

CLAN EWEN SOCIETY



No. 45

Bulletin[©]

MAY, 2001

FAILTE

As we approach yet another AGM, I hope that we will have at least as many members attending as we have had in the past.

Last year's attendance was good and the AGM proved very successful with only a few hiccups which will be put right this time round. I always hope for bigger attendances however, and trust that 8th, 9th and 10th June this year will prove so.

I mention this particularly as I feel that we here in Scotland are suffering from adverse publicity overseas as far as tourism is concerned. I refer, of course, to the dreaded Foot & Mouth Disease that has beset us.

May I try to allay any fears that you may have regarding holiday travel.

The country is not under siege. There are vast areas that have not been affected, and which are open to tourists. One can still travel to, and through affected areas providing one obeys the regulations - laid down and which are well sign-posted. Our area - Cowal - is unaffected and is many miles from Dumfries & Galloway where culling is being carried out.

I have spoken to Mr. David Newton, the Estate Factor of Otter Estates, an Honorary member of our Society, and a farmer by profession and at the time of writing - mid April - he has stated that he will not allow anyone to enter any of his fields, which debars any visitors to our Cairn and Castle site, both of which lie on his farm.

We hope, however, that with careful husbandry by the Government and the farming community, things will have improved by June.

Don't hesitate, therefore. If you were planning to attend, then please do so and don't be put off by the rumours about which you have read or heard. Who knows? It may be all over by June.

Those of you who start to peruse the Bulletin from the back page forward will have noticed that Charlie Ewen's name is no longer listed as our E-mail correspondent. I received a telephone call from Charlie recently to say that his eyesight was failing rapidly and that little or nothing could be done medically to halt this trend or to cure it. As a result

Charlie has extreme difficulty reading and, apparently there are no spectacle lenses made that can alleviate this situation. Sadly Charlie has fallen victim to an acquired degenerative disease known as Macular Degeneration.

I'm sure that all members, those who have paid their subscriptions to him in the past, and particularly those of you who have exchanged mail and more recently E-mail with him, will wish to join with me in expressing our most sincere commiserations.

On a lighter note: I have taken the first step to establish a Chief for Clan Ewen, so we have started spending money on this quest. The action so far is that I have written to The Rothesay Herald, an advocate of the Lyon Court whom, I hope, can furnish me with the names of armigerous McEwens so that we may establish a *derbhfine* in order that the members thereof can consider those names which are offered for Chiefship. Whomsoever is selected may have to serve as Commander for several years, I think five years is acceptable at present - it used to be 20.

Looking forward to meeting you all again and hopefully meeting some who have not been here before.

Alan Ewing.

Secretary's Report

A committee meeting was held at the Piping Centre in Glasgow on 27th January at which all members attended. The minutes of this meeting are paraphrased hereunder.

1. A discussion re the venue and date of next meetings. Two committee meetings per year to take place - one in Glasgow and one in the east, e.g. Perth.

The dates would be: last Saturday in January and first Saturday in September. The venue for January meeting dependent on weather. Emphasis to be placed on fact that this year's AGM to be second Saturday in June which is a change from our customary date.

2. **Treasurer's Report**

Current Account (to date)	£1,990
Chief's Account (to date)	£1,390

Iain advised that he proposed changing the Chief's account to a Bank of Scotland 30 day account to achieve a better rate of interest. This was carried.

3. **Membership Secretary** gave details of members as follows:

Total membership	269
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These comprise:	Life members	50
	Paid up members	60

	i.e. Active members	110

SALES

Jim stated that there was a dearth of orders and that he had fulfilled any outstanding orders.

GENEALOGIST

Murdo had not received any feed back as a result of the web sites published in the November 2000 Bulletin.

AOCB

It was agreed to co-opt two new members onto the general committee. They are Ms. Sidnie Terry and Mr. David McEwan. An extra-ordinary meeting to be convened on 21st April 2001 to finalise the arrangements for the AGM.



*Sir John McEwan with his bride, Lady Rachel.
Sir John is a possible contender for the Clan Chiefship.*

Subscriptions

WHEN THE NOVEMBER 2000 ISSUE OF THE BULLETIN WAS DELIVERED TO MEMBERS, IT INCLUDED A MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTION FORM FOR THE PERIOD 1st JUNE, 2001 TO 31st MAY, 2002. SO FAR, THE RETURN OF THESE FORMS HAS BEEN SLOW AND AN AMENDED FORM IS ENCLOSED IN THIS SPRING 2001 ISSUE OF THE BULLETIN.

IF YOU HAVE NOT ALREADY RETURNED A FORM, YOUR EARLY RESPONSE WOULD BE APPRECIATED.

Iain McEwan, (Hon. Treasurer)

Society Manager's Report

My dear friends, now is the time for all good men to come to the aid of the party. No, this is not a typing exercise, nor is it a call only for the male members of the Clan, what it is is an invitation for all members, male, female, children and friends of the Clan to come along to this year's event, held in the Royal Marine Hotel in Dunoon from 8th to 10th June. Let's make this the biggest and best gathering that we have ever had and let's put Clan Ewen up amongst the biggest gatherings held in Scotland.

Last year was the first we had used the Royal Marine Hotel but what a pleasure it was to see so many of you enjoy the splendid facilities laid on by Shirley and Martin Greig. I am sure you would agree with me that the owners and staff of this fine hotel bent over backwards to meet everyone's needs and requirements.

As you will have seen in the previous bulletin, ferry travel can be made through myself on receipt of £5 per car and driver and £1.50 for each passenger thereafter, these are return prices - please send a reply-paid self addressed envelope.

This will be a saving of half the normal cost. REMEMBER, book early in order that we can send these tickets back to your home address prior to leaving for the clan gathering.

We will, as usual, be offering our full range of products and several new items at this year's gathering and we would hope that all members will



Is this the youngest member of our Clan? If you should see him at this year's Gathering, please stop and speak to him.

assist us by purchasing something, whatever it may be, to help with the general running of the Clan. Should any members wishing to avail themselves of new garments for this year's gathering, i.e. kilt, skirt, blouse, jacket, etc., please contact me as soon as possible as it may take several weeks for this to be made up. Should anyone come across an item they feel the clan should stock, please contact me direct by e-mail, phone, letter or see me at this year's gathering.

Our arrangements are well in hand now for this year's event but as we are still in the grips of this terrible foot and mouth disease, some events may have to be cancelled.

To all our overseas clans people: Barbara and I have been invited to represent the clan at this year's Scottish Tourist Board Exhibition in Glasgow and I will be looking for opportunities to pass on to you during your stay in Scotland. If I can be of any help in obtaining information or brochures, please let me know.

May I remind you all that we plan our second Miss Clan Ewen Competition this year and I would sincerely hope that more of our female members, whatever age, will enter. This competition is judged on many aspects, so the more the merrier.

At this year's event, we will have as our guest speaker, a clans woman, who has graced the Scottish Political scene for nearly half a century, namely Dr. Winnie Ewing, M.S.P., and on the Friday evening she will speak to us on her own chosen subject, "My Three Parliaments". I do hope that as many of you as possible will come along for a long weekend and join us on the Friday evening.

A full programme of events will be given to members at reception on arrival and this will give everyone a chance to plan their weekend.

In conclusion, I would like to wish you all a safe journey to both those coming from overseas and here at home and I look forward to seeing you all.

I would like to thank the Companies who contributed to last year's raffle. Shirley and Martin Greig, Royal Marine Hotel, Hunters Quay, Dunoon PA23 8HJ.

Hazel Anderson, Scottish & Newcastle Breweries, Frederick Street, Edinburgh.

Iain and Carol, T. J. Mathews, Bespoke Tailors Ltd., Blantyre Industrial Estate, Glasgow.

Scott Chalmers, Gaelic Themes, Park Circus, Glasgow.

Colin Brown, Inglis Buchan, Mercat Building, Glasgow.

Jim McEwan, ex of Bowmore in Islay, now Bruichladdich Distillery, Islay.

David McDade, McDade Ltd. (Tie Makers), McPhail Street, Glasgow G40 1DN.

Bob Duffy of Scotmark, 15 Smithfield Crescent, Blairgowrie PH10 6UD

James McLennan, Chief Executive Argyll & Bute Council, Kilmory, Lochgilphead PA31 8RT.

Ms. Kay Scott, Ortak, Hatston, Kirkwall, Orkney KW15 1RQ.

We will be holding a raffle again this year and we would be most appreciative of any items gifted for this event.

I would also like to thank our own members who made their own special contribution to the raffle, it was much appreciated.

Yours aye, Jim McEwen

Clan Ewen Price List

Item	£
Clan Notebooks	1.50
Clan Paper and Envelopes	4.00
One Box Green Clan Crested Coasters	7.00
Book Markers (Blue/Red)	1.50
Clan Crested Coasters	7.00
1 Box Clan Crested Table Mats	35.00
Clan Table Mats	20.00
Clan Coasters	9.00
Clan Postcards x 10	2.00
Clan Chopping Board	8.50
Clan Tray-Gilt Edge	10.00
Clan Tray	8.00
Fishing Table Mats	14.00
Fishing Coasters	7.50
Fishing Chopping Board	6.00
Gents Tartan Ties (Ancient)	8.50

Gents Tartan Ties (Modern)	8.50
Gents Tartan Bow Tie (A)	5.00
Children's Bow Ties (A)	3.00
Gents Tartan Ties Long (A)	9.50
Ladies Scarves (A)	8.00
Ladies Scarves (M)	8.00
Tartan Material Per Metre - Double Skirt Width (Ancient)	15.00
Ladies Tartan Sashes	12.00
Tartan Cummerbunds	15.00
Clan Miniature Whisky (Only Available In U.K.)	3.00
Leather Clan Key Fob	3.00
Acrylic Tartan Key Ring	2.00
Clan Fridge Magnet	3.00
Clan Gold Colour Tartan Brooch	3.00
Clan Tea Spoons	3.50
Clan Paperweight	5.00
Clan Tartan Mugs	5.00
Clan Crested Velour Cushions (Pink, Green & Blue):- By Order Only	22.00
Ladies Velour Clan Crested Hand Bags (Black, Blue & Green):- By Order Only (These Can Also Be Made In Sporrans Style)	35.00
Box White 4 Damask Clan Crested Napkins	30.00
Clan Crested Kilt Pins	8.00
Silver Clan Crested Key Fob	8.00
Silver Clan Crested Brooch	8.00
Clan Wool Scarves (M)	8.50
Clan Battery Clock	15.00
Clan History Books	26.00
Tartan Waistcoat (A)	25.00
## Clan Crested ties on blue background ##	12.50

(Never been available before - only available through Clan Society)

ALL ITEMS SUBJECT TO POSTAGE & PACKING. FOR NON-STERLING CHEQUES A SURCHARGE OF £6 IS PAYABLE.

HIGHLAND DRESS, ACCESSORIES I.E. - DIRKS, CAIRNGORMS, SGIAN DUBH, BELT BUCKLES, PLAIDS ARE ALL AVAILABLE TO ORDER - DELIVERY TIMES MAY VARY. ALL OTHER CLAN TARTANS AVAILABLE THROUGH MAIL ORDER AND SHOULD BE PRE-PAID.

Researching Your Scottish Forebears - The Basics

In the last issue of the Bulletin I detailed a wide range of websites and related sources via which those of us with skill in IT (Information Technology) and computers could search for information on their forebears. However, I am very conscious that we are not all IT literate - and many people have no wish to go down that route. (It can, indeed, be daunting).

Several members have asked me for information on the basics of family history research - where to start, and how to make some progress; but not necessarily to turn it into an all-consuming passion.

In a nutshell, start with what you know. There are a number of ways of preparing a family tree. One option is to trace back your father's (the paternal) line. This involves starting with yourself, then your father, then his parents, then their parents, and so on. As each generation is completed, it will double in size from the last. (Father - one name; his parents - two names; their parents - four names)

As you progress back each generation - particularly, in Scotland before 1855 - your task will get harder and more time consuming. The same applies if you wish to trace back your mother's line. Firstly, your mother; then her parents; then their parents, and so on. Most people setting out to prepare a family tree will wish to trace both the paternal (father) and maternal (mother) lines - it is more than likely that you will get back further with one of these than the other.

A much harder, and more ambitious line to take is to start with your earliest known forebear, and then work forwards in time to the present day. For instance, you may know from family hearsay that you are descended from John McEwan of Edinburgh, born 1789. If you set yourself the task of starting with this John McEwan how do you know where to start?

There are probably several people called John McEwan born 1789 in Edinburgh. If, in the records, you find one - how do you know it is the right one? If you do identify the right one, how do you establish the correct line from him to you? He may have had six children, but only one of them is "direct line" to you; the others are off at a tangent - providing

lines of cousins and second cousins, and others even more distant. This method of research can be highly rewarding - as evidenced by some of our members' own efforts - but it is far from easy, and it is very time consuming. Much easier, as I said, to start with what you know, and the easiest starting point is **yourself**.

It will be a great help if you have a copy of your full Birth Certificate to hand. (The full Birth Certificate has a lot more information than an abridged Certificate.) If you do not have a full Birth Certificate, you can easily get a copy. Contact the General Register Office for Scotland ("GROS") for details of how to go about this. Address: New Register House, Princes Street, Edinburgh EH1 3YT, Scotland. (Certificate ordering service: telephone 0131 314 4411; International +44 131 314 4411). For those with access to computers etc., their website is **<http://www.gro-scotland.gov.uk>** and the e-mail contact is: **records@gro-scotland.gov.uk**.

Certificates will cost you, however - genealogy is not a free pastime!

There is a great deal of information on the Birth Certificate:

1. Details of the entry number, and the Register Book from which the details have been taken.
2. Your full name.
3. Your date of birth, and where born.
4. Male or female.
5. Full name, and occupation, of father.
6. Full name, and maiden surname, of mother.
7. Date and place of their marriage.
8. Signature and details of the person who officially notified the authorities of your birth.
9. When and where the birth was recorded, and the official's details.

Armed with this information, you are well equipped to progress back in time. I suggest that you follow back both the paternal and the maternal lines - and see how you progress with each of them. If you do get a bit stuck with one, a bit of progress with the other will help to keep your spirits up. From the Birth Certificate referred to above, you now have

your parents' full names, and your mother's maiden name, plus their date & place of marriage. What you want to see now is a copy of their Marriage Certificate. Again, "GROS" is the place to contact. The full Marriage Certificate contains the following:

1. Details of the entry number, and the Register Book from which the details have been taken.
2. Bridegroom's full name and occupation.
3. Bride's full name and occupation.
4. Their marital status at the time of marriage, and their respective birth dates.
5. Their birth places (country).
6. Their usual addresses immediately prior to marriage.
7. Their parents (i.e. your grand-parents) full names, occupations of their fathers (i.e. your two grandfathers), and the maiden surnames of their mothers (i.e. your grand-mothers)
8. Details of the person solemnising the marriage, and the official witnesses to the marriage.

You see how we now have you, your parents, and your grandparents in the picture - three generations already! The next step is Birth Certificates for each of your parents. From their Marriage Certificate you know their full names at the time of marriage, dates of birth, and their parents names. This last item is important. Your mother may have been born Mary Cameron on 15 April 1942 in Scotland. It is not unlikely that six people with the name Mary Cameron were born on 15 April 1942. Make sure that you do have her parents' names to hand - so as to ensure that you have the correct Mary Cameron.

So it is really a case of going logically from Birth Certificate to Marriage Certificate, to Birth Certificate, and so on. The "GROS" mentioned earlier, has a very useful introductory leaflet on researching one's family, and the facilities that are available through their offices. It is fairly time consuming to correspond with the "GROS" one step / one certificate at a time; but you will get some interesting mail arriving at your house - and it could validly be said that the official certificates you receive are

family heirlooms in themselves. An alternative method, if you can get to Edinburgh, is to reserve a seat in the "GROS" search rooms for a day - or a week if you want. This is the same address, but the telephone number is 0131 334 0380; International: +44 131 334 0380. Usually a great deal of progress can be made in one full day. A week may be too much of a good thing.

Do make any booking reservation well in advance, especially in the summer months. Also, only pencils are allowed for writing in the search rooms - no pens or biros. By searching the records in person you can look through them fairly quickly, and transcribe them onto your own notepad. It should be possible to record at least twenty certificates in the one day by this method - and staff are on hand to provide assistance should you require it. (That said, they are very willing to help with queries - but they will not do the work for you!). If you wish you can also order official copies of the certificates while you are there.

These certainly add a touch of authenticity to your researches. An alternative method is to hire the services of a professional genealogist to do the work for you. However, I think that those people who do the work themselves generally gain a great deal of satisfaction from having done so - albeit usually with some setbacks and tears along the way.

Do please note that what I have said above refers to Births and Marriages **in Scotland**. If, therefore, you were not born in Scotland but your parents were, you will need to start with them. Remember that if they were also married in Scotland, you would be best to start with their Marriage Certificate - that being the most recent identifiable event - and then go back from there. Full Death Certificate records are also available at the "GROS". It may be the case that you need to use a Death Certificate as your 'starting point'. Also note that if there are other factors to take into account (e.g. adoptions or illegitimacy), it can get a bit more complicated.

Do remember that the spelling and the handwriting on the records are not always neat or totally accurate. A hand-written letter S can often look like the letter F (particularly on older documents). A hand-written T can look like a J. Indeed, this is the case with my wife's Birth Certificate. From the handwriting it looks as if her father has been recorded as "JP Cameron". We know that he was "Thomas" - and elsewhere on the Cer-

tificate this name is spelled out in full, albeit that it looks like "Jhomas" from the writing. Again, as many members will confirm, the surname spelling will often change from one certificate to another (e.g. McEwen to McEwan). It is important both to be aware of this, and not to be put off by it.

I mentioned earlier the date 1855. Providing everything proceeds smoothly, it should be relatively easy to get back to 1855. A uniform system for recording - as is used today - came into effect in January 1855. Prior to this date the recording was the responsibility of the Church Minister for the Parish in which the event happened. There were over 900 Parishes in Scotland, and the method of recording / what information was recorded (if anything) very much depended on the enthusiasm of the Minister in question for this particular task. Some Ministers did not bother; sometimes the records were lost or burned (in error or otherwise). It can be difficult to identify the correct Parish, out of over 900. However, it is certainly possible to go back a long way before 1855 - even to the late 1500s in some cases - but it is "a whole new ball game", and not for the faint hearted beginner. Good luck! I hope that if you do give it a try you will share your experiences (good and bad) with fellow members through the columns of the Bulletin.

A.G. Murdo McEwan - February 2001

Message to Members

To the youth and seniors of the Ewen Society there is one word you should make no part of your life if you can avoid it, procrastination, which means to put things off to another time. It is known as the thief of time and we never know when our time will run out for us. When I receive letters for example I answer them right away. When I have something to write about I post it as soon as I can. To the youth I say, don't procrastinate about learning of your family history. To the seniors I say likewise about sharing your knowledge of that history for you never know when your time will run out. I will post these thoughts before I go to bed.

Your U.S. Correspondent

Paul McEwan

McEwan Heritage

This is a drawing of an early crest and shield of a McEwan family from around the 1300s. The Clan motto sits above the crest, displaying "Reviresco", I grow again. A knight's helm of armour, dating from around the time of Robert the Bruce. It could possibly relate to the time of Gillespie and Bannockburn, when Gillespie McEwan received the barony estate lands from Bruce for military service rendered. This being after his father had forfeited the estates by campaigning against Bruce.

The helm is crowned with a tressure of oak leaves. Resting upon this, sits the family emblem of the Clan. This depicts a stunted oak tree which has been chopped down, but is developing new growth from its base. The signature is recognised by all members of Clan Ewen.



The shield shows a Scots Lion passant signifying the Clan as being of Royal line descent. It also shows a wheatsheaf or a quiver of arrows. The original shield is difficult to decipher and has been depicted as both these interpretations on several designs.

I am no expert on heraldry, so I would like some feedback on the points above. Also, the tree emblem sits upon an ermine band of red and gold or red and silver. Whose colours are these?

There is also a significance to the helm being turned to the left and not facing front. But alas! I cannot remember what it is.

If any member has a better knowledge and understanding of heraldry,

on these points and others, I would like their opinion and comments.

An article on the main features in deciphering a family crest and shield would be most helpful to our members. To clarify such points as what do sable; quartered; and indifferenced; mean?

My thanks go to Paul McEwan our USA Correspondent for sending in the wonderful drawing of the Crest.

Editor

Editor's Letter

This is just a note to all McEwan's of all spellings within the family, to spare a thought for all rural and farming communities, here and abroad, who have been blighted by the horrendous disease, foot and mouth. If you can support in any way, do so. The families and livelihoods of whole generations, have gone up in smoke.

I do not know how many, if any, McEwans are affected today by the crisis but in Perthshire in the 1800s, there were many McEwans in the country.

That was until a cattle plague hit. Whole communities disintegrated, many moving to Glasgow to find passage abroad, my own ancestors being one of them. I am still trying to find ten sons scattered to the four winds, all over the world, to this day. So the damage done can be far reaching and incorporate many areas, not registered immediately.

Remember also, the original homeland area in Argyll is a farming community. The statistical account shows in the records, a large section of the community as farmers, in and around the Kilfinan area.

So maybe at some point, in some small way, we have all been affected by this kind of catastrophe and can understand the hardship and suffering caused.

It affects whole communities long-term and many will take a long time to recover from this.

Our Clan is also a community and we should learn from these rural and farming families. In difficult times, you pull together and use all the resources you have available for the benefit of everyone.

So if you can support in any way, please do. If you are coming to the Gathering, enjoy it and involve yourself in it. The Gathering is a celebration of the coming together of Clan members from around the world.

Profile on . . . Earle McEwen (continued)

The most memorable hunts aren't always the most productive. Raymond, one of Earle's five sons (he has two daughters) was twelve years old when he and Earle were hunting near Aratiatia at Maranui. They'd crossed farmland to reach a fence line which bordered a block of bush. They looked across a gut which filtered down into the bush and noticed a huge gray sow which Earle estimated to be around 2501bs. His dog was working the face above her, knowing full well that there was a pig in the vicinity as it got a hint of the sow's scent, but unable to nail a decent whiff of her.

The pig was a couple of hundred metres away from the hunters and knew that a dog was out to grab a mouthful of her giant floppy ear.

The pig walked along stopping to cock her ear and would raise her leg as if pointing like a dog. This times before she decided it was time to do a runner. A well worn track through the dead fern was her escape route, one that was going to take her right past Earle and Raymond. Throwing caution to the wind there was only one plan of attack the hunters could follow. They shimmied up the strainer posts.

The game plan was for Earle who was closest to jump on her as she trotted past. He figured if he hit her in the middle of the back she'd go down and theoretically he'd be able to grab hold of something. Everything was running like clockwork as the mountain of pork came into full

view and Earle launched himself into flight bum first, a split second too late meant that he hit the sow's butt and slammed into the hard packed ground with a thud. His kidneys floated up around his ears and his wrinkled spuds bounced up into his abdomen. Raymond dived from atop his strainer but completely miscalculated and did a face plant onto the dry dusty track while the pig took off unscathed. Both hunters were still having a good look at the ground with their brains rattled and top and bottom ends ringing with pain. The dog took off in hot pursuit but the pig escaped unscathed.

The hunter can just as easily become the hunted, as we all know the wild pig commands and deserves respect as an adversary and game animal. Like anyone that's pig hunted for numerous years Earle's had his fair share of close shaves. He was out doing field work, researching trout for Internal Affairs at Waihaha, which is nestled on the shores of Lake Taupo when his dog Tip got onto a pig.

Armed with a rifle in case he saw any deer he took off to the bail. A chorus of barking was erupting from within the depths of a pig tunnel. Scoffing, chomping and the clicking of ivory verified that Tip had a good boar to contend with. Deciding the only solution was to crawl into the tunnel and deal to the pig he crawled in with his rifle at the ready.

All hell broke loose and the infuriated boar came bearing down on Earle with a canine earring dangling from its bristly ear. As the enraged pig blasted past it gave a vicious swipe with its hooks and disappeared into the daylight and over the side of a gut. Tip was out-matched and the boar lived to tell the tale. So did Earle, he'd escaped relatively unscathed. The only thing that needed stitching were his waders which sported a lengthy rip as a reminder of his close call. Earle's mates call him "Poacher" and its not without good reason. One day he was hunting Fletchers Forest with Chum who had a good boar who was proving to be a real fighter bailed up a gully in a dead end gut. There was only one thing Earle could do.

He was young and fearless and climbed around above the fracas then dropped down to the blunt end of the boar. In a flash the pig turned and got into him. Chum came to his master's aid and grabbed a mouthful of leg which spun the hog around long enough to allow Earle to tip and stick him. He considers himself lucky not to have been ripped.

"Poacher" is a label which he's been stuck with for many years since a mate got caught and squealed like a stuck pig and turned queen's evidence in return for a lighter sentence. It resulted in Earle receiving a three pound fine and being banned from Fletchers Forest for life even though he'd never been caught. He's now a staunch club member and redeemed character.

He's not an advocate of poaching with all of the available areas to hunt, but admits to joining a club in an attempt to curtail his poaching in his younger days.

It's ironic that the queen has also played another role in his pig hunting. He purchased an old Austin which had been previously used to ferry Queen Liz around when she visited our shores. She'd probably be mortified if she knew that Earle cannibalised the Austin that taxied her royal highness and cut it down into a pig hunting wagon.

It was under the shadow of Mount Tahara in 1975 that Earle nailed his biggest pig. His sister was behind the wheel of the Austin and dropped him and his mate Gunner Powell off just past the mountain then headed back towards Taupo.

They crossed the farmland to the rear of the mountain and after a fruitless hunt were returning back to the road when it started to rain. They were only 50 metres from the road when Nicky, Earle's dog darted into the scrub and started bailing. Gunners hound joined in and a hell of a scrap ensued. They had a boar who was playing a tune by clicking his ivory like castanets and scoffing and snorting to let man and hound know that he meant business.

With Gunners dog firmly latched onto the rear and Nicky tucked in with a mouthful of ear the boar had the anchors on. Earle had fought his way through the scrub, stepped in and tipped and stuck the boar which went just a tad under 200 lbs. Coincidentally just as they broke out onto the road with the pig Earle's sister turned up to pick them up in the Austin.

Nearly all of Earle's hunting was done alone with just one dog. He rates Nicky as being the best dog he's ever had. All of his dogs have been bred from his own. When they've reached 3-5 years of age he's

produced a pup which he's run with his dog. Nicky was a lab cattle cross heading dog.

A breed which Earle believes possesses intelligence, are quick on their feet and cover an area well. By casting out as heading dogs do, rather than chasing a pig when it breaks, the dog is able to head the pig and then bail till the hunter arrives then tuck into a hold. Admittedly he says that at times one dog can be clearly out-matched by a big boar but this is something that has never worried Earle.

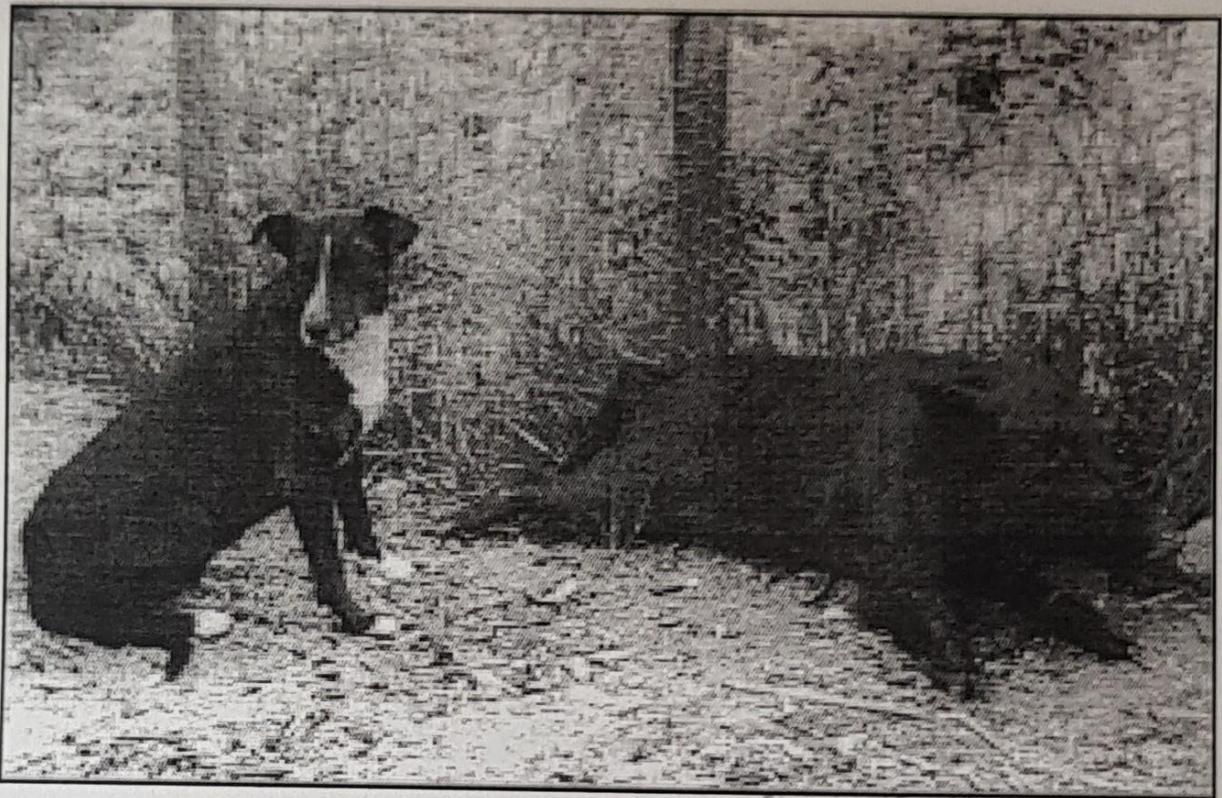
As far as he's concerned anything that's so big it eludes the fangs of his dog is probably too big to carry anyway. Hunters that catch pigs that you struggle to carry out and risk blowing a vessel in the gut busting process, can keep them. Over the years he's proud of the fact that none of his dogs have been ripped badly.

At worst they've suffered the odd poke. He attributes this to being a staunch advocate of training his dogs to hold on the ear and tuck in. All of his dogs have worked from whistle and hand actions. Earle glows with pride when he speaks of how when he skins his pigs he takes off the hocks and at worst there may be a small bit of bruising where his dog has given the pig a hit in the rear to slow the hog up a bit.

Despite the heavy populations of pigs which roamed the bush in his early hunting days the most pigs Earle has taken in one day were three. He recalls during one hunt near the Wanganui River - The dogs bailed and returned, then bailed and returned again. He was carrying a rifle due to the fact that wild bulls roamed the area. The very reason for which the dogs were returning.

They had a big black cattle beast bailed. Steak wasn't on Earle's menu and the dogs were called in till they put a healthy distance between themselves and the bullock. Within minutes of their release the dogs delivered the goods and Earle and his son both had a pig to carry each. While they were giving their attention to the pork the hounds nailed another pig. Loaded to the hilt with pork, they'd only travelled several hundred metres when they sighted two different mobs grazing unperturbed, totalling over 30 animals.

The pigs were left unscathed for the simple reason that Earle's attitude is that he wants to be able to return next Sunday to indulge in his favour-



Chum 1 and Boar Hatepe, 1958

ite pastime. The area was one of the few private blocks that he hunted on over the years until a bunch of townies went in and massacred all of the pigs in the area. Something which has Earle seething.

Being a staunch conservationist he says he's a keen advocate of Tokoroa clubs release system. He believes the future of the sport lies with such clubs educating young members and instilling healthy attitudes towards hunting into them. He's happy with the status quo and believes the clubs are doing a good job of teaching up-coming members the rules of the game and not to be greedy.

He firmly believes that hunters looking for dogs should choose from intelligent bloodlines that hold on the ear as after all the idea is to get meat on the table. He's angered by brainless breeds that think with their fangs and hit sows only to chomp their way through her litter. Mutts that do that and fight with other dogs belong down the offal hole. He's seen valuable dogs wrecked for life through aggressive dogs which fight when they meet another team in the bush.

Earle states joining a club is a great way to gain access (helps curb the

urge to poach as well), meet a great bunch of guys and enjoy conviviality on club days. Hunting for the sheer enjoyment of the sport should be paramount rather than seeing who can stake claim to the biggest pig. If you catch a sow in pig let her go, we need to conserve what's left of what we've got. When he first started hunting he was guaranteed a pig. Now your guaranteed a hunt but you can't guarantee that the dogs will get a run.

Compared to the pigs of yesteryear today's hogs wear Adidas running shoes and graze at about forty miles an hour. The hunting is getting harder. He's adamant that hunters that sell pork should be castrated so as they can't breed and produce more pork sellers. He sights many deer on his hunts and believes that there are high enough numbers of the animals to justify the sale of venison but the sale of pork should be taboo as a deterrent to greedily taking more than your share of pork from the bush.

At seventy years of age Earle's still dangerously fit and running several self-owned businesses. A hip replacement last year has done little to curb his Sunday hunts and he frequently jogs his way back to his ute at the end of a day in the bush. For the first time in years he's now running two dogs and a pup. He still mostly hunts alone and nailed his last pig and was home again after only three quarters of an hour. Two pigs had the cheek to run across the road in front of his ute as he was driving through a block of open pines. The dogs flew off the back and with each latched firmly on to an ear while his pup bailed it was a matter of routinely going through the motions to tip and stick the 90lb boar. When he rung his wife up on the cell phone he now carries, she thought the worst, thinking he'd stuffed his hip and couldn't believe it when he told her he was on his way home with a bit of pork. Something that he's now teaching his grandson. Getting out into some great country with good mates whether they be man or mutt and bringing home the bacon.

Rick Williamson

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