



Eriska THE STORY OF AN ISLAND

BEFORE his death in April this year Robin Buchanan-Smith wrote a love letter to the island he and his family turned into the setting for one of the world's top hotels.

Eriska The Story of a Island has now been published complete with superb photography by Dennis Hardley of Benderloch

But anyone expecting to find a gossipy tale of a luxury destination for the rich and famous will be disappointed.

The hotel features prominently but this book is a celebration of the island itself; its landscape, history, flora and fauna.

Robin was ordained into the ministry and was based for many years at Christ Church in Oban where he was a friend, supporter and counsellor of many.

He and his wife Sheena bought the island in 1973 and though neither were hoteliers or business people they set about transforming the 'big house' and the island.

A great raconteur, Robin's tales about the island and the hotel were legendary.

One of their sons, Beppo suggested his father write it all down but he was reluctant to do so.

'I had a plan. I deliberately wrote a couple of chapters quite badly and gave them to him,' said Beppo. His father rose to the bait and set to work.

The glossy full-colour book is illustrated throughout with photographs by Dennis Hardley.

Dennis's landscape photography is known around the world and the *Eriska* book presented him with the challenge of photographing everything from tiny insects to panoramic landscapes as he captured everything that makes *Eriska* so special. The only photographs that are not his are the historic ones of the Victorian and Edwardian hey days of the 'big house' and the Buchanan-Smith's own personal photographs, plus one very awkward customer - an otter.

'My father had insisted he wanted a picture of one of the island's otter's near the bridge,' said Beppo.

'I spent 12 months and never saw one,' said Dennis.

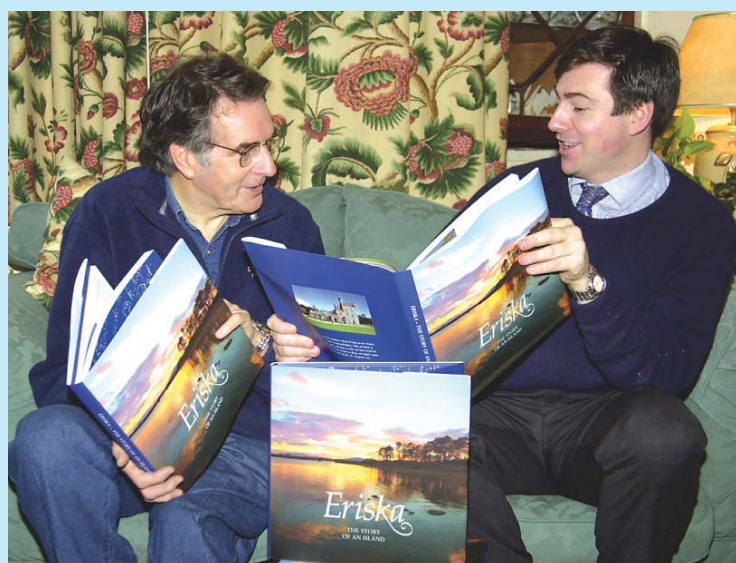
'I had a phone call from a guest who had left early one morning and stopped to take some photographs by the bridge,' said Beppo.

'He had caught the otter on camera and was able to send the photograph from the airport, via his laptop.'

The book also marked a first for Dennis with a move into digital photography with a Canon Eos IDS Mk II.

With Beppo and his brother Chay the island is now onto its second generation of Buchanan-Smith stewardship and the story so far has been captured by their father and Dennis forever.

Eriska The Story of an Island is available from the hotel £25 including postage and from selected shops and tourist centres across the area. See the hotel's website: www.eriska-hotel.co.uk .



Dennis Hardley, left, and Beppo Buchanan-Smith.