# **An Unusual Dog Spey**

I had an occasion to spey a bitch in the early 1980’s shortly after I started working in Otorohanga. In those days we did not have the sophisticated kennel facilities that modern veterinary practices have these days.

Our procedure was to anaesthetise the dog, maintain it on gas, and do the surgery. We did not keep the animals overnight which is done today, but sent the animal home somewhat groggy to recover. In this case the surgery was successful, and the animal sent home as usual. When animals come out of anaesthetic they shiver because their body temperature can fall when they are under the anaesthetic, and shivering is part of the normal warming process. The clients were usually instructed to give the animal water, but to wait until the next day for regular feeding.

The owner, who was a young lady, kept the dog overnight in the bedroom which was nice and warm to recover fully, which it did. It had a ravenous appetite and I had a panic phone call at about 1.30 in the morning to say that the dog had eaten her oral contraceptive tablets, and what should she do! You can guess my advice: - the dog was unlikely to be affected; after all its ovaries and reproductive tract had been removed. However, she was in more danger than the dog, and should make sure she sees the local Doctor to get a repeat prescription.

# **One of the Local Veterinary Characters**

When I started work with the Huntly District Veterinary Club in 1971, I worked in an intense dairy farming area in the triangle between Taupiri, Orini and Whitikahu, starting 8Km south of Huntly. I had approximately 120 dairy farms to service, but one of my preceding veterinary colleagues had left a lasting impression on the farmers. He was British and lived in the Taupiri Pub. But he paid the publican using British Penny Black stamps (Britain’s first stamp issue) of which he had an endless supply.

In those days, veterinarians in dairy practice saw many cases of milk fever at calving time, which is now mainly prevented by better nutritional supplements. Whenever he was called to see a cow down with milk fever, he instructed his client to have a bottle of beer on hand. If the cow didn’t get up, he gave the bottle of beer to the cow, and if it got up, he drank the bottle of beer. These weren’t the days of stubbies – these were the days of real bottles of beer. Fortunately most of the cows got up, and he was able to supplement his habit and save a few Penny Blacks from the Taupiri publican. Farmers have long memories, and were always remanding me about this colleague.

L G Chitty