

OTMC Bulletin

Bulletin Number 640, May 2004

**Newsletter of the Otago Tramping
and Mountaineering Club (Inc.)
P.O. Box 1120, Dunedin.**

**The OTMC meets socially at 3 Young Street
every Thursday - doors open at 7.30pm,
programme begins at 8.00pm.**

President's Piece

The special evening to acknowledge our Life Members on the 25th March 2004 was an outstanding success. I have received some very positive feedback from various Life Members acknowledging the gesture.

I would like to extend my thanks to Antony Pettinger and all of those who contributed their time and expertise throughout the Bushcraft 2004 programme. It has been a great success, with new memberships already flowing through from the intake. Membership numbers increased by four during that month.

If anyone is intending to tramp over private land please seek prior approval from the landowner.

I trust everyone took time out to relax over the Easter period. Wishing you safe and enjoyable tramping.

Terry Casey, President.

Committee Members 2003-2004

President	Terry Casey	454 4592
Vice President/Clubrooms	Sandra de Vries	473 7224
Secretary	Jenni Wright	454 5061
Treasurer	Ann Burton	476 2360
Imm. Past Pres./Publicity	Alan Thomson	455 7878
Chief Guide	Antony Pettinger	473 7924
Membership Secretary	Ian Sime	453 6185
Gear Hire	Mike Brettell	455 1515
Daytrip Convenor	Cathy McKersey	455 0994
Funding	Greg Powell	454 4828
Library	Jonette Service	454 2323
SAR Contact	Teresa Wasilewska	477 4987
Social Convenor	Fiona Webster	487 8176
Property Maintenance	Peter Mason	455 7074
Bulletin Editor	Robyn Bell	476 7411
Conservation	David Barnes	454 4492

**Visit us on the Internet at:
www.otmc.co.nz**

BUSHBASHERS

is a mixed social volleyball team needing new members!

It was originally started by OTMC club members (which explains the team name). Current team members include Wayne and Pam Hodgkinson, Spen Walker, Geoff Jackson, and Henry Masina.

Games are Tuesday evenings at OBHS or St Hilda's gyms, from 7pm to 8pm, or 8pm to 9pm depending on the draw. Cost is your share of \$90 every 6 months, plus \$2 at the door. So if you would like to give volleyball a go in an enjoyable social setting, give Wayne a call on 4730950 or tap him on the shoulder at club.

INTERNATIONAL MOUNTAIN FILM FESTIVAL FOR DUNEDIN

The Banff Mountain Film Festival will be coming to Dunedin in May, giving outdoor enthusiasts a chance to see some of the world's best action films. The Film Festival began in 1976 and is held in November each year in Banff, Canada. It's an international competition, attracting hundreds of films and videos on mountain subjects. As well as a huge range of films, the week long Banff Festival also attracts a wide range of guest speakers – all with an outdoors focus to their area of interest. Not only are mountaineers involved in the Festival and its films, so are rock climbers, trampers, skiers, canoeists, mountain-bikers and conservationists keen to preserve the great outdoors worldwide.

Following the festival each year the judges pick the best films and they go on tour, throughout Canada, and the rest of the world. In each area the organisation hosting the Festival selects a programme from the winners which reflects the interests of their community. The 2003 Film Festival, which is the programme we will see here in Dunedin, attracted over 250 films from 29 countries. The films ranged from productions created by high school students through to entries from professional crews working for companies like the BBC and National Geographic.

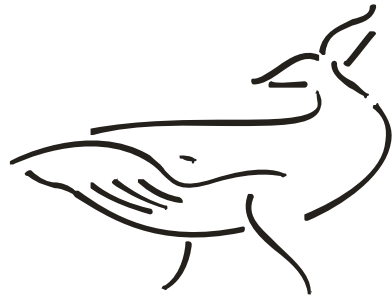
In Dunedin the Festival will be limited to a one-night only event at 7.30 pm on May 13 at the University's St David Street Theatre. Members of the local section of the NZ Alpine Club, who are jointly hosting the Dunedin Festival with the Otago University Tramping Club, have picked nine films for the Dunedin event.

“Like all film festivals people will get to see the expected, the unexpected and the quirky, explained Lindsay Smith from the Alpine Club. “The nine Dunedin films range from a seven minute special on Extreme Tramping through a twenty minute edge- of- the- seat skiing extravaganza to the evening's climax – the 2003 winner of the Banff Film Festival.” “We all found this year's winner, *The Other Final*’, was quite a surprise, not what we expected at all, Lindsay explained. “However after viewing the movie we could see why it won. “We're sure anyone who sees the Festival will agree.”

Tickets cost \$10 and are on sale at Bivouac Outdoor, 171 George Street. There will be spot prizes drawn from the pre-sold tickets.

Enquiries to Lindsay Smith at 467-7597 / (027) 444- 4658

Trip Reports



Ben Ohau Range (Whale Stream): March 6-7

“Private Property! No Access! No Queen’s Chain! Trespassing! Breaking OSH Regulations! You can imagine how the three of us felt (large party this!) when at 11pm on the Friday night these words jumped out at us as we peered at a notice on the fence opposite Ferintosh Station on the Mount Cook road. It looked as though our planned trip up Whale Stream and ultimately the 2499m (2500 with a jump) peak of Dun Fiunary was stymied before we started. Nevertheless, we found a good camp for the night at the mouth of Boundary Stream and resolved to see the station owner the next morning.

With our negotiation skills primed, and our fast twitch muscles twitching in case we were confronted by a double-barrelled shotgun, we tentatively approached the house. The door opened and we were met by the kindest looking old lady one could hope to meet! “Yes of course you can go up Whale Stream,” she said. “Just watch out for the hunters, but they are due out today so they should be no problem.” “What about the ‘Private Property’ notice?” we asked. “It’s just to make sure we know who’s up there,” she replied. “No problem if you ask permission.” (Therein lies the moral of the story!) And not only did she give us permission, but let us leave Grant’s car in the homestead grounds. As we trudged up the Whale Stream track we met the hunters coming out. They appeared to have been successful, bagging several chamois and/or tar. One poor guy, however, had had his tent blown away and lost his wallet with it. Unfortunately, we never found the wallet.

After a couple of hours and a long lunch, we found an ideal small terrace above the stream where we could pitch the tents. This done, and before we fell asleep in the warm, late afternoon sun, we decided to go up to the stream fork and follow the north branch by tracking a long ridge terrace, helpfully mentioned by the hunters, which hugged the valley side some fifty metres above the stream. This made for ideal walking and, interrupted only by watching a chamois climb above us, we soon came in sight of the Whale Stream headwaters below the spectacularly craggy peaks of Ferintosh and Glentanner. We returned to camp with the evening sun on our backs, and after our evening meal settled down to the sound and smell of consumed dried onions.

Cruel Grant woke us at 6.30am the next morning to a low mist and the distant call of the kea. As the mist looked as though it would burn off, after breakfast we decided to head up towards Dun Fiunary in the hope that we could “knock the bugger off”. To get a quick start we left our tents up and hoped that the kea’s calls would remain distant.

As we climbed up from our campsite the mist cleared from the ridge terrace but remained in the valleys. Before we ascended into the Talus Basin below Dun Fiunary we had to drop to a small stream, which was still covered in mist. It was here that we experienced a strange phenomenon. We were above the mist with the sun above and behind us. This caused our shadows to be cast upon the mist below and be completely surrounded by a perfectly circular,

beautiful rainbow aura. Tony took this apparition as a divine signal from heaven and, after first blessing his fellow disciples, launched himself across the gap in an attempt to levitate himself into the Talus Basin. Needless to say God was not on his side and, after ignominiously picking himself up, he had to struggle up the steep tussocky incline like other mortals.

Once in the Talus Basin, we bore left (as recommended by an OTMC member) and took a steep but easily climbable tussock ridge that brought us to the left of the peak of Dun Fiunary. However, before we could gain the final rock ridge, we had to struggle up some hundred metres of scree of the “two steps up, one down” type. We had some relief courtesy of several tar who gave a demonstration of their remarkable ability to run across sheer rock faces. Finally we gained the ridge, only to find that it was about one metre wide and consisted mainly of loose rock! After a couple of scary attempts to climb along this ridge, we settled on a secure spot (“spot” being the operative word!) and had a late lunch whilst taking in the expansive views that stretched across Lakes Pukaki and Tekapo to the Two Thumb Range, and over the clouds which covered the country towards Timaru.

As it was by now mid afternoon, we decided not to seek an alternative route to the summit and so headed back down. The tiring descent was alleviated by two discoveries: the first an exquisite miniature rock and bright green moss garden, complete with bonsai-like trees (but no Hobbits), formed where a spring emerged from surrounding barren rock; and the second a perfectly preserved tar/chamois horn found by James. We arrived back at our tents, relieved to find that the keas had remained distant, and, after cleaning up all our gear, struggled off with full packs back down the valley.

Thirteen hours after being awoken by Grant, three very tired trampers (am I just speaking for myself here? – Tony) arrived back at Ferintosh Station. Just as we were driving out of the gate we were met by the very kind old lady and her husband. We told them of our adventures and not being able to get to the peak. The old man replied with typical sheep farmer taciturnity, “You went the wrong way. You should have gone further up the basin.” Now who was the &#?!?!# at the club who told us to “bear left” once we were in the Talus Basin?

Never mind, we had a good hard tramp (11 hours), climbed to over 2000metres, had great weather, great views and what is better than being in amongst the mountains? (Fish and chips afterwards at the Omarama pub?)

Tony Timperley, for Grant Burnard and James Macdonald.

A SOUTHERN MAN GOES VOLCANIC

If there's a perk in being on the FMC Executive, it's that twice a year, after an all day meeting, we get to for a wander in a part of the country we may not otherwise get to. Usually these trips are necessarily short, as people have to travel home. But when I found we were meeting in Taranaki, I suggested that there was really only one day-trip there I was interested in. Probably with that in mind, the meeting venue was the historic Camphouse at North Egmont, and I made sure that I had a Monday flight booked.

Despite earlier threats, Sunday dawned clear and still. The summit was there for all to see, so seven of us hit the road – literally. Unfortunately, the commonest route to the summit starts on a 4x4 track, known locally as The Puffer, and it was this that occupied our first hour and 500 vertical metres. We were down to 6 of us after Tahurangi Lodge, a large locked hut (with a small emergency shelter) belonging to Taranaki Alpine Club. The route from here goes up a large gully, and it's steps all the way – initially wooden-framed stone ones, then a wooden

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"stairway to heaven". Next it was scree – the usual two up, one back routine. Often there was an underlying hard layer, making traction a bit tricky. Eventually we reached the bottom of The Lizard, a rock ridge that clearly showed its volcanic origins. Once atop The Lizard, a bit of a scramble around the side of one of the low peaks was needed to avoid a snow slope, and then we were in the crater. As four of the group had gone ahead and were nowhere to be seen, I was glad to have had a quick look at a map the night before, and so knew that the knob on our right was slightly higher than the trickier looking one to the left. A last five minutes of scree saw us on top.

For the latter part of the climb, there had been quite a cool breeze, which had initially been refreshing but was now less welcome. The cloud had come in below us as we climbed The Lizard, so unfortunately the view was largely that of the top of a cloud, the only exception being Ruapehu and Ngaruahoe some 120km distant. Lunch & photos were dealt to beside a plaque commemorating Dieffenbach's ascent.

The descent was unremarkable, although took not much less time than the ascent. By the time we reached the scree, it was warm enough to lose a layer. Once below the cloud layer, we were better able to appreciate provincial Taranaki than in the morning, when we had had eyes only for the top.

David Barnes for Lex Smith, John Wilson, Jean Wilson, John Rhodes & Robin McNeill.

TEN TRAMPERS AND A TYPHOON

Because of the forecast, I was only half expecting anybody to turn up at the clubrooms on Sunday morning (28th March) for Bruce's, nope, Robyn's, nope, my trip to Poatiri/Mt Charles. So, I had a back-up plan of going to the Craft Show and/or the Museum. Then, Alison Johnston rang us at 8am to say their whole family would be there. Then we had to seriously get moving, as it was all on. Organising yourself to go on a day walk is really easy. Organising a family, two of whom said that they would rather stay at home and play on the computer all day and didn't really want to go, is another thing.

We got to the clubrooms at 9am exactly. Phew! Richard ate his muesli in the car on the way down. A cheery few 6 people were there to greet us and away we drove along the Peninsula, in the very windy wind and ominous looking sky.

There was a bit of confusion at the start of the track, as we missed the sign post. How can 10 people miss the big wooden sign post? I don't know. We drove to the end of the Allans Beach Road. I went to see the people of the house there, to make sure we had the right spot. But alas, there was nobody home, just a whole lot of chickens. Richard and I were on a trip up Mount Charles with the club 14 years ago, where we started from this house. I remember it well, as I was quite pregnant and there was no way that I could make it to the top that time. With nobody around to ask, we hustled up the track as fast as possible, sussed out that there were only big sheep in the paddocks anyway and continued. It was really, really windy at the bottom of the track, but as we got further up the mountain the wind was, well, more windy. Extremely windy! Richard said we must be in the jetstream by now, but it's just that this is the bit of Otago that sticks out most into the ocean storms.

We hid behind the first bunch of rocks we came to. It was about morning tea time, so Graham produced lots of chocolate for everyone. A storm came through as we finished the chocolate and we had to wait for a lull before dashing out from our rocks to follow the path up the less windy side of the mountain. This was nice. The wind pushed us upwards and not sideways for a while. We admired the pepper trees. Then we were there on the top. Some of us crawled the last few metres because we couldn't stand up straight. All that gin and tonic the

night before? No, it was the windy wind. Bloody hell, was it strong! After shouting “yippee” “We made it” and all that, we staggered down to the less windy side of the rocks. We admired the views, the insect life (why would an insect choose to live on the top of such a windswept hill?) and did the obligatory summit photo. The kids had a spitting contest, with Vincent winning by sending his spit into the sea past Taiaroa Head.

The next storm was fast approaching. Time to run! Most of us had a great run into the wind on the way down with lots of shouting and leaping in the air to see how far the wind could carry you before you came back down to earth. The smaller people with shorter legs conceded to a nervous tip-toe around the lovely crop of thistles about half way down. But then we were away again yeehaaing into the wind; Alison and Graham sedately walking down hand-in-hand at the back. Very romantic. I think they had a quick snog when no-one was looking, but they’re allowed to. They’ve been married at least 13 years or so.

We had lunch back at the cars and decided not to visit Allans Beach on account of not wanting our faces and legs sand-blasted. We saw the BIG wooden walkway sign as we drove away. Oops! Maybe they should paint it bright orange or something. The trip ended with a visit to Macandrew Bay School Fair. Graham picked up a bag of books. Our family (the children anyway, who do mad things like eating ice cream on cold days) had an ice cream to eat in the car on the way home. And nobody was car sick, thank goodness.

Tracy Pettinger (leader) for Richard, Vincent and Rosa Pettinger, Janet Barclay, James Marshall and Graham, Alison, Christina and Jasmin Johnston.

RIGHT AROUND MT SOMERS

The addition of the new South Face route on Mt Somers has enhanced the opportunities for weekend trips in the area.

Our group – all with early 80s OTMC associations - hit the track at 11am, heading for Pinnacles Hut and beyond. The initial slog uphill was a bit of a shock for the bodies, with the sweat fair pouring off within minutes. The lookout rock, with its expansive views of the bush-clad gorges, was a welcome excuse for a break. From there, the descent to the stream was a little gentler than I expected. When we got to the main stream crossing, lunch seemed like a good idea. Carrying on, it was onwards and upwards, with a spot where the track passes behind a waterfall a bit of a novelty. One last grunt brought us to the knob at the edge of the Pinnacles basin, where Paul regaled us with cautionary tales about rockclimbing on the nearby crags with someone who’s happy a grade or three higher than he is. Carrying on past the hut, we climbed up to the interestingly- named Maiden’s Relief, where Paul managed to pollute the best drinking water since lunch by immersing himself in a rock-lined plunge pool just above the track. Then it was just a short sidle to the saddle. Classical nor’wester signs made us feel that our decision not to spend the weekend at Mueller Hut was vindicated, while the strength of the wind put paid to an earlier suggestion of a Guinness at the saddle. As we approached Morgan Stream, the sight of half a dozen trampers emerging from the Hydroslide Stream track and heading over the last ridge to Mt Somers Hut confirmed an earlier plan to avoid the hut and stay in the Water Caves rock biv. It wasn’t really sauna weather, anyway. The Guinness was dealt to, and then the fire – inevitable with Barry in the group – was lit and the serious business of consuming as much as possible of the contents of our packs commenced. Some visitors from the hut informed us that there was no firewood there, so carrying on for a sauna would have been fruitless anyway.

Sunday dawned quite murky, so there was a brief discussion on options before we decided on sticking with the circumnavigation. The morning’s route took us past Hydroslide Stream and

the Infamous Fencers' Campsite (does anyone know the origin of this name?), then over a ridge and down to the crossing of Tri Falls Stream. We'd come up a swollen Tri Falls Stream a year previously, but almost didn't recognise it running at a much more manageable level. From there we commenced the slog up to the Bus Stop, still travelling in murk. A short descent brought us to the plateau leading to the Woolshed Creek carpark, and soon we found ourselves at the top of the gully leading down there, two hours from the biv.

This point marks the start of the new route. The initial couple of hours is well marked but not developed much. It appears the track development philosophy (a sensible one, in my view) is that if there's enough markers, a pretty clear track will develop itself with a bit of use. The route is largely in tussock and scrub, with the occasional patch of black beech in the gullies. The line, which tends downwards, is lower on the hillside than we had envisaged, but on looking at the steep gullies above us, we could understand the logic. The murky conditions meant the view across the Canterbury Plains wasn't there, but this did contribute to a sense of being in a wild and remote landscape. The mist-shrouded volcanic outcrops above us added to that feeling.

After an hour and a half, we reached a larger area of beech. The track here gave the appearance of having been established and used for quite some time. After crossing a couple of dry creeks, Caves Steam seemed like a good spot for lunch. From there, the track climbed steadily for nearly half an hour – a good way to warm up after cooling off at lunchtime – and reached a small saddle, then started to sidle, crossing a couple of gullies. These were marked with signs saying "Avalanche Zone", which seemed a bit incongruous so far below bushline on a smallish hill. However, Barry, as a trained avalanche tech, said he could see evidence of some activity, and a later view of the whole hillside made it a lot more obvious. Soon we picked up the main track leading to the summit of Mt Somers. A suggestion that the subalpine vegetation in the mist was reminiscent enough of Scotland to suggest a dram was happily able to be acted upon. Then it was onwards and downwards, and an hour and a half saw us back at the carpark, at the conclusion of a really enjoyable trip.

We couldn't see why the DoC pamphlet suggested doing the South Face route in the opposite direction. However, on a club trip where you've got all day on Saturday but don't want to finish too late on Sunday, the circuit would probably be better done clockwise, or else started from Woolshed Creek with a night at Pinnacles.

David Barnes for Paul Olsen, Barry Flamank & Lawrence McKay



BRAIN TEASER ANSWERS
from last month's edition

1.	Pennies from Heaven
2.	Knock on wood
3.	A big misunderstanding
4.	Turned upside down
5.	Looking all over for bargains
6.	Cash on delivery
7.	Odd man out
8.	A punch in the nose

Trip list

CHIEF GUIDE COMMENT

With Bushcraft over for another year, it is back to tramping again. The combined Bushcraft/OTMC trip to Timaru River in late March was a great trip. Even though the forecast was dodgy, we only had about 15 minutes of light rain on Saturday evening. It was encouraging to see 12 out of the 19 Bushcraft participants on the trip. They furthered their learning, particularly in river-crossing!

The recent Easter trip to Arthur's Pass has confirmed that winter tramping conditions have arrived already. Up to 20cm of snow in parts of Arthur's Pass village greeted members on Good Friday. The club has always made the most of the conditions during our trips – this was no exception. I know the party I was in had a great trip, and the other party I have had a report from completed their trip over Avalanche Peak, into the Crow, onto Carrington Hut and down the Waimak as planned.

Last month the trip card for the winter months was sent out with the Bulletin. I would like to thank the leaders who have volunteered to lead the trips. Also, a big thank-you Cathy McKersey for the great work she has done with the Sunday trips. If you don't see the trip you wanted the club to do on the list then put it on the trip suggestion list at the back of the clubrooms.



**Mt. Somers (All)
May 22-23**

Leader to be confirmed (contact) Antony Pettinger 473 7924

Mt. Somers has become quite a popular trip within the OTMC in the last five or so years. Situated in South Canterbury, the area enjoys relatively settled weather. A climb of Mt. Somers itself (1687m) is straightforward and offers good views over the area. A through trip from Woolshed Creek to the Alford Forest is a good option if we have two vehicles, and there are two good huts in the area. A new option is the chance to complete a full circuit of Mt. Somers – see David's report in this Bulletin. This trip will close on 13 May. If you are keen to lead this trip, please contact Antony, otherwise one will be selected from the triplist.

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**Waitutu / Port Craig (M/FE)
June 5-7 (Queens Birthday)
Leader to be confirmed (contact) Antony Pettinger 473 7924**

The Waitutu area has become a sort of traditional trip for the club to do during Queens Birthday. The two main options on this trip are either a circuit of the Hump Ridge and down to Port Craig, or an in and out trip to Port Craig itself. The latter option gives the chance to visit the tallest standing wooden viaducts in the Southern Hemisphere, further round from Port Craig. If you are interested in the history of the area, the book 'Viaducts Against The Sky' (the history of Port Craig) by Warren Bird is recommended reading.

This trip will close on 27 May. If you are keen to lead this trip, please contact Antony, otherwise one will be selected from the triplist.

**Dansey's Pass (Mt. Domet Option) (M/C)
June 19-20
Alan Thomson 455 7878**

Apparently Alan has some unfinished business with Mt. Domet, so he is keen to try and reach the top of the 1942m peak. Mt. Domet is regarded as a relatively easy climb in easy conditions, comprising a mixture of tussock, scree, rock, and snow. The view from the top is quite impressive, from the Oamaru coast, up the Waitaki Valley through to Mt. Cook. Cone and Grayson Peak are other options if Domet doesn't interest you, and a traverse between these two is quite straight-forward. If climbing Domet, a campsite at GR I41 033869 (the main fork in Otekaieke Stream above Chinamans Hut) is a good idea, especially with the shorter winter days.

The trip list will close on June 10.

Antony Pettinger, Chief Guide

DAYTRIPS

**Short City Walks (E)
May 2**

Dunedin offers some great walks within the confines of the city. Join me to discover these little gems. Frasres Gully bush track, Nicols Falls bush track (can be muddy), Signal Hill, Cleghorn St end farmland, great views of the harbour.

Back at the clubrooms by approx 1.30 pm. Car pool cost \$3.

Contact Cathy McKersey 455-0994

Possum Ridge (M)
9 May

The plan is to go down to the delightful Possum Hut from Mountain Road, then up Possum Ridge to link up with the Green Ridge track. From here we could make the short detour to Pulpit Rock before heading back down to the cars via Green ridge

Contact Joseph Donnelly 456 2077

All Day on the Peninsula (M)
May 16

There's a myth that Peninsular trips are short and not worth getting out of bed for. But string together enough of the short tracks, add a wee bit of road walking to join the dots, and you can have a solid enough day out. Throw in more uphill than a Maungatua traverse – but broken into manageable chunks – great views and some beach walking and you have an excellent wander without driving a long way. Bring water as there isn't any en route.

Carpool cost \$4

Contact David Barnes 454-4492



Inland Waikouaiti Area
23 May

Details to be advised prior to trip via email/clubnight. Carpool cost \$8
For more information,

Contact Tony Timperley 473-7257

Mt Hyde via the Aquaduct
30 May

This trip will start from the Taioma road with a walk through the forest and then a wee drop down to the aquaduct to cross the Taieri river, a climb to Mt Hyde (443m), and then retrace our steps back to the vehicles. This is a trip that the club hasn't done in a while so it will be new territory to most.

Contact: Alan Thomson 455 7878

Social Programme

Coming Thursday Night Meetings

- 6 May** **1st Aid for Trampers** - a useful update for those heading for the hills
- 13 May** **Rob Porteous** and friends will tell us about the fun they had "cycling" from **Haast to Paringa** via the Cattle track , and on the Cycle Saga.
- 20 May** **B.Y.O.** - Routeburn crossover, Rees valley and Kea Basin - tell us about your trips.
- 27 May** Debbie Cleland will talk about her experience on Outward Bound
- 3 June** Queen's Birthday Weekend - no clubnight.

Any ideas, and contact names in particular, are welcome for the Thursday evening activities. Please contact Fiona Webster (Social Convenor) if you can help - see the Committee member list.

Contributions (limit of 1000 words) are welcome for the June Bulletin, deadline is 13/05/04, publication 27/05/04. You can submit material on floppy disc (PC not Mac please), or email 'rbell@pooka.otago.ac.nz' (without the quotes). And you can leave paper submissions in the editor's box in the clubrooms, or post to Robyn Bell, 236A Taieri Rd, Dunedin. Thanks.