fruits and vegetables. It’s all there! You can look right in and see everything. I never saw a picture do it justice.”

Bags packed, Barrett sits in a chair and sighs. It has been a good weekend for Lincoln. She enjoyed talking with the fans and showing a crisp black and white print of The Cage. But now it’s growing late and she has time to relax before the flight. Reflective, Barrett comments, “I hope that Star Trek keeps affording us a comfortable living. And if Star Trek V comes along, I would love to be along with the other seven. If that is not to be, which is probable, that’s life. They’re painting themselves into a corner with the above-the-line costs going up with each picture. Wouldn’t it make more sense to start all over? The TV series makes sense but Bill Shatner wouldn’t do it again, Leonard wouldn’t do it again, I don’t think De Kelley would do it again because that weekly type of thing is your entire life. You have 12-14 hours a day and you do nothing else. That’s a terrible chunk to take out of your life. Put me there, I would be fine seven days a week. I wouldn’t mind, but Christine Chapel isn’t that important to the Powers That Be.”