

Megatheriums for Breakfast 2

A fanzine published for ANZAPA and others
by none other than...

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...who should know better.

As I was saying when I was so rudely interrupted... I can't imagine anything worse than being the Chairman of a World Science Fiction Convention.

Chorus of "Who is this guy?" "Oh, not him again!" "Isn't he the fellow who..." and sundry noises off.

Well, yes, you're right, it is him again. It seems that fanzine publishing is one of those annoying habits that you can never quite shake off. As Mark Twain (or would it be Marc Ortlieb?) said: "Giving up publishing fanzines is easy... I've done it hundreds of times."

And here I am back in ANZAPA, of all places! You know, I have to say with all due humility, that the old lady is looking a little ragged and feeble these days. Only 15 members, and mailings of less than 50 pages... I remember the halcyon days of ANZAPA, when we had 30 members and half a dozen people on the waiting list for over a year, when mailings were regularly 200 pages or more. Back in my day... Umf! Snuggle! Gmph!

Got him! Silly old bugger would have gone on for hours. Tie that gag tighter, LynC, or we'll never have any peace.

(Time passes...)

All right, Clive, you can let him free now, I think he's learned his lesson.

Mmmph! Gasp! Ahhh!

Well, actually I did read somewhere that ANZAPA these days was a refuge for the boring old farts of fandom, so I figured this would be just the place for me. But now I have read through a sample mailing, it seems that the rumours were wrong. Most people here can't be all that old, or I would know their names.

Anyway, enough gratuitous insults from me. I'm back, and you'll just have to put up with me.

Brief resume for those who haven't a clue who I am, and quick update on the last six years for those who do.

I am now 40 (definitely boring old fart territory), happily married to Sue and father to Katie, who is now 9 years old, and landlord to Eccles the cat (yes, I know it's an awfully silly name) and more recently to Queenie, Blackfeathers, Houdini and Minnehaha, not some strange tribe of Amerinds, but our chooks.

We still live out here in Research, in the house my parents bought out of sheer desperation when they arrived in Australia in 1965. It's improved a bit since then. At least now it has a roof, and we've taken out the tram windows. Funnily enough, though, it had chooks then, too.

I'm still working, (though for who knows how much longer if Mr Packer gets his way) for David Syme and Co. Limited, publishers of "The Age", where I've been for the last 7 years.

I've had a funny sort of career, if you can call it that. A couple of years working in Public Relations; four years doing clerical work; eight years as a journalist working for the Department of Trading Racehorses and then Telecom Australia; two or three years as a Videotex Manager (whatever that is) for David Syme; more recently as Resident Computer Boffin and Self-Taught Programmer for the same organisation.

Brief digression. One of the interesting (or maybe simply one of the depressing) things about getting older is that the early parts of your life start to sound - especially to those young people born after the Moon landing - like ancient history. I think perhaps that recent generations are going to feel this more than did our parents or grandparents, simply because of the pace of change has been so great in our lifetimes.

I mean, what will these young people think when I recall how, as a boy, I remember the lamplighter coming along the street where I lived, with his ladder over one shoulder, to light the gas lamps? They'll probably think I'm making it up to add colour to my conversation. Or worse still, they might believe me, and conclude that I was a contemporary of Queen Victoria. Sometimes it actually feels like that, and I'm only 40. How will it feel when I'm nudging 80?

End of digression.

And then there's My Brilliant Fannish Career (which Went Bung six years ago).

It seems amazing, but I started publishing fanzines twenty-one years ago. Carey Handfield and I joined ANZAPA for mailing number 9, with a collaborated, illegible, boring and utterly forgettable fanzine called GHOP? The title was the best thing about it.

I seem to remember having been OBE of ANZAPA for one year at least, and President once or twice. Oh, and I was Chairman of that thingy, you know, the one we don't mention in polite company.

I always enjoyed publishing fanzines, you know. But there always seemed to be these conflicting demands: people wanting me to write fiction and suggesting that I couldn't publish fanzines and write at the same time; people wanting me to "just help with the bidding publications for the WorldCon..."; people suggesting that there were other, more serious and important things in life.

Well, fudge to all that. At the age of 40 I reckon I've earned the right to do what I please, and what I enjoy. Stopping publishing fanzines didn't mean I got a sudden rush of enthusiasm for writing fiction. On the contrary, it just dried up my creative urges. "If you don't use it, you lose it" applies to most things in life, I think.

Werl, it's a...!

Speaking of getting old, in some areas time must stand still. I had taken a few days off work, and Sue and I decided to go the movies.

It seems that the Cinema Centre in Reservoir (not to be confused with Research) puts on a special session for the mums of school-age kids. It starts at 10.15am with a feature-length film, then lunch, then another feature, finishing at around 2.30pm, just in time for the mums to get back for the kids coming out of school. At \$10 a head including lunch, it seemed like a pretty good deal.

The film we were going to see was "Shirley Valentine", with Pauline Collins, a movie which I can now recommend very highly. It was on with "Dad", starring Jack Lemmon, a real weepy and far too long, but still worth watching.

But the real story is about the movie theatre and what we found when we got there. Reservoir is directly to the north of Melbourne, and is a relatively run-down, somewhat impoverished area which hasn't yet become trendy due to the lower house prices, but at the same time isn't so run down as to have become a slum.

We arrived in Reservoir, hunted around for a car park, and ended up deciding to park in the New World supermarket's park, on a patch which appeared to be ground cleared by the demolition of some building. At any rate, there weren't any signs to indicate how long we could park there, so we felt fairly safe from getting a ticket.

We walked to the cinema, and handed over our tickets, receiving in turn a voucher for the lunch. As we entered the cinema itself, we were greeted by the strains of music. It took me a little while, as we found ourselves a seat, to work out where it was coming from.

I don't know how I could have missed it. Up on the cinema screen were whirling blobs of red and blue colour, the result of placing some kind of mixture of coloured fluids in a rotating slide over the projector lens. And sitting in pride of place on the stage before the screen was a genuine Wurlitzer electronic organ. It was a huge instrument, with about a zillion knobs and controls, all white with gold-painted fret-work. Playing this monstrosity, seated on a stool arched above a complete octave of foot-pedals, was a woman with hair piled high on her head, wearing horn-rimmed spectacles, a black woollen jumper and pink Lurex tights.

Her repertoire included such modern delights as "Pennies from Heaven" and "Give my Regards to Broadway". I sat entranced, with my mouth open. The whole effect was added to by the fact that while the majority of the sound appeared to be coming from the Wurlitzer itself, occasionally some key that the organist hit would result in tinkling bells or other effects

which appeared to come from speakers placed at random locations about the theatre, far away from the organ itself. And all the while the psychedelic colours swirled on the screen.

It was like something out of the 1950s, and unbelievably funny. I sat chuckling all the time, and getting dug in the ribs by Sue, for now the audience had filled up: lots of mums, but more old age pensioners and disabled people.

Then after a while I started to wonder about how they were going to get the Wurlitzer out of the way. Although it didn't cover much of the screen, it would be slightly in the way from a number of places in the audience. Perhaps, I thought, it's on castors, and they will just wheel it out of the way?

Then there was a signal to the organist (the spotlight blinked out for an instant), and she turned the music to her farewell piece. As she began to play this, I suddenly realised what was happening. The entire organ, organist and all, was slowly sinking down into a hole on the stage! As she sank, she turned and waved to the applause of the audience.

It was too much. I broke up, and Sue kept punching me and hissing for me to shut up. I only managed to stifle my guffaws as the light on the organ finally went out as it disappeared into the abyss.

Haven't had so much fun in years.

AND NOW... THE MAILING COMMENTS SHOW!

Bury My Soul at Exit
#63
Weller

"Distance lends enchantment", they say. Is this what explains your fanatical devotion to Aussie Rules football, a game I find little or no interest in despite living in the very heartland of the code?

But then, sport of any kind has never attracted me (probably due to my complete inability to play any sort of competitive sport without kicking the ball through my own goal at least once a match).

The only sport I ever admit to watching is the World Cup Soccer. Once every four years is about my limit. Perhaps also there's some mystique and macho-ism (pun intended) about staying up till three in the morning to watch Sierra Leone thrash Argentina. There were some good moments in the last World Cup, but the final was totally boring, which let the whole thing down a bit.

I enjoyed "The Keyboard Prayer" very much, and I liked your spontaneous response of "upgrade our hardware". My brain, I have decided, works pretty well, but it works s-l-o-w-l-y, and I can never come up with a swift and witty response like that. I always think of it about two hours later. I guess what my brain needs is a Turbo button. My latest computer has one of these, but since it is permanently pressed in and the wanky digital display always reads "33", there doesn't seem much point in having it.

Fanatic 24
Lyn McConchie

Congratulations on your writing success. I admire anyone who can stick to writing fiction long enough to succeed at it. I haven't read any of your material, but I'll keep an eye open for it. Do I understand that you have published novels? If so, what are they?

Please excuse my ignorance of your career, but I have, as they say, been "out of it" for a while.

Your trip report highlights one good reason I can't afford to go overseas: visiting bookshops would bankrupt me.

I found out two days after it was over that our venerable State Library had been having a book sale, and was perversely glad that I had missed it. This computer I am currently using is our latest and biggest single purchase since I last bought a car, and I can easily imagine wanting to spend its purchase price over again just to acquire the kind of books I imagine the State Library had for sale.

Module 91
Michael O'Brien

Hi, Mike!

Well, actually Alexander Graham Bell's first words over the telephone are the subject (in my own mind) of some debate. It's all to do with apocryphal stories, a subject on which I could go on about at some length. Bell's own notebook, written on the day, indicate that the full words were "Come here, Mr Watson, I want to see you."

But we have the apocryphal story, developed to add drama to the occasion, of Bell spilling acid over his hands and calling out in distress to Watson to come to his aid: "Come here, Mr Watson!". The shortening and the exclamation mark are obvious later amendments. Lovely story. Never happened.

Another great apocryphal story to do with telecommunications is about the first telegraph cable laid across the English Channel. The cable worked fine for about an hour, and then failed, never to work again. The story is that a French fisherman hauled the thing up in his nets and cut it, thinking it some strange kind of sea-serpent. Terrific stuff. Repeated in every popular history of technology. I doubt it strongly, for the following reasons:

- * Cables in those days had wretchedly bad insulation, and one leak along the twenty miles of cable would have been enough to put the telegraph out of action.
- * The investors would be unhappy to told the technology had failed and so had to be given another excuse.
- * I don't see how an un-cut cable could be dragged up in an open net anyway; and
- * It appeals so much to British prejudice about dumb Frenchmen.

Sorry to hear your mother is getting frail. My own father, who has for years seemed as fit and as solid as any 73-year old could be, has suddenly developed severe angina. Indeed, all of the illness he has avoided for the last fifty years or so seems to have hit him all at once.

In short order he has come down with: an intense bout of flu; angina; blood poisoning; shingles; and developed a severe allergic reaction to the penicillin the doctor gave him to try and sort some of this stuff out (believe it or not, my father had never taken penicillin in his life before).

However, he seems to be recovering from most of the above, although the angina still prevents him from doing any but the gentlest of activities. I'm worried about the psychological effect of all this on a man who thought he was practically immortal, and whose main interest in life was gardening.

*Illegitimi Non
Carborundum
Linnette Horne*

Regarding your job: can you not simply insist on working to rule; that is, doing only what is on your job statement? Or is that a very quick way to the dole queue?

I know what you mean about not getting a full technical background. I regard myself in many ways as an amateur with computers; and yet I hold a Graduate Diploma in Computing, and am a full member of the Australian Computing Society, with PCP (Practising Computer Professional) status.

But there's so much I don't know! And life seems too short ever to spend the time to find out. I think I am too much of a generalist: I know a little about a great many areas, but not enough about one particular area.

I also know the threat of being retrenched. As part of the Greater Fairfax Empire, sent to the cleaners by young Wocca Fairfax and about to be snapped up for a song, I shouldn't wonder, by Kerry Packer, who has a reputation for being really mean and getting rid of anything that doesn't turn an immediate buck... what a rotten sentence!...as part of that, I consider my job to be in severe jeopardy. But I've bored plenty of people about my woes at the few social occasions I've attended recently, so I shall desist.

A Letter to ANZAPA
Gerald Smith and
Womble

Films... ah, yes, I remember those. I think the last movie I went to see in a theatre was *Ghostbusters II*. (I was fudging a bit earlier when I said we had been to the Reservoir cinema 'recently'. In fact, it was over a year ago!).

We did go to see *Phantom of the Opera* earlier this year (the musical, not the old movie), which was very enjoyable, even if we did get the stand-in rather than Antony Warlow as the Phantom.

"...the Sydney bid to hold the Worldcon in 1995 is off." This, believe me, is called "a lucky escape". If you ask me, the following should be engraved above the road to running a Worldcon:

*Per me si va nella città dolente,
per me si van nell'eterno dolore,
per me si va tra la perduta gente...
lasciate ogni speranza voi ch'entrate!*

* brg *
Bruce Gillespie

Hi, Bruce!

Thanks for the copy of *Metaphysical Review*, by the way, it was one of the things that encouraged me to start doing this again. I'll write you a letter of comment Real Soon Now.

And what do I say about your splendid article here on the works of someone I haven't read? I guess I go out and look for Carroll's books myself, you certainly make it sound worthwhile.

I've read very little sf or fantasy during the last several years. For a start, as far as I can see they've stopped publishing *real* sf, at least if I can judge by the covers and the blurbs of the paperbacks in my local bookstore. I have, I admit, read a couple of books by Greg Bear which I quite enjoyed the first time through, but they don't seem to withstand re-reading.

Yes, yes, I know, you're going to complain that I haven't told you what I've been **doing!** I know you of old, Bruce Gillespie.

Well right now I'm writing these mailing comments in the middle of baking bread. The waiting times while the bread rises are just right to dash off comments to an apazine or two.

But more seriously, well I guess I've been working, and coming home, and cooking, and playing games with Katie and talking to Sue and sleeping and going back to work again the next day. In other words, I seem to have settled into a rather mundane sort of existence. "All happy families are alike...".

I've also managed to struggle through two years of part-time study, which involved leaving work at 5.30pm, staying at Chisholm until 10pm without a meal, twice a week. The result was the aforementioned Graduate Diploma in Computing, which I saw as being essential to my future job prospects (however feeble they still remain), which wasn't a great deal of fun, but certainly an experience that I may write about some time.

Somewhere in this fanzine (I hesitate to say "later on" because the wonders of word processing mean that the order in which you read this may well not be the order in which I wrote it), I'll try to find time to talk about what I've been reading, and what I've been listening to. (This, I think, is what Bruce Gillespie really means when he asks "what have you been doing?").

You really know you're home when you find a wombat in your bed
#17
Cath Ortlieb

Getting married in the Zoo sounds like a neat idea, but I imagine it leads to all sorts of "smart" comments. I just hope and pray that I never have to suffer through another "Ocker" wedding (my brother has been married twice). If I hear that tired and vulgar old joke about marriage being like a train trip to Western Australia one more time...!

Actually, we are trying to bring Katie up the right way so that she won't want one of these huge (and appallingly expensive) weddings that seem to be the standard these days, should she ever tie the knot. I remember fondly getting married in our back yard, on a very low budget. Those casual weddings seem to have fallen out of fashion, it seems.

Q76
Family Hryckiewicz

Are you people any relation to the J.Hryckiewicz who wrote one of the classic textbooks on systems analysis? It seems, well, not exactly a common name...

Your experience in trying to study reminds me of the ten months I spent trying to write while staying home on accumulated leave while Sue did a midwifery course and I became a house-husband. I agree that it is truly amazing how many other things you can find to do. Mind you, looking after an 2-year old child, even when she spent a large part of the weekdays in child care, was pretty time-consuming!

DON'T get me talking about computers! I too have just upgraded (in my case from an Apple IIe) to a system very like the one you describe, though without the scanner system. The level of frustration of not being able to bring work home, of trying (believe it or not) to support a shareware program without my own computer, had just reached critical point.

Spending \$3000 is not done lightly in our household, however it seems that the tax advantages of running a home office are such that the system will soon pay for itself.

The MSFC Club newsletter
whoever

Nice, amusing graphics. Seems the old MSFC is positively thriving, and a lot of entertaining activities going on. Full points to whoever is involved with all this.

Recent Listening

Well, I seem to have acquired a taste for classical music, mostly of the Baroque period, while realising that I am only barely scratching the surface of such music.

I'm very fond of Bach, but more so of Purcell and Handel.

One of my favourite CDs at present is Purcell's *Te Deum & Jubilate in D Major* (plus 4 anthems).

I think it's the little boys that get to me. I fell in love with boy sopranos when Lee Harding played me Faure's *Requiem* once late at night at Gurner Street, and I haven't been able to give them up since. I recently acquired a cheap CD called *The Sound of Kings* (the choir of King's College, Cambridge), which has some wonderful pieces on it, including several by Faure and one by Purcell.

It's no wonder they used to castrate boy sopranos - anything to try to preserve that purity of tone. Sends shivers down my spine, it does.

I also love the Purcell *Odes* (Lee Harding's fault again) such as the *Ode to St Cecilia's Day* (*Sound the Trumpets*). And I'm looking out for a good (and cheap) recording of *The Faerie Queen*.

On the non-classical side, there's very little I listen to these days, but I've very much enjoyed Ladysmith Black Mambazo, both on the *Graceland* album and on their own *Shaka Zulu*. But I own very few non-classical CDs. I still have a turntable, and I will occasionally put on Fleetwood Mac, Eurythmics or Crosby Stills & Nash.

Back to the classical side, I always thought that I hated opera, but listening to the Doug Aiton radio program (like thousands of others, stuck in traffic in my car) has made me realise that though I still think the idea of opera is silly, there are some wonderful songs in operas. I freely admit to buying the Aiton *Your Favourites* cassette, and enjoying it very much, especially the male duet from Bizet's *The Pearl Fishers*.

Recent Computing

My acquisition of an IBM-compatible computer has been of too recent a date for me to report on length on what I have been doing with it, but a few notes might be of interest to those not instantly nauseated by such things.

My most recent computer follows a line of descent from my first personal computer, a Tandy Model 1 purchased in 1979, and which I promptly named "Multivac" for reasons that any Isaac Asimov fan would understand. This behemoth of computing came with a whole 4K of memory and no disk drives (it used a horrible audio cassette recorder to store programs). Still, I taught myself assembly-language programming on it, and wrote a highly idiosyncratic word processor for it.

Next came "Newton", an Apple IIc with two (count them!) floppy disk drives.

Buying this machine was in retrospect something of a mistake (it was just prior to the ascendancy of the IBM-PC), though it gave me all those nice facilities such as word processing, spreadsheets and a database manager, via a great little program called Appletworks. I did some programming on it, too, and taught myself Pascal, but the Apple II is not the world's best programming environment.

And now we have "Daedalus", the machine on which I am working, and compared with those previous computers, a true giant among dwarfs. A thousand times as much memory as poor old Multivac; a hard disk drive which can store 85 million characters; a colour (!) display capable of a resolution of 1048 by 720 points, each of which can have any of 256 colours; running at a speed which makes the mainframes of 10 years ago look sluggish... and all for less than I paid seven years ago for the Apple II!

Even if you are not a computer freak like me, the speed of development in computing must strike you as nothing less than amazing.

So far, I've been using Daedalus for pretty mundane tasks - like writing this fanzine. But even here, the power of a word

processor like Word for Windows is light years in advance of things like Electric Pencil (anyone remember that?).

However, I've also spent quite a bit of time playing with a program called Fractint, a marvellous public domain program to display fractal images like the Mandelbrot set (see the next section for various raves about this).

My main justification for buying this computer, though, was so that I can properly write and support shareware software. I've had a modest success with a little program called AUTOREAD, now up to version 1.10, which makes reading text files, particularly manuals or help texts, much easier on a PC. (It sort of competes with a program called LIST, but is aimed at a slightly different function, automatically generating contents pages and indexes on pull-down menus). I wrote this program after hours at work! Now at least I can work on it at home.

Oh, and games, too, of course. Current hit in our house is a Windows game called Taipei, which uses Mah-jong tiles.

Recent Reading

Well, last holidays I read the Booker Prize winner, *Possession*, by A.S.Byatt. I should perhaps say that this is the first Booker Prize winner I've ever read, but the reviews and discussions of it I'd heard on the radio (Jill Kitson) made it sound very well worthwhile.

I did enjoy the book very much, though I reckon it has a few serious structural flaws, Booker notwithstanding.

The book is prominently labelled 'A Romance', and in the preface the author pleads for a little tolerance on that basis. The story is about the uncovering by 20th century academics of a previously unknown love affair of a prominent (and fictitious) 19th Century poet called Randolph Ashe, and a French-born poet called Cristobel LaMotte. There are similarities with *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, in the interplay between a modern-day romance and that of the 19th Century poets, but

Possession is not therefore a derivative work, and is probably in many ways the better of the two. There are also many elements of comedy in the author's dealing with the modern-day protagonists.

Part of the great charm of the book is the wonderful poetry that Byatt has obviously written for her characters, in two quite different styles. In particular the mythic epic written by LaMotte is very haunting and chilling, and one wishes it were possible to see the entire work, here only excerpted.

The flaws? Well, given the basic thesis, and the slow uncovering of the truth, I reckon it's a bit of a cop-out to show us crucial scenes from the 1800s which clearly can not have been revealed by the modern-day researchers, and indeed of which they appear to remain ignorant.

Nevertheless, *Possession* was good enough that I went hunting for other works by A.S.Byatt. I've just finished *The Virgin in the Garden*, which is in quite a different vein but still very entertaining, set entirely (but for the Prologue) in the 1950s, and dealing with the various characters in and around a Yorkshire school who are involved in putting on a verse play about Elizabeth I. I found it a little slow going, though, and I kept putting it down and drifting off to something else for a while. Partly this was because of the highly literary quality and style of the novel, and the many references to authors and works which I am too poorly educated to have read. Byatt seems to have an interesting style, mixing the wryly comic with the serious and even tragic.

What else? Lots of junk, of course. I get into certain moods (particularly after long days wrestling with the intricacies of Oracle) when I can concentrate on nothing in the least heavy. Indeed, in these moods I like nothing better than to re-read mysteries or thrillers, or even (*gasp*) science fiction.

But in a more serious vein, I've just re-read James Gleick's book *Chaos*, which remains fascinating, both as an insight as to how science is really done, and as a view of a whole new philosophy of science and particularly physics, a revolution which has yet to run its course, but which fundamentally shakes up concepts and ideas

long taken for granted. Phrases like:

"Deterministic but totally unpredictable."

"Is there a climate?"

"Simple systems give rise to complex behaviour."

"The end of the reductionist program in physics"

...stick in one's head long after one has put the book down; and the images of chaos, of the Mandelbrot Set in particular, set one wondering about what kind of universe this really is.

Here's a real puzzler for you, not explicitly asked in the book: did we invent the Mandelbrot Set? Or did we discover it? Certainly the process carried out by the scientists and mathematicians involved seems to have been almost totally a voyage of discovery. They had no idea it was there. Was the Mandelbrot Set always sitting there, brooding in some unknown corner of conceptual space? If so, what kind of space? If we didn't create it, who did? One imagines the Mandelbrot set:

*...burning bright
In the forests of the night.
What immortal hand or eye
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?*

Frankly, the Mandelbrot Set terrifies me.

Anything else worth mentioning? I also read *Superstrings and the Search for the Theory of Everything* by F. David Peat. This was fairly hard going, I must say, although it's good that "popular" science writing is now starting to treat its readers as intelligent enough not to be deterred by a few equations or difficult concepts. Oxford University Press has published some terrific paperback titles in this "serious popular" vein, of which the best is I think *Inward Bound* by Abraham Pais, a wonderful history of particle physics by one who was a participant. Pais also wrote the best scientific biography I've read, on Albert Einstein, called *Subtle is the Lord*.

Oh, and I've managed to obtain some obscure titles by Wilkie Collins. Everyone, surely, has read *The Woman in White* and *The Moonstone*; if you haven't, there is great pleasure in store for you if you have the slightest fondness for mysteries and

especially Victorian melodrama. But of the thirty or so books that Collins wrote, only these two seem to be regularly in print. Many titles are impossible to obtain without finding copies published a century ago.

Wilkie Collins was a contemporary and close friend of Charles Dickens, but their styles could not be more different. (Those who remember me will recall my expressed fondness for Dickens, which resulted in me being labelled as a member of the "literati", joke, joke). Certainly if you enjoy Sherlock Holmes the above-mentioned books should not be missed.

But the more obscure novels? I found, through the English company Booksearch copies of *Antonia, or The Fall of Rome*, Collins' first novel, *Basil*, his second, *Poor Miss Finch*, and *Jezebel's Daughter*. Through my own resources I've located *No Name, Man and Wife* and *The Dead Secret*. Of these, the best is *No Name*, (which Dickens reckoned was a better novel than *The Woman in White*), with *The Dead Secret* next.

One day I must write Bruce an article about Collins.

But a small plea: if you can lay your hands on any other novels by Collins, please let me know; I will pay good prices for them.

This was *Megatheriums for Breakfast 2*, which I reckon is still a good name for a lazine. You have to have a long memory to recall issue #1.

Courtesy of Word for Windows, we also know such trivia as the fact that I've spent 408 minutes working on this, that it comprises 32129 characters and 5640 words, that I started work on it on 12/10/91 and printed it out on 21/10/91. Aren't computers wonderful?

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