

Hold on to your hoverboard: 'Back to the Future' is now (Update)

October 21 2015

Welcome to the future. October 21, 2015 is the date "Back to the Future" professor Doc Brown and Marty McFly journey to in their time-traveling DeLorean in the second installment of the much-loved movie trilogy.

The world as imagined by director Robert Zemeckis—with hoverboards, self-lacing sneakers and flying vehicles—seemed a long shot when "Back to the Future Part II" came out in December 1989.

Fans of the series are marking Wednesday's landmark date by celebrating some of the predictions that came true in the futuristic saga—and some that didn't.

The films follow the time-travelling adventures of young Marty, a teenager living in small-town America in the 1980s played by Michael J. Fox. He sets out in a DeLorean car converted to voyage the space-time continuum by his eccentric inventor friend Doc Brown.

"I was a teenager when the film was released. I remember thinking it will be fun to watch it later when I have a family," said Brad Russell, founder and president of the Washington West Film Festival, which is organizing a retrospective on the series in the suburbs of the US capital.

Welcome to Hill Valley

Russell is organizing a marathon screening of the three films, which came out in 1985, 1989 and 1990. Many other movie theaters are doing likewise.

He even managed to get the town of Reston, Virginia outside Washington to change its name for the duration of the festival.

A billboard that reads "Welcome to Hill Valley"—the fictitious town where the film takes place—is to greet collectors of DeLorean cars expected for a parade on Sunday.

A documentary by Jason Aron entitled "Back in Time" also debuts Wednesday in the United States, in which the film's stars talk about its impact on popular culture.

In California, where the movies were filmed, some 200 fans, many dressed up as Marty or Doc Brown, gathered at a Burger King fast-food restaurant where the young hero grabs onto a pick-up to speed his skateboard ride to school.

"Watching this movie as a kid time and time and time again, I've never even thought about this day in the future," gushed Toby Fulp, 38, dressed up as Doc.

On Saturday, "Back to the Future" buffs in Hollywood will be able to party at the "Enchantment Under the Sea," the high school dance where Marty's parents fall in love in 1955 in the first film of the series.

Delighted fans in Santiago, Chile, watched as one of the DeLoreans used in the films was turned on and spread its wings at the city's Museum of Fashion, which also displayed a leather jacket and white sneakers that Fox's character wore in the movie.

In Canada, the government also decided to get in on the fun, issuing an official recall notice on the DMC-12 DeLorean which it said had a problem with its "flux capacitor" that could impact its time travel abilities.

Even the White House jumped into the anniversary, organizing online debates with specialists on the question, "What does 2045 look like?"

Marketing gold

"Prediction is a fun conversation we are having," Russell said.

Some are still being worked on, such as increasingly sophisticated prototypes of the famed hoverboard and dog-walking drones, which also feature in the film.

One joke that has long gone unnoticed outside the United States resonates big-time for Americans: the success of the Chicago Cubs baseball team.

In the second installment of the series, the team known affectionately as the "lovable losers" wins the 2015 World Series.

And now to the surprise of many, the team is in this year's playoffs, one step away from the Series—which they last won way back in 1908.

Several companies are also cashing in on the "Back to the Future" anniversary.

Nike is releasing a version of the self-lacing Nike Mag shoes that Marty wore in the movie, and Pepsi will sell limited-edition "Pepsi Perfect"—Marty's soda of choice in the blockbuster series.

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