

Megatheriums for Breakfast

5

'...What are Mega-what's-its-names and Ptero-what-do-you-call-them? And does anyone have them for breakfast?'

'Why, almost everyone had Pterodactyl for breakfast in my time! Pterodactyls were something like crocodiles and something like birds - I believe they were very good grilled.'

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

David R Grigg, 1556 Main Road,
Research, Victoria 3095, Australia.

THE LOVE OF COOKING

Yesterday was a fairly typical Saturday for me. Got up at about 9 o'clock, had breakfast, washed the left-over dishes and things that wouldn't fit in the dish washer, cleared the bench, got out all the ingredients and implements, and started to make bread. I make two dozen wholemeal bread rolls every second Saturday. It's impossible to buy bread rolls anywhere that taste as fresh and as wonderful as home-made rolls, and there's the added pride in having put them together yourself.

Bread is actually quite easy to make, there's no mystery about it. The most difficult part of it when I started baking bread was finding a suitable spot to let the dough rise. It needs to be considerably warmer than normal room temperature, though not too hot (or the yeast will die). I spent some time sticking bowls in cupboards with electric fan heaters, propping bowls over the vents of the central heating system, and so on. All nonsense. The best way, I've found, is to turn on the oven on its lowest heat, about ten minutes before the dough is ready. It shouldn't get any warmer than about 60°. Then you turn the oven off, put the bread in, in a deep bowl covered with a damp cloth, and set the timer for 45 minutes. Same sort of process once you've shaped the bread, except you only need to leave the bread in for about 30 minutes then.

Bread is a good thing to make when you have other things to do, because the long waiting times for the bread to rise can be filled in with other useful things. On Saturday, once the bread was mixed and kneaded (I must be out of condition - hard work, this!), and in the oven to rise, I peeled and cored a bowlful of left-over apples to make the filling for apple pie, which could cook simultaneously with the bread. I'm not a purist: I used commercial pre-rolled pastry sheets from the freezer for the pie base and top. Pastry is one thing I haven't yet mastered.

I cooked the apples, covered, in the microwave, for about ten minutes. Set them aside to cool. Took out the bread, kneaded it again, shaped it into rolls, weighing each lump to make sure the rolls were of an even size. Put them back in the re-warmed oven.

Then I went down the street to buy meat and vegetables. Bought (among other things) a bunch of leeks, an eggplant, some limes and bananas, pork chops and minced lamb.

Came back and took out the now-risen bread rolls and cranked the oven up to high. Cut out the pastry and lined a dish with it, then covered this over with foil so it could be blind-baked.

The pie base and the bread-rolls went into the oven once it is hot, for about ten minutes and fifteen minutes respectively.

Oh, the smell of new-baked bread! Oh, the taste of warm bread with butter melting into it! Why doesn't everyone still do this?

The pie is filled, the top put on. My daughter Katie insisted on decorating the pie with shaped pieces of pastry. Very nice, but I fidgeted because she took a long time, and the oven was hot! Then in it went, for another twenty minutes or so. (This day it was a

minor disaster, because the apple filling was very wet, and we got juice bubbling out of the pie, so the pie stayed in for longer than usual to dry it off a little).

Slightly more major disaster later on, as Katie is keen on cooking along with Dad, and she was making a sort of muesli slice from a recipe on the side of the cereal packet. It involves putting the mix into the food processor for a while to mince down. But the blade of the food processor tends to get stuck when you want to lift the bowl up off the motor. Dad tried to help, and the blade came off - very suddenly. Dad spent the next twenty minutes picking little bits of muesli off the bench, the toaster, the jug, the walls, the cupboards, the floor...

Lunch was easy, there were left-overs from the previous couple of nights' dinners.

After lunch, I set to and make potato and leek soup. Another minor disaster because I filled the food processor too full of cooked ingredients and soup started to leak everywhere - but this was soon remedied.

Around five o'clock it's time to start work on dinner. I bought the eggplant and the minced lamb with moussaka in mind, and that's what I produced. The microwave is invaluable for this, because it cooks a whole casserole full in around twenty minutes. It would take well over an hour in the oven. Katie announced her disgust with eggplant well before dinner is cooked, but when the moussaka was served, she ate it all and asked for more.

I had intended to make steamed pudding with the limes and the bananas, but we were all too full. Besides, there was apple pie and cream.

The following day, Sunday, we had leek and potato soup for lunch. Dinner was roast lamb, roast potatoes, roast onions, broccoli and red-wine gravy. Wonderful!

Why do I do all this? Well, because I love it, of course.

I have this theory that most women don't enjoy cookery because they have been brought up to believe that it is their duty to cook for their families, and who can enjoy an enforced duty? Whereas men who cook love it to little pieces because they never feel that they *have* to do it.

I started cooking for myself when I first moved away from home, twenty years ago (!), and started by producing some absolutely vile things (run out of onions - oh well, these pickled onions are sure to do just as well...). But I enjoyed cooking even then. I seem to recall that when a bunch of us went on the Cradle Mountain / Lake St.Clair bushwalk in Tasmania, taking six days meandering up side walks, I did almost all of the cooking, with some notable disasters. (Vesta Curry and Rice was bad enough, but *burnt* Vesta Curry and Rice was something to be experienced!).

Nowadays, Sue and I share cooking the evening meals during the week pretty evenly, though there are weeks I come home so zonked from work that I don't lift a finger all week.

But weekends I usually do all the cooking, lunches and dinners and the extra stuff like special desserts and baking, as mentioned above. And I enjoy it enormously. As much as anything else, I enjoy cooking as a hobby because it is utterly different from what I do at work, and perhaps for this reason I find it very relaxing (disasters aside!). This is probably why I usually don't mind coming home from a hard day at work and then cooking the family meal.

I am certainly no purist. I love all the labour-saving gadgets that our mothers and grandmothers had to do without, like my big Breville whizzer, which is terrific for any large-quantity chopping, mincing or shredding. Even better, I like the little Breville Whiz Kid Twins which has two sets of bowls and blades with a removable motor which sits on top. One set is like a midget one-cup quantity food processor, fantastic for blending up tinned tomatoes, or pureeing a cup-full of solids for soup. The other set is a small one- or two- cup blender, great for instant milk-shakes.

And the electric knife. How did I live without this, for cutting roasts, for slicing home-made loaves of bread as thin as commercial bread?

I also adore the microwave. But I didn't use to. I spent several years scoffing at microwave ovens. I used to love quoting a joke out of a humorous dictionary of cooking:

Microwave Oven: A device based on the radar technology of World War II, which will instantly seek out and destroy any food placed within its cavity.

But in the end, it was listening to Geoff Slattery on the radio that convinced me to buy a microwave. He kept on emphasising that you don't buy a microwave oven to do things that you can do much better by conventional means. You use a microwave to do what it does best. He calls the microwave "an extra pair of hands in the kitchen". And he's absolutely right. When I finally gave way, I found that the microwave oven quickly became indispensable.

Like many people, I was very disappointed when Geoff Slattery announced that he was no longer going to appear on the Doug Alton radio show every Tuesday. It used to be one of the highlights of the week to listen to Slattery talking about food and cooking whilst I drove home on Tuesday evenings. Geoff Slattery has a wonderfully irreverent attitude to cooking, and an infectious enthusiasm about it. I warmly recommend his book "Simple Flavours" to anyone who wants to cook without fuss and for pleasure.

It was Geoff Slattery who introduced me to souffles. Souffles, like bread, have a wholly undeserved reputation for being hard to cook. People who demonstrate that they can cook either are usually the subject of universal admiration these days. What nonsense! Souffles, like bread, are easy, so long as you keep your eye on the ball. (The other thing I love about Geoff Slattery's writing about cooking is his frequent use of sporting metaphors - Slattery was also the Sports Editor for "The Sunday Age" for some time).

Well, what would an article about food be without the inclusion of a special recipe? The dessert I

mentioned earlier which combines limes and bananas is a great Geoff Slattery recipe, which I reprint here wholly without permission. The most important thing about it is not the precise ingredients, but the fact that Slattery discovered that it is possible to cook steamed puddings in the microwave in less than 10 minutes! For that reason alone, this recipe, which does not appear in his book, should be preserved for ever more:

WHOOPEE, WOW, AND A STEAMED PUDDING
by Geoff Slattery

1 cup s/c flour
1/2 cup white sugar
handful of raisins
zest of one lime, chopped finely
1 banana, sliced and tossed in a little lime juice
1 egg
100 gm butter melted
1/2 cup milk

1. Mix the flour with the raisins, and lime, and mix through the sugar.
2. Add the sliced banana, folded through the flour gently so as not to break the delicate flesh of the banana.
3. Mix through the melted butter and egg, again working the batter gently.
4. Add the milk, slowly, working it through until the batter is well mixed. It should be quite moist, but well short of liquid.
5. Pour into a well-buttered, lightly floured pudding mould. It should come almost to the rim of a half-litre mould.
6. Cover with plastic wrap, and bake in the microwave (500W on high, more powerful on medium) for six minutes. Watch through the door glass and you will see the pudding expand like bubbling lava until the plastic is fully stretched and the pudding is done. It is like watching wild-life photography where a time-lapse camera picks out a flower opening from a bud, and then the scene is replayed at usual speed. It is a rare fun show.
7. Remove and peel away the wrap. Test with a knife. It should turn clean. Return to the oven and cook on high for another minute.
8. Remove from oven and allow to sit for a minute. Unmould, and test to see whether there are any moist pieces at the edges. If so, return to the oven for a minute or two.

The Sauce

Juice of two limes (1/3 cup)
1/3 cup caster sugar
cream

1. Bring the lime juice and sugar to a rapid boil, stirring, and continue boiling for a minute as the syrup thickens. Remove and set aside.
2. Pour the syrup over a slice of pudding and immediately pour the cream over the top.

RECENT READING

Quite a lot more reading over the last couple of months, and a lot more science fiction (perhaps it's the influence of Anzapa, perhaps its just the state of the weather...)

Earth: David Brin
Out of the Silence: Earl Cox
Bully for Brontosaurus: Stephen Jay Gould
Wyrd Sisters: Terry Pratchett
Equal Rites: Terry Pratchett
The Invisible Man: H.G. Wells

The Island of Doctor Moreau: H.G. Wells
The Media Lab: Stewart Brand
Immortality: Milan Kundera
Bride the Wind: Joan Aiken
The Wolves of Willoughby Chase: Joan Aiken
Black Hearts in Battersea: Joan Aiken
Nightbirds over Nantucket: Joan Aiken
The Cuckoo Tree: Joan Aiken

I was part way through *Earth* last time around, which explains why I mentioned it in my 'Recent Computing' section but not in 'Recent Reading'. I enjoyed it a lot more than most science fiction I have attempted in recent years, particularly Brin's evocation of a quite credible society 50 years from now. Nevertheless, there were parts which strained all credibility (for example, a whole building blasted off the planet into orbit while staying intact enough to eventually settle onto the Moon with many of its inhabitants alive and well).

But I liked his depiction of the worldwide Net, a computing/information resource as ubiquitous and as essential as the electricity grid. I'm convinced he's right about this (see also my comments about Stewart Brand's book). I also liked the final titanic struggle between two women who epitomise the two extremes of the ecology movement.

Out of the Silence was a real find. I picked it up in a library sale at Hastings for \$1, though it has clearly never been a library edition. I have often heard of this book, which is frequently quoted as one of the classics of early Australian science fiction. First published in the 1920s. I must say that I was surprised at how well it was written, certainly superior to much of the science fiction pulp that was being written at the time (or since). It compares very favourably with Wells. At the same time, it is unashamedly Australian in character (no cultural cringe here). Not only that, but there is a real moral dilemma outlined, in which the main viewpoint character falls from grace and suffers the consequences. I liked it a lot.

Bully for Brontosaurus was an excellent collection of pieces by Stephen Jay Gould. His essays keep on getting better and better. No one writes better about Darwin, evolution, natural selection and baseball than Gould! It's tragic to know that he has cancer. I just wish him a very long and productive life.

Oh yes, more Terry Pratchett. *Equal Rites* was I thought the better of these two books. *Wyrd Sisters* was a bit uneven, but there are some lovely bits of parody of Macbeth in there. Interestingly, I also re-read *The Colour of Magic* recently, but didn't like it much. He's improved since the first two books in this series, I think.

And then for some reason, I decided to pick up my omnibus volume of H.G. Wells novels, and greatly enjoyed re-reading these classics, especially *The Invisible Man*. But *Moreau* is chilling, especially the ending, where the protagonist returns to "civilisation" but sees everywhere the mark of the beast...

The Media Lab was a fascinating study of the work of the Media Lab at M.I.T., even if rather out of date (Brand originally wrote it in 1987, which when you are talking about advanced technology is around

about the Middle Ages). There are some wonderful ideas in the book, particularly Brand's thoughts on the "information economy". As he points out, you just can't treat information the same way as you can treat traditional goods: "Information wants to be free." "If you sell a cow, you get the money, the buyer gets the cow, you don't have the cow. If you sell information, the buyer gets the information, you still have the information". And the information can be duplicated perfectly for almost no cost: information wants to be free.

Milan Kundera's book is the first one of his that I've read. Jill Kitson (of 3RN's *Book Report*) is to blame again. I hesitate to call *Immortality* a novel, though it centres around fictional characters... well, mainly. Goethe and one of his female groupies occupy a fair amount of the book too. But then so does Milan Kundera himself. And Ernest Hemingway. As well as true incidents that Kundera hears on the radio. It's a very strange book, but I'd like to read it again, and to hunt up his other works. I haven't seen the film of *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, but I'll look out for the paperback.

One of the greatest pleasures in life, I reckon, is to discover a book by an author you have never read before, to enjoy it immensely, and then discover that the same author has written dozens of books. This happened to me with Dick Francis, and with Ellis Peters/Edith Pargeter. And now with Joan Aiken, who is a children's writer (or juvenile fiction writer, or what have you). I picked up *Bride the Wind* in the children's section of the local library while idly waiting for my daughter to finish choosing her books. I found it very reminiscent of Leon Garfield, though perhaps not quite up to his standard. And to an adult reader, the plot complication (the hackneyed idea of a girl masquerading as a boy) was obvious from the beginning. But nevertheless, I enjoyed it a lot, and it spurred me on to pick up her other books.

The Wolves of Willoughby Chase is the start of an extremely funny, exciting and thoroughly entertaining series of books set in an alternate history where the Jacobites had their way and James III is king of England. Those nasty Hanoverians keep popping up with various plots to do away with the Jacobite monarchy and put Bonnie Prince George on the throne instead. Needless to say, they always fail, often due to the direct intervention of the remarkable Dido Twite, a truly unconventional female protagonist of whom I am surprised more has not been made by today's feminists (Aiken was writing these books in the sixties and early seventies, long before we started being serious about female role models in children's books).

RECENT LISTENING

Well, the old JSB, "Great Bach", is rattling away on the CD player at the moment, a good and cheap collection called "The Best of Bach", most of the tracks of which are in the public domain, which I suppose is why it was so cheap. But there's over an hour with some wonderful pieces on it. I especially like "Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring" (what could Fred Nile do with a title like that, I wonder?), the "Little" Fugue in G Minor and the "Little Suite" from the Anna Magdalena Notebook.

I made another of my bi-monthly visits to JB Hi-Fi in Camberwell, and found yet another pile of unboxed CDs. Even after buying jewel boxes at 80c each, I ended up with the complete symphonies of Beethoven for less than \$4.80 a disc, plus some Bach violin concertos. So they are performed by largely unknown orchestras, so what? I'm not sophisticated enough to know the difference.

I also picked up a copy of "Classic CD" magazine, which came with a sampler CD of works discussed in the magazine, and a great supplement called "100 Essential Classics", which is a terrific guide for someone like me who doesn't know his Schubert from his Schumann. All for \$8.95. The magazine was pretty good, too.

One of the pieces on the sampler, and discussed in the magazine, is an excerpt from "The Protecting Vell", a modern piece for cello and orchestra by John Tavener, which was very stirring to listen to.

RECENT COMPUTING

Last month, I indulged myself (again) and bought Borland's "Screenery" disks, which contain masses of interesting "wallpaper" images for Windows, plus a useful screen saver. Totally unnecessary, of course, but fun anyway. I use a routine which changes the Windows background wallpaper every time you start up Windows, so I am constantly entertained by new images behind my word processing or spreadsheets.

Since I often leave the computer or computers running for long periods, both at work and at home (it's not actually good for electronics to be turned on and off all the time), I figured it would be good to have a screen saver which would alter the screen constantly to stop images burning in to the phosphor of the monitor (not that modern monitors are very susceptible to this). Besides, screen savers can be fun to watch, and certainly liven up the office. There are several variations. One I like a lot is called "Conundrum", where the screen is broken into blocks which randomly move around like someone is trying to solve (or more likely, muddle up) one of those "15" puzzles.

I've also been having some fun playing with a Sound Blaster card, which I actually have at home for a quite serious purpose: I'm writing some code to control sounds in our interactive touch-screen systems. The card is at home because my work computer has the wrong kind of slots (it's a PS/2, yuk!), and besides, I don't currently have time to do software development at work! (I've just, today, finished a computer-based training package for the Department of Administrative Services in Canberra to sell the concepts of Electronic Data Interchange... but you don't want to know about that, do you?).

The Sound Blaster certainly seems to be a very professional job, and the quality of the sound out of the tiny speakers which came free with the kit is excellent. It (quite amazingly) comes with a quite clever Text-to-Speech converter which will read any text file in a quite clear if rather mechanical voice. Very useful for the visually-impaired, I would imagine.

AT LAST, THE MAILING COMMENTS SHOW...!

Oh dear, oh dear. Not a very promising mailing, this one. When I find myself contributing nearly 15% of the mailing, single-handed I start to wonder if it's all worth while.

But then I see that Leanne Frahm has rejoined, and I can't resist the thought of amiably crossing swords with her again, not to mention looking forward to her excellent prose. She'll probably look at my contribution last mailing and think that nothing ever changes, here's David Grigg still being boring about computers and droning on about books he's read. Well, never mind, Leanne, welcome back anyway.

Jan Kicked and Clawed Her Way to the Top

JAN MACNALLY

I much enjoyed your Liar's Autobiography and your family photo album, but what more can I say? Have you sold the film rights yet? I imagine they could do a marvellous job with Meryl Streep in the title role.

My Butcher is a Scientist

LIN WOLFE

Well, actually, I was hoping to hear a lot more about your butcher, and whether he tried to convert you by sneaking you cheap E-Meter-cleared sausages. I was going to suggest that if he became insufferable in this way you could give him a copy of "Bare-Faced Messiah", which is an absolutely astounding (pun intended) biography of L. Ron Hubbard. But then you would run the risk of ground glass in the mince, I suppose.

It's interesting to hear that your office is over-run with mice. One of my problems at work at present is that we are perennially short one mouse, which means that I am continually running around unplugging and replugging their tails as I play a sort of game of "musical computers". I suppose it wouldn't exactly harm us much to invest in another mouse, but cost-containment is the order of the day at David Syme & Co Limited right now.

You Really Know You're Home When You Find a Wombat in Your Bed #20

CATH ORTLIEB

I can easily imagine how annoyed you were at (literally) hanging around waiting for George Bush to go away. I've often been in a plane to Sydney that goes into a holding pattern due to the congestion there, sometimes going around in circles for as much as 45 minutes! This is not a good way to start a business trip, when you have to be at an appointment at a certain time and you have no way of ringing up and apologising in advance.

Bike riding... yes, well. Ever since I wrote that enthusiastic article I've hardly touched the bike, and I've put on two kilos in weight. Now my excuse is that the weather is too bad and I'm waiting for Spring.

Module 84

MICHAEL O'BRIEN

You are right about obsessive behaviour, and I was amused to read about your passion for radios.

My passion, rather obviously, is for computers, but these are much more expensive than radios, so I have fewer. But nevertheless, we have three computers in the house, one Apple //c, one Apple //e, and this PC, of which I am still inordinately fond (it's still more powerful than anything I have at work - no, I tell a lie, at work I have access to a Sun SparcServer, which is a *really* powerful beast, but I don't have any games or otherwise interesting software to run on it). And I still regret that I eventually sold my Tandy Model I, which in its own way was a really neat machine. When Katie goes to MLC (yes, we *have* decided, Jan), we'll have four, because she will get a laptop as a matter of course (the school requires it).

The trouble is, of course, that everyone in the family wants access to *this* machine. Perhaps I should set up a Local Area Network in the house?

Changing mood entirely, sorry to hear about your cat. What are your feelings now about Sunday? Do you think dogs like rottweillers are in fact safe to own?

Purple prose from a purple lady Jenny Glover

Eec, by the heck, a hectograph! This really brings back memories.

You know, despite having published some hundreds of fanzines in my time, I have never actually ever owned a duplicator of my own. The closest I ever came to it was having a

Gestetner on semi-permanent loan from Telecom. I eventually gave it back, I hated it so much.

But in my early days, I was extremely impoverished, and I published a few fanzines (mostly for Apa-Nova, anyone remember *that?*) with a commercially-produced hectograph kit, which I found in Norman Brothers' stationery store, which used to be downstairs in Elizabeth Street.

You have obviously mastered the art. I found that no matter how hard I tried, I always used to end up with type which wavered up and down, or slanted down the page like the Leaning Tower of Pisa. And I never managed to get the surface completely clean after using it, so that subsequent pages bore the receding ghosts of pages past.

What an entertaining, even if brief, introduction to you this was. I look forward to reading more contributions from you. But if you have four dupers, perhaps a little less purple prose next time?

You may be interested/amused to know that I am a compatriot of yours. I was born and raised in Bradford, which can't be more than 10 miles away from Leeds.

We left Bradford when I was 13. These days I can only put on a Yorkshire accent if I think hard about it and mug it up like a party trick.

Illegitimi Non Carborundum LINETTE HORNE

Well, this contribution certainly gave me the shakes!

Oooh, your interfamilial spite! Glad to hear, at least, that you are a little better off as a result of the settlement of your father's will.

Module #83

MICHAEL O'BRIEN

What, you again? Oh, I see, this was meant for February.

Um, yes. My short but unspectacular career as a science fiction author certainly had its highlights. One was the fact that both (yes, all 2) of my magazine appearances featured my name prominently on the covers, along with, both times, Jack Williamson's. There's something in that, but I'm not sure what...

Alexander Graham Bell is an interesting subject. Do you know that

he considered his greatest invention to be the PhotoPhone? Or that he spent many years of his life researching heavier-than-air flight? Interesting to speculate what would have happened if he had succeeded. The Bell Telephone and Aviation Company, perhaps?

Fanatic 27
LYN MCCONCHIE

Well, um, er, yes I did ask for it. Thanks for the poetry. Not quite Wordsworth, but certainly amusing.

Why *do* you New Zealanders put up with living in a place which Gaia must have down as "temporary accommodation, soon to be demolished"? But then I suppose we Australians blithely put up with bushfires, which probably do more damage overall and lead to more loss of life and property than earthquakes.

Kallen
SINGULAR PRODUCTIONS

Since this came in a sealed packet with a warning on the cover, I thought I should do the sensible thing, and I haven't opened it. Did I do right?

Bury My Soul at Exit #63
WELLER

I found your account of your father's bypass intensely interesting for personal reasons. My father is also due for a triple (maybe a quadruple) bypass.

His recent angiogram showed extensive blockage of his coronary arteries, and quite severe damage to his heart from the three attacks he has now had. But he has no private health insurance, and that means he ends up on a waiting list for a public hospital bed, which could take up to four months! This is very depressing, but there's not a lot we can do about it. (Public health here is dramatically under-funded).

At least it is nice to read that the operation did your father the world of good. I'll keep my fingers crossed about my own Dad, and hope that he doesn't have to stay on the waiting list for as long as predicted.

Tisellaton
JANE TISELL

Yes, your thoughts on running conventions are very much to the

point. It also reminded me that one of these days I'd like to write a shareware program that would simplify managing the resources and programme for a convention, sort of like a spreadsheet for convention programme events, with resources like speakers, rooms and equipment taken account of, so that you could play "what if" and re-arrange the programme quickly without clashes. Perhaps someone has already written such a program, anyone know?

Your comments about getting older are also spot on. My late teens and early twenties were also horrible, and I wouldn't be a teenager again for quids. I also thank God for letting me discover fandom. I honestly don't think I would have survived my twenties had I not joined fandom.

Exhystentialism
ROGER WEDDALL

Right on about the "rising crime rate". Terry Lane has run a few articles on this subject, but has largely been ignored. Roger, people *want* to believe that life is getting more and more dangerous, and they are not interested in listening to statistics or facts about it. As to why they want to believe that, I don't know. Perhaps it's part of the longing for the Golden Age, the "good old days" which really probably represent an unconscious longing for the freedom of childhood.

It's indisputably the case that your chance of being murdered are infinitesimal compared to your very real chance of being killed in a road accident. Never stops people driving, does it?

You refer in your comment to Jeanne to 4-digit street numbers being very rare in Australia compared to the U.S. You are right, of course, but I've lived on and off at this 4-digit address for nearly 27 years. Mind you, when we moved here, the number was 762 Main Road, but the numbering broke off and restarted in Eltham. A few years after we came here, the council or the Post Office decided the duplicate numbers were too confusing, and sequentially numbered Main Road, and we became 1556. However, the numbering stops only a few houses up the street. But it is unusual enough that I often have to repeat my address to people writing it down.

Your comments on racism are interesting, but I need to think some more before I make a serious response. In general, though Australia has many racists, I do not believe that it is a

racist country. Indeed, I think we have absorbed, and are absorbing, people from other countries and of other races remarkably peacefully. Most outbreaks of prejudice seem to have been imported here (Greeks vs Turks, for example). It is true, however, that you see and hear real racism expressed towards Aborigines, particularly in places like Queensland and the Northern Territory.

I'd be very sorry to see you resign from Anzapa. I certainly don't get the chance to talk to you whenever I might like, and besides, I am a poor conversationalist. I prefer writing, probably because my brain, as I've mentioned before, works very slowly, and when I write I can take my time. This is one of the reasons it has been so good to get back to publishing in Anzapa, because it is one of the very few ways in which I can express myself in the way I would want to.

Ah well, another day, another dollar, or something like that. Or how about:

*Our revels now are ended. These our actors,
As I foretold you, were all spirits and
Are melted into air, into thin air;
And, like the baseless fabric of this vision,
The cloud-capped towers, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Yea, all which it inherits, shall dissolve
And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a rack behind. We are such stuff
As dreams are made on, and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep.*

Nothing like a bit of the old Bill Wagglepear. Is there?

I started this contribution a lot later than the previous ones, and I'm rapidly running out of time, and certainly out of energy. So six pages will have to be enough.

Regards to all.

This was *Megatheriums for Breakfast 5*

I've spent 379 minutes working on this issue, it comprises 33749 characters and 5920 words, I started work on it on 05/05/92 and printed it out on 04/06/92. I just knew you wouldn't sleep right if I didn't tell you this.

From David R Grigg, 1556 Main Road, Research, Victoria 3095, Australia.