



Jacques Francois Bordet posing with a conformation winner he judged which was owned by Lynda Kieres, Belgrade, MT 2009.

**THE SECOND FRENCHMAN---REMEMBERING LONG TIME CEB-US FRIEND AND
EPAGNEUL BRETON FOUNDATION ADVISORY TRUSTEE JACQUES FRANÇOIS
BORDET**

In Memoriam – Jacques François Bordet (1935-2023)

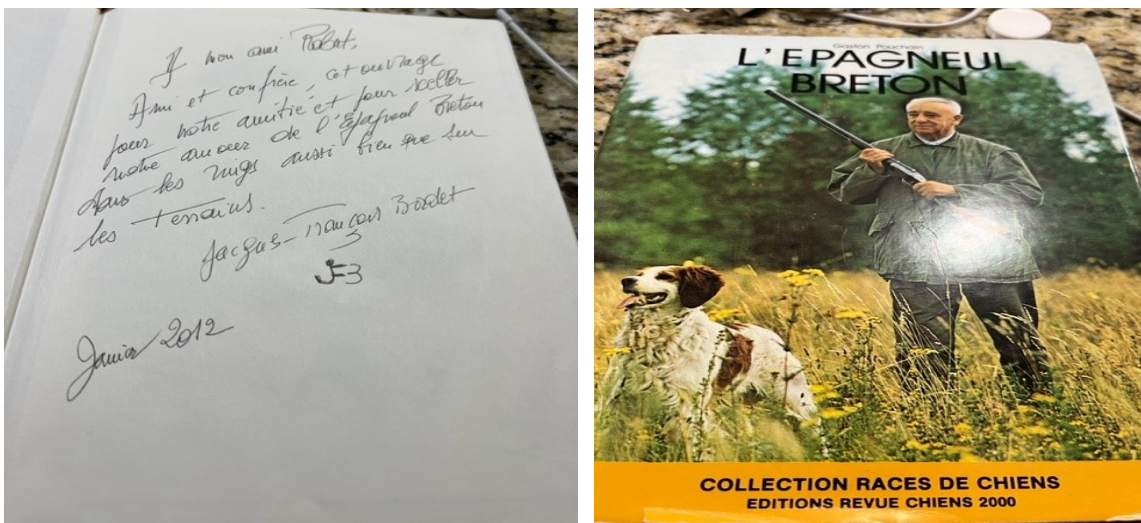
Long time CEB-US Honorary member and E.B. Foundation Honorary Trustee Jacques François Bordet passed away on January 20, 2023 from a brief battle with cancer. Except for a brief stint living in Paris during his younger years, he lived most of his life in his native village of Aunac, in southwest France. At the time of his passing, he was 88 years of age. He is survived by his spouse Marie Therese Bordet, two daughters Pascale and Isabelle, two grandchildren Benjamin and Anastasia and his 12-year-old Epagneul Breton, Glamour. His spouse Marie Therese indicated to a family friend, that shortly prior to his death, one of the French sporting magazines interviewed her late husband as one of the oldest shooting men living in his region of southwest France.



Jacques posing with field trial and show winners (left) and clowning around with friends at the same Montana 2009 event (right).

Jacques François Bordet was a lifelong student and admirer of the Epagneul Breton after becoming involved with the breed in his mid-twenties. As a young man, he met Mr. Gaston Pouchain, late President of the French Kennel Club and President of the CEB-France in 1956. Mr. Pouchain undertook to introduce and mentor Jacques in his learning and study of the Epagneul Breton breed. Jacques would frequently give Mr. Pouchain credit for having a profound influence in his life's involvement with the Epagneul Breton in its native country. In time, Jacques would eventually serve on the committee of the French Club, eventually assuming the important role as Secretary of the French National Club for the Epagneul Breton. He became qualified as an Expert Confirmer, Conformation Judge and Field Trial Judge in his native country and visited, traveled, judged and lectured in many countries in relation to the Epagneul Breton. He often spoke of the special qualities of his close friend and mentor Gaston Pouchain in promoting and expanding the breed in France, as well as internationally. Mr. Pouchain inspired Jacques to follow in his footsteps as an ambassador and promoter of the Epagneul Breton around the world. In 2006, Mr. Bordet was first invited to the United States to lecture and judge an unsanctioned exhibition of Epagneul Bretons which was organized in St. Louis, Missouri. He was the second influential Frenchman to come to the USA to help in the modern development of the Epagneul Breton in this country, following Henri Guelou's visits in 2001 and 2006. During that visit to St. Louis, Mr. Bordet undertook to formally evaluate for conformation the breed representatives which were exhibited at the meeting at the Purina Farms Facility in St. Louis Missouri. These evaluations became the first official conformations of Epagneul Bretons which were formally recognized and recorded in the United States. He would then return in 2007 to Judge the show, field trials and to confirm EBs at the 2007 CEB-US U.S. National Conclave held in Casa Grande, Arizona. An ardent believer in the confirming process, he carefully studied and evaluated each dog, and would explain to the owners, apprentice judges, and other interested persons the things he found notable about each dog exhibited to him; mixing his comments with both praise and constructive criticism. He encouraged the burgeoning U.S. Club and its leadership to establish a process for evaluating conformation in a formal process as practiced in France, and for training club members to become confirmers and eventually trained as

conformation Judges of the Epagneul Breton. An engineer by profession who was interested in how things were constructed and functioned, he loved observing the dogs in the field and hunting. However, he very much enjoyed and evaluating the conformation characteristics of the Epagneul Breton and teaching others about how and to what degree the dogs fit within the official conformation standard of the breed. He would grab Bob Olson or other CEB-US Confirmateur apprentices and persons he was mentoring by the arm when the time for a show or confirming process would begin and say in English (although he only fluently spoke his native French), “Come ‘Bub’ (his unique pronunciation of Bob Olson’s first name), we must judge the dogs.” Aside from a genuine desire to “leave something behind” in the form of knowledge, when he would return home to France after visiting in the USA, he frequently brought small gifts or mementos which he left with his students, such as a French field trial judging horn wrapped in leather, or a copy of Jean Louvet’s autographed book *Epagneul Breton 2000*, which is a leading treatise on the breed’s conformation characteristics. Prior to his last visit to Judge in the USA, as his advancing age began to limit his travels outside of France, he spent over a year finding copies of his dear friend Gaston Pouchain’s collector’s item treatise *L’Epagneul Breton* which has been out of print for some time, and is very hard to find. He took delight in presenting each CEB-US President he had known since 2007 a copy of that book at the 2012 National Conclave, which he inscribed with a personal note to each recipient as well as donating an extra copy to the club auction.



Collector’s item treatise and personal note Jacques gave to each CEB-US President at 2012 National Conclave, Quincy, Florida

“Jacques” as he was fondly called, developed enduring friendships with members of the CEB-US Club and burgeoning modern U.S. constituency for the Epagneul Breton. He returned to the USA to judge in field trials and conformation, and to confirm dogs several times, to Montana in 2009, Georgia in 2011 and at the U.S. National Conclave in Florida in 2012. He only quit returning to help in the USA after he began to have health challenges due to advancing age,

which made traveling across the Atlantic Ocean difficult. He wrote articles for the CEB-US magazine about the confirming process, the development and evolution of the French conformation standard for the Epagneul Breton, and kept a steady stream of personal correspondence to friends in the USA and elsewhere in the form of letters and note cards handwritten in his native French language. His letters and cards would always have a photo or drawing of an Epagneul Breton, typically hunting the becasse (woodcock). During his visits to the USA, he got to go hunting for sharp-tail grouse in Montana and bobwhite quail in Georgia. After missing a few shots at distances greater than he was accustomed to shooting back at home on the becasse he hunted there, he finally collected both a sharp-tail grouse and a bobwhite quail for his game bag which he shot over EBs. With a grin, he would say in French, “Now I have shot game over the Epagneul Breton on two continents!” When you would visit his home, in his den, he would proudly point to a side-by-side mount of a European Woodcock and a North American Woodcock, which he had a French taxidermist preserve, in order to show the difference in size and feathering of the two different species of his favorite game bird. When you would ask him, if he shot the North American woodcock, he would grin and say, “No, a friend brought him home as contraband from a hunting trip in Canada, --at my request!” Just for fun, on one occasion, when he visited the southern US, hosts offered him a drink of pure moonshine, of a high quality as sipping whiskey. As he savored the unique taste, he pronounced that, “Its good, --similar to the bootleg Cognac, they make in my region of France!” Of course, not to be outdone, the next trip over to see him in Aunac, his guests were offered a sample of his own native French moonshine, in the form of non-taxed Cognac, made at a secret distillery not far from his village of Aunac! “You like the French or the American moonshine better?” he inquired. He laughed a belly laugh when the response to his question was, “The French make both good illegal whiskeys, and even better hunting dogs which started out helping the poachers!”



Jacques poses with two venerable French breeders, Madame Lucienne Marchand of St. Tugen Kennel (left), Jacques F. Bordet (center), Guy Morin of Keranlouan Kennel (right)

Always friendly, welcoming and fun loving, with a great sense of humor, Jacques Bordet was a constant positive force and trusted advisor during the formative years of the CEB-US club.

At a time, when there was hesitance of some Judges from France, to come to judge in the United States, he like his colleague of similar years vintage, Henri Guleou, was among the first two Frenchmen to endorse and vouch for the CEB-US back in France and Europe during the early, formative years of CEB-US as a club. They were able to confirm that there was a separate club in the United States apart from the American Brittany, which had the mission of following the French methods, traditions, and following the French official conformation standard in order to keep the breed's conformation and working qualities, as a foot hunting dog authentic to the breed's origins. This endorsement of the work and purposes of CEB-US from a long time French judge and high officer in the CEB-France national breed club was very important at the time, because communication of that day with the European dog community was typically by word of mouth and in a more traditional format. All of that took place before the advent of social media, electronic mail, and other forms of modern digital communication. After coming here to judge in the USA, Jacques lobbied and persuaded other French judges knowledgeable of the Epagneul Breton in France and elsewhere to follow suit to come and judge in the USA. When the American delegation from the newly renamed CEB-US breed club in the USA arrived in Bretagne for the 2007 Centennial Celebration of the Epagneul Breton, Jacques made a point to be present there in Callac, Bretagne to warmly welcome all his American friends. He made a real effort to make CEB-US representatives feel at home during the tour of the Epagneul Breton Museum in Callac, as well as in relation to the other breed club festivities during the French Centenaire Celebration associated with the 100th birthday of the Epagneul Breton being recognized as a breed in his native France.

Jacques truly loved his own personal Epagneul Bretons. None of them he owned in his later years were dogs which he exhibited in field trials or shows. They were his companion gun dogs, lived in the house, and they accompanied him almost everywhere he went. He preferred females and he was especially doting with his last two beloved EB females, Amourette and Glamour, who were excellent hunting dogs. At his core, like many of the French men of the field of his day, he had the heart and tenacity of a woodcock hunter. Although the areas around Aunac received only modest migrations of woodcock in the fall, he would hunt the thick coverts and marshy forest areas religiously several times a week. He cheerfully hosted friends, including several Americans, who came to visit him in Aunac. Not only would he arrange for their hunting licenses, lodging at a local B & B, and guide them to some of his favorite coverts around Aunac that held an occasional woodcock, but he and his lovely spouse delighted in serving his favorite game, which he had harvested from the woods. He would serve the becasse whole on toast with foie gras (goose liver pate in butter), after roasting the game in a pressure cooker seasoned only with pepper and salt, with head, beak and innards still intact. As dinner fare, the becasse would be served along with roasted chestnuts from the nearby forest, along with other traditional French table fare from the region where he lived. Dinner would begin in typical country French fashion, with an aperitif of local Cognac and conclude with a smorgasbord of local French cheeses purchased freshly made from the fromagerie down the road. As he prepared each guests'

main course of woodcock on toast, he would cut the woodcock's head and beak off, and put it on a guest's plate for a garnish. At the end of the meal, he would ceremoniously cut open the beccasses' skull, and serve the woodcock brains on toast with a smear of foie gras, as a final delicacy. He also took delight in showing visiting friends his native French culture and traditional way of life in the countryside. It was common for him to take guests to the farm where he bought French goat cheese each month for his entire life, to visit archeological sites and museums depicting the early history of France, and to take a break in a day of hunting to have lunch at one of his favorite country French restaurants near Aunac. He and Marie Therese were gracious hosts in the finest sense of country French folk. Dinner at their home was served in multiple courses in traditional fashion in France, each course with a fresh bottle of wine from the personal cellar below in the Bordet home. Although he nor his spouse spoke English fluently, Marie Therese would have her French-English Dictionary handy at each meal. She would translate important French words or concepts in her neat handwriting, as Jacques held forth with his stories from the head of the table. Jacques also had a prized collection of original artworks of the paintings of Boris Riab depicting and interpreting the Epagneul Breton in hunting and at leisure. He knew the famous artist Boris Riab who interpreted the Epagneul Breton as a subject and personally visited him often during the heyday of the artist's most productive period as an artist. Because of the friendships he valued in the USA, Jacques went out of his way in 2007 to persuade the Trentinis, as proprietors of the venerable Pigenettes Kennel in France to find a quality pup for Ed and Joyce Smith of Galveston, Indiana to bring back to the USA. The Smiths were visiting there in Loudeac in the heart of Bretagne during the 2007 Centennial Celebration. Jacques was beaming and all smiles when the Trentini's handed off Cytese Des Pigenettes to Ed and Joyce Smith in the town square of Loudeac, Bretagne during the August 2007 Centennial Celebration of the Epagneul Breton. (Loudeac was the nearest decent size town with meeting facilities close to the nearby village of Callac Station Verde, which was the birthplace of the Epagneul Breton.) This was only one of many tangible generous gestures Jacques made to try and help boost the CEB-US Club and its members during his years of active involvement with CEB-US and the Epagneul Breton community in the United States. He was a very proud Frenchman, devoted to his native breed, his native language and his native culture. But he was quick to tell you all those things he treasured were still prevalent in France, because of the assistance the United States had given France in World War II.



Jacques Francois Bordet demonstrating the couler at 2007 National field trials, Casa Grande, AZ

During one of his last detailed letters in January of 2019 sent to a friend in the USA, Jacques reflected fondly about his many trips and experiences in the USA by virtue of his involvement with the Epagneul Breton. He wrote in pertinent part to express his sentiments as follows: “I thank you for the newsletters that fill me with ease, because to my great joy the American Club [CEB-US] now plays in the big leagues, and has nothing to envy. Congratulations for the work done. ... But what really delighted me was that the situation [prevalent in CEB-US] reminded me of my debut with Mr. Pouchain, where all Bretonniers were friendly to me.” He treasured the many friendships which were a by-product of the time he spent in the United States. He indicated that it gave him a sense of profound satisfaction to have helped in the correct kind of development of the Epagneul Breton in the USA. He spent much of his long lifetime as a student, teacher, judge and friend of the Epagneul Breton around the world. When asked to serve as an Advisor and Honorary Trustee of the Epagneul Breton Foundation at its formation, he accepted with delight and responded to any request for educational information or artistic interpretation of the Epagneul Breton which was posted by the foundation. Several memorial donations in his memory have been made and received by the Epagneul Breton Foundation. On behalf of the Bordet family, his surviving spouse, Marie Therese, wishes to express her appreciation for the gestures of sympathy and remembrance she and the family have received since news of Jacques’ death became public. Mrs. Bordet indicates that her late husband always spoke fondly of his colorful and memorable experiences with friends in the US Epagneul Breton community which he shared when visiting the USA and also back at home. His colorful personality, generous nature, and many contributions to the Epagneul Breton in the USA and elsewhere will be long remembered. The sense of loss from his recent death is profoundly felt and shared by fanciers of the Epagneul Breton in the USA and around the world.