

you
can't
prepare
for
where
the
truth
will
take
you

8MM
EIGHT MILLIMETRE



Some standard 8mm stock
and a selection of 8mm films with camera



The advent of being able to take one's own "home movies" can be traced back to 1923, when the Eastman Kodak Company developed a system of film-making equipment that would both be affordable and easy to use for the consumer market. The result was the release of the 16mm format. Whilst this was much smaller and more manageable than the professional 35mm format, the new 16mm equipment was still extremely expensive – \$335.00 for both the 'Cine Kodak' camera and the 'Kodascope' projector, and this at a time when a new Ford car would set you back \$550.00!

With 16mm proving to be so expensive, Kodak realised that they needed to develop a truly affordable and simplistic format that would be within the reach of the amateur market and, as a result, 'Cine Kodak Eight' was launched in 1932. The basis of the new format was a 25-foot roll of 16mm film, which had been perforated with twice the usual number of sprocket holes. The roll would be loaded into the camera with the leading edge placed in a take-up spool. The camera would then expose one half of the 16mm frame, shooting two 8mm frames on each single frame of the 16mm stock. When the end of the roll was reached, the camera would be opened and the reel reversed, thus allowing the opposite side of the frame to be exposed (akin to how cassette tape is used today). When sent for processing, the laboratory would split the developed film down the middle, producing two lengths of 8mm footage, which would then be spliced together and placed on a 50ft reel and which would run for approximately four minutes at 18 frames per second. Initially, the new film stock was only available in black and white, but in 1936, Kodachrome colour film began to be made available to the public.

The new format, known variously as Double-8, Regular-8 or Standard-8 was a great success and by the 1950s, home moviemaking was becoming an increasingly popular pastime, with 16mm largely becoming a format for the 'serious' amateur or semi-professional.

In 1962, Kodak proposed the idea of a new 8mm format. Although producing good results, one of the problems with Standard-8 was that it had been derived from 16mm stock, which meant that a large proportion of the 8mm frame was taken up with sizeable sprocket holes.

The new format, entitled Super-8 was launched in May 1965. Rather than relying on a single reel of 16mm film, Super-8 would utilise one continuous piece of specially produced 8mm film stock. One of the main advantages over its predecessor was that the entire reel could be encased within a plastic cartridge, eliminating any need to thread the film and flip to over half way through shooting. The size of the sprocket holes was also greatly reduced and repositioned in between the frames rather than in the middle of them, as they had been with Standard-8. The effect of this was to increase the overall frame size by some 50%, improving the definition of the projected image.

However, the new Super-8 cartridge system did have one drawback when compared with its forebear. Due to the fact that a roll of film needed to be loaded, Standard-8 cameras featured a proper film gate, which helped to keep the film steady and in position. With the new Super-8 format, a plastic pressure plate was built into the cartridge, which could sometimes result in the film moving from side-to-side slightly whilst being exposed, causing the image to occasionally weave and jiggle.

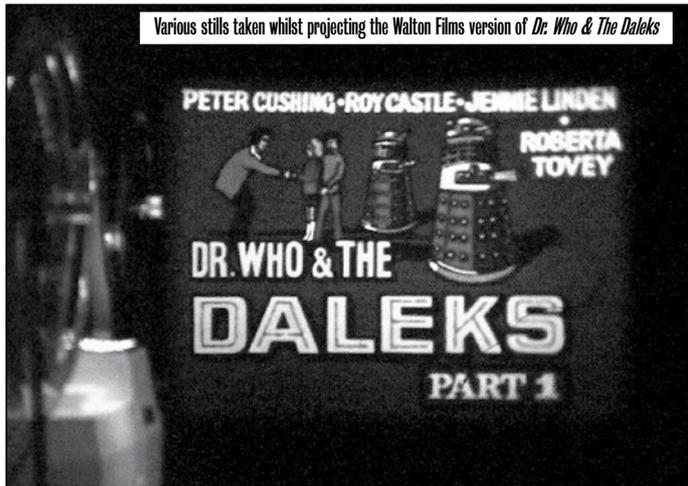
Up to this point, all 8mm film stocks produced had been silent, but in 1973, Kodak added a thin stripe of magnetic tape onto one side of the frame, and produced the first Super-8 sound cartridges.

From the 1950s through to the early 1980s, 8mm cine photography was a very popular hobby, but with the advent of home video cameras, general interest in the format began to decline, as people moved over to the convenience of recording onto tape rather than film. Whilst many other manufacturers have pulled out of 8mm film stock production, Kodak still produce both colour and b/w cartridges for enthusiasts, although market pressures forced the discontinuation of 8mm sound stocks in 1987.

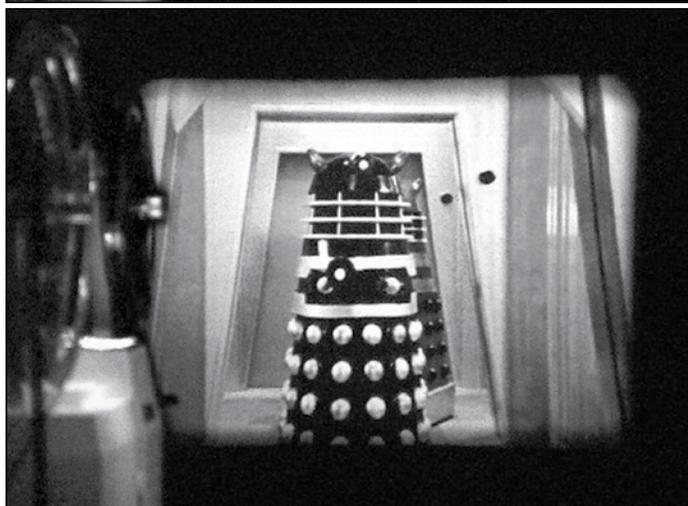
Nothing at the End of the Lane

As well as making their own films, enthusiasts could also buy and collect 8mm reduction prints from a multitude of cinema releases, cartoons and documentaries, and it was in this format that *Doctor Who* made its only commercial 8mm transition in the form of the two 1960s Amicus Dalek films.

In 1977, Walton Sound and Film Services of London released both *Dr. Who & the Daleks* and *Daleks Invasion Earth 2150AD* in a number of different formats. The complete films available on colour/sound stock could be purchased on 8 x 400ft reels at a price of £133.00, but far more popular however, were the edited versions of each feature. In common with many commercially available 8mm prints of the time, abridged versions of both films were also released spanning two 200ft reels. As well as being available in colour/sound at £16.33 per reel, a black and white, silent version was also released at only £5.49 per reel. To make up for the lack of dialogue in these silent versions, caption cards were inserted at relevant points in the action indicating the salient parts of the script. The two films were marketed by Walton up to their demise in 1983.



Various stills taken whilst projecting the Walton Films version of *Dr. Who & The Daleks*



DR. WHO AND THE DALEKS

- PART 1 Doctor, Susan and Ian enter city to Thals escape following Temmosus' death
- PART 2 Alydon and Doctor examine map of Dalek city to "That's my lucky number!"

DALEKS INVASION EARTH 2150AD

- PART 1 Tom recovering consciousness to Doctor, Tom and prisoners walking into the Dalek saucer
- PART 2 Meeting in shed at mine workings to final destruction of mine

As well as the various releases above, the complete film of *Daleks Invasion Earth 2150AD* was also released in compressed Scope format. When projected through a special lens, the full widescreen version of the film could be enjoyed. Finally, a 50ft Scope version of the original trailer for *Daleks Invasion Earth 2150AD* was released in colour/sound by Derann Film Services Ltd.¹

Although the two Amicus Dalek films were released on 8mm, in common with virtually all British television,² no commercial release of BBC produced *Doctor Who* episodes was ever made. However, at some point in the 1980s-1990s, a number of episodes were temporarily and unofficially "borrowed" from the BBC and private 16mm negatives were struck from them. From these negatives, a number of 16mm prints were made, which still occasionally turn up for sale at various comic marts, memorabilia fairs and internet auction sites up and down the UK. A short time later, several Super-8 reduction prints (b&w/sound) were made from these pirated 16mm negatives. It is certainly known that 8mm prints of *The Chase*:6, *The Evil of the Daleks*:2, *The Web of Fear*:1, *The Wheel in Space*:3 and *The Invasion*:6 were struck at this time and it's quite possible that others were made as well.

By the 1960s and 70s, 8mm cine photography was as popular with the general public as the concept of camcorders and video recording are to the masses today, with the equipment offering the user to chance to make their own permanent record of whatever events captured their interest (even if it was only in four minute segments – the duration of an 8mm film!). It is for this reason that 8mm could hold a potentially undiscovered goldmine of interesting material for *Doctor Who* historians. Whilst Walton enjoyed commercial success with the Dalek films through mass duplication, evidence shows that private filming has preserved unique material that would otherwise not exist.

Broadly speaking, this material can be split into two different groups, namely the filming of the programme's production either on location or in studio, and the filming of transmitted *Doctor Who* broadcasts from a domestic television screen.

FILMING OF DOCTOR WHO'S PRODUCTION

Unlike the finished episodes, with the multiple world-wide sales they incurred, the actual production of an individual *Doctor Who* story was very much a one-off event. By and large, during the 1960s and 70s, 8mm cine cameras were brought for much the same reasons that people invest in camcorders today – in order to keep a permanent moving record of noteworthy events in their lives such as weddings, holidays, new babies etc. That said, the advent of a *Doctor Who* film crew arriving in one's village and filming a television programme in their locality was fortunately deemed enough of an interesting occurrence to occasionally warrant someone turning up with a loaded cine camera and committing the day's events to celluloid.

Story: **THE DALEK INVASION OF EARTH**
 Format: Standard-8/colour/silent
 Duration: 1' 50"
 Date Filmed: 23 October 1964
 Filmed By: Carole Ann Ford
 Current Owner: Carole Ann Ford



Comment: On her final day at work on *Doctor Who*, Carole Ann Ford took her cine camera into Studio 1 at Riverside and filmed the shots of her fellow artistes on the Dalek control room set during the costume rehearsals for *Flashpoint*, the last episode of *The Dalek Invasion of Earth*. However, due to the mechanics of Standard-8 filming (as discussed earlier), the footage was accidentally double-exposed. After being loaned to the Restoration Team, the footage was transferred onto video at the BBC, and 60 seconds of the least affected footage appeared as an extra on the DVD of *The Dalek Invasion of Earth*.

¹ The 8mm film trailer is still available from Derann Film Services – www.derann.co.uk

² Various Gerry Anderson productions such as *Supercar*, *Fireball XL5*, *Stingray* and *UFO* did make the transition to 8mm as did a couple of ITC releases (Department S).