

BUSHY TALES



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Dedication

For my grandchildren, Hanna, Gavin, Alex, Elizabeth, Tate, Lia, Cate, Diego, Benji, and BrynD, who greet me with, "Grandma, tell me a story!" Here are some very special stories about a very special dog, and the life lessons I learned from him.

*If a story is good, it's worth telling twice. And any
Lindsell knows a story always gets better the second time.*

—favorite Lindsell saying

Chapter 1

BUSHY

We were never getting another dog—never, Never, NEVER. That's what Mother said. That's what Dad said. So that was THAT!

We were dog people...had always been dog people, but Sookie changed all of that. Sookie was a beautiful black cocker with one white spot under her neck. Quite lovely, quite elegant, quite stubborn and stupid. Even I at only six years old realized that Sookie had "problems." We wanted to love her. We wanted to help her fit into our family. How hard could that be? We had a Dad who went off to work in the woods each day and came home each night to be adored by all the family. We had a Mother who mostly stayed at home and made wonderful homemade treats that all the neighborhood kids savored. And we were three stair-step girls, Mary 8, Sarah 7, and me, Anne 6, who just wanted to spoil our new dog.

But Sookie would not have it. She ignored us all. Her main activities were messing on the carpet,

running away, and getting lost. When we took her out to play, she'd lose interest and scamper off. When Dad tried to teach her to come, she sat down stubbornly and would not move. Mother tried bribery, enticing Sookie with special doggie treats. Even this didn't work.

Usually when Sookie left, we'd find her on a neighbor's porch, or a block away resting by a bush, or wandering through the nearby field.

Finding Sookie became a regular before dinner chore for us sisters. At first it was fun, but as our parents became more and more annoyed at Sookie's inability or unwillingness to learn, we three girls became more desperate. One day all our efforts failed. Sookie ran off, and we couldn't find her anywhere.

Mary ran up the hill checking behind trees and in the tall grass. No Sookie.

Sarah hurried through the field to the next block searching and calling. No Sookie.

I went around our neighborhood calling, knocking on doors and asking. No Sookie.

Dad came home. No Sookie.

Mother called us in for dinner. No Sookie.

We were frantic as only three little girls can be. We begged for help searching for our little black dog. So after dinner, Mother and Dad loaded us into the car; we rode around town with our heads out the windows calling, "Sookie, Sookie, Sookie—Here, Sookie!" After an hour or so we realized that we weren't going to find her, and we three started to cry. At that point, Mom said, "Thank goodness we didn't name her Halleluiah. Can you imagine what we'd have looked like driving all over town tonight shouting, 'Halleluiah, Halleluiah, Halleluiah!'"

Well, that was the end. Sookie never returned. We always hoped she found a nice home, but even we girls doubted that she was smart enough to do so. And how could she ever have found a family as perfect as ours? Perfect for a dog.

Though we waited and hoped, we never found any trace of her. Mom and Dad said, "No more dogs." Having a dog that would not bond with any of us was just too much.

It took about a year to resign ourselves to being doggiless forever, when a miracle showed up on the curb beside our house. On March 30, I'll never forget that day, a drippy dreary Sunday morning, a little black cocker with a white spot on his neck came to check us out.

Sarah spotted him from her bedroom window. "Come quick!" she called to Mary and me. We were amazed. There stood a sorry, soggy-looking Sookie.

"Sookie's back!" I shouted, waking Mom and Dad. Did I hear a groan from their bedroom? They seemed less than excited as they dragged themselves to Sarah's window. They quickly pointed out that this was obviously not Sookie. It was younger, and Dad could tell even from this distance that this was a he, not a she.

"Can we keep him? Can we?" we begged.

"Hold on," Dad said. "This dog must be lost. We'll give him something to eat and let him go on his way."

When we protested, Mom reminded us, "Remember how sad you were when Sookie left?"

There's probably another family looking for this little lost dog."

Mom fixed a bowl of food. Mary, Sarah, and I carried it out to where this soggy little dog stood. He seemed afraid, and moved away from us. We set the bowl down and walked back to the porch. "Sit quietly," Mary, the little mother, whispered. We obeyed. After awhile the little black pup stepped up to the bowl, sniffed it, and watching us, tentatively tasted the food. Then he stepped away.

Wanting to get the dog under cover of the porch, we crept forward and moved the food in closer. Then we returned to the porch where we again waited quietly. The little dog stood at the edge of the curb, looked at the food, looked at us, and then slowly inched his way to the dish. He ate a couple of bites, then hurried back to the curb and watched us.

This time we brought the dish all the way onto the porch where it was protected from the rain. We gently called, "Come here, little doggie, come here." Then we went inside and watched through the window.

He stood still for a long time as the rain poured down on him, making him look even sadder and more miserable. Then he slowly, slowly approached the porch, climbed the stairs, walked to the dish, looked around as if to make sure he was alone, and then ate all of the food. After licking the bowl clean, he walked back to the curb—back into the downpour—back to the cold—and stood staring down the road. Was he looking for someone? Was he thinking of his options? He definitely seemed pensive as he stood there.

“Girls, time to get ready for Sunday school!” Mother interrupted our thoughts.

“Please let me stay home today,” I whined.

“We need to take care of the little doggie,” Sarah continued.

Before Mary could add her two cents worth, Mother replied, “We’ve fed him, and now he needs to find his way home. It’s time for church, girls.” Case closed.

In church we prayed as we’d never prayed before. “Please let that little dog be okay. Please let

him still be there when we get home. Please let him stay with us.”

We raced home after church, but when we got home, he was gone.

We tore into the house. “Mommy, Mommy, the puppy’s gone!”

“Come here, girls.” She motioned us to follow her down into the basement. There curled up on a blanket near the sawdust furnace was the little dog—considerably drier and happier looking.

Mother explained that after we left for church, Dad went out into the rain and stood near the pup for a few minutes. He saw that the dog was shivering from the cold, so he said, “Come, boy.” And the pup followed Dad around the house and into the basement. Dad made him a bed there near the warm furnace and brought him water.

The pup looked so content lying there. We girls sat on the basement steps and watched him. He watched us. “Here, Doggie. Here, Blackie. Here, Boy!” No response.

Mary and Sarah whistled; I didn't know how yet. He perked up his ears. We held out our hands as though we had food. He stood, stretched, and meandered over to us. After sniffing us, he let us pet him. We stroked his head, his ears, and his warm fluffy fur.

“What shall we name him?”

“How about Fluffy?”

“That's a girl's name.”

“Hmmm. What's another word for Fluffy?”

“Bushy! How about Bushy?”

And that's how Bushy got his name and how he came to live with us and be part of the Lindsell family.

-Bushy-



*Me with Sarah, Mary
and Bushy*

Chapter 2

CHARGER

Some dogs have one name, some dogs earn two. Bushy lived with us long enough to earn not only a first name, but eight middle names. Bushy was the name he wore because of his looks—he had bushy black hair, but don't forget that one white spot under his neck. Charger was the name he earned because of his bravery.

Bushy figured out immediately that he had us three girls wrapped around his little paw. He didn't have to do anything to please us—just having him brought joy to our lives. He joined all the neighbor kids in our daily play. Hide 'n Seek—Bushy was great at finding all the hiding places. Kick the Can—Bushy could outrun all of us back to base, the pump in the center of the street. He couldn't climb trees with us, but he'd stand and stare at us when we got stuck in the Old Oak Tree on the hill. He watched disdainfully when we sneaked Mom's cigarettes to smoke with our friends. He grinned mischievously at us when we

coaxed him onto our beds. This was absolutely forbidden and he knew it. But, ohhhh, it was so comfortable cuddling there together. How quickly he was off that bed, all innocent looking, the minute he heard Dad's footstep.

That's because from the very start, Bushy was really Dad's dog. He adored Dad. Every day he waited on the porch and watched for Dad's rig. Then he would follow Dad into the basement and wait while Dad got cleaned up. First we girls helped Dad take off his cock boots. There were so many hooks and eyes for those long laces on his logging boots. Then we'd run upstairs and wait while Dad showered and dressed for dinner. Bushy waited with Dad.

At first Dad said that Bushy was an outdoor dog who could be in the basement, but never upstairs. So Bushy dutifully obeyed, following Dad to the top of the basement stairs and waiting there for him to come down the next morning.

It didn't take long before Dad said that Bushy could come on up. So every day, Bushy would follow Dad up and curl next to Dad's chair while Dad read the

evening paper. At dinner time, he'd sit beside Dad's chair. We girls tried to entice him to come to us by furtively dropping food scraps by our chairs. It didn't work—Bushy was Dad's dog the minute Dad arrived home. All our antics earned us were scoldings for being such messy eaters.

Dad loved being adored by all of his girls and his dog. He felt like a king. Everyday Dad anticipated his homecoming after a long day working in the woods. Bushy soon figured out how to make Dad's homecoming even more exciting. He'd sit on the porch until the moment he heard Dad's truck. His ears would perk up, and he'd stand at attention until Dad's truck rounded the corner. Quickly he'd look for the nearest target to demonstrate his bravado. As soon as Dad stepped from his truck, off Bushy tore after a bird, a cat, or another dog. "Ruff, ruff, ruff!" Off he charged, chasing away the evil interloper, making home a safe place for the King—proudly showing King Dad that his domain was well guarded.

"Atta boy, Bushy. You're so brave!" That's all it took. Bushy was set for life. He became known as

Bushy Charger for how courageously he protected Dad's kingdom from dangerous birds, cats, and dogs.



*Sarah waiting on the porch
with Bushy*

After several years, Bushy learned an important life lesson. Each day when he heard Dad's pickup, he repeated the same routine. There wasn't a bird who stood its ground, or a cat who didn't race to the nearest tree, or a dog who didn't scoot under a fence or into a house when Bushy came charging. Until that fateful day.

Bushy heard Dad's pickup and saw him round the corner, but there was no bird, cat or dog in sight. But wait! Across the street stood the biggest Great Dane he'd ever seen. Its head was three times the size of Bushy's. Its teeth were monstrous compared with Bushy's. Whereas Bushy came to my knee, this dog came to my shoulder. He was huge—he was gigantic—he was humongously enormous. Did this stop Bushy? NO, he didn't hesitate for a moment. He knew his duty, and he charged right up to this monster dog. "Ruff, ruff, ruff!" went Bushy.

"BARK!" One sound only split the air. Then that dog clamped his enormous teeth into Bushy's side and threw Bushy across the yard.

We girls saw this happen, and raced from the house, but Dad was there first. "Owwwwwww," Bushy whimpered; he was alive, but torn from his neck to the side of his ribs.

"Go get your Mother. Call the vet and tell him we're on our way," Dad ordered. Mother came running. Dad gently lifted Bushy and placed him onto Mom's lap. Mom wrapped our beloved Bushy in a

towel, holding his skin together as best she could, trying to stop the bleeding. Then off they sped.

It was hours before they came home, tired and bloody, but able to report, "He's alive!" He had needed 26 stitches, a huge amount for such a small dog, and would need to be watched for several days for infection.

Two days later, Bushy came home. He was not our happy, playful dog. He was sore and tired and pitiful. We made a bed for him by the fireplace since it was hard for him to move about. We brought him his food and water, but he just wanted to lie there and rest. For days Mother needed to give him antibiotics, which he took willingly. When one of us tried to give them, Bushy spit the pill out. He ate if Mother fed him. He went outside to do his duty if Mother took him. And gradually, gradually, gradually he recovered. He could limp slowly about the house. Then he could manage a stair or two, and finally the whole flight. Eventually he started whining by the front door when it was time for Dad to come home from work. He sat on the porch to watch and wait, but

he couldn't go charging off when Dad drove up. He'd limp off the porch to greet Dad and follow him into the basement.

A few months passed. Bushy seemed to be getting better, but he still moved slowly and looked up at us pitifully when we asked, "Bushy, are you okay?"

One Saturday when Dad was pushing the hand mower around the back yard, he heard a "ruff" that sounded like Bushy's old "charging" sound. "It couldn't be," Dad thought. "Bushy can hardly walk."

Dad poked his head around the corner of the house in time to see Bushy charging after a bird who had dared to land on our grass. "Ruff, ruff, ruff!" Bushy chased that bird away. As he turned to strut back to the house, Dad stepped out of his hiding place.

"You little fake!" Dad said. Bushy spotted Dad, immediately stopped and started limping slowly back home. "You little fake!" Dad repeated softly, as he stroked Bushy's head. "You're okay." Bushy looked up at Dad and gave him a mischievous grin. He knew he'd been caught, but it was okay; he was still loved. Bushy had truly become a member of our family.



Our family

He knew we all loved him, and he'd finally figured out the place each member had in the family. We three girls were his play things—to run with and cuddle with. Dad was the King, master of the domain—to be honored, adored, and respected. And Mom, Bushy finally understood that a Mother is to care for you, help you when you're hurt, and to tenderly make all things better. And his place was to be

—Bushy Charger—

protector of us

Chapter 3

CHALLENGER

So far Bushy had learned that he could charge everything his size or smaller, but that large animals should be avoided. An important lesson... however, there was still more to learn.

Small dogs were easy to scare off. These little yippers understood power...and Bushy was the most macho of the macho. He exuded power. If his bark didn't scare off these doglings, he'd bare his teeth and "grrr" as he slowly circled them. Usually this was enough to send a dog skyi-yi-ying back home. But occasionally a dog would challenge Bushy. We didn't want him to fight, but he was a tough one and wouldn't back down. He had learned to respect the monster dogs, but he had to teach more than one dog who was the power in his 'hood. We moved a lot when we were growing up, and in every new neighborhood, Bushy showed the other dogs not to enter his domain. Whether with a growl, a scowl, or a fight, Bushy took control.

Birds, though, proved more difficult. For example, sea gulls were great teasers and would taunt Bushy by diving just out of his reach. Some were even known to plan sneak attacks; while one was distracting him, another would sneak up behind and eat the food we'd put out for Bushy. Oh, these birds. They were a constant threat to our domain. He always had to be on guard—ever vigilant—because they constantly challenged him.

When he wasn't chasing dogs and birds off, he was after cats who attempted to enter our property. They were sneaky, so Bushy learned stealth techniques, too. He knew their various entry points. They might sneak in through the bushes alongside the house. Bushy had to crawl on his stomach to lie under those bushes so he could "grrr" at them if they tried that port of entry.

Other cats would leap onto the fence and brazenly walk along the top to enter our property. Bushy sat near the fence—still as a statue—not a movement—barely breathing until a cat came haughtily marching along the top of the fence.

Suddenly Bushy would spring into action, chasing back and forth along the fence “bark, Bark, BARKING” at the top of his voice to scare the cat away.



Our family at the fence

The most brazen of cats would simply walk onto the property and try to stare him down. Bushy had a foolproof plan of attack. He would tear up to the cat, challenging it. The cat would arch, hiss, and claw at Bushy. Bushy would circle the cat, carefully

avoiding those claws, but leaping in to nip at its hind quarters. Bushy the Brave would eventually chase off even the most brazen of the cats.

Until one evening. As we were all enjoying ourselves in the back yard, one of those brazen types sneaked out of the trees behind our house. It was so dark we could barely make out its form against the even darker hillside. But Bushy sensed it was there, and he leapt to our defense.



Bushy and me on that hillside behind our house

“Grr!” He stood there eyeing the animal. The cat stood still and looked directly into Bushy’s eyes, trying to stare him down. Didn’t it know that this was

Bushy Charger Lindsell, Protector of the Domain? He would never back down from the challenge of a measly cat. Noooooo, not Bushy.

“Grrr!” Bushy moved in closer. The black cat didn’t move—just stood there. Bushy stepped closer. By now the cat should arch, hiss, claw—but not this daredevil. It was more brazen than any Bushy had ever met.

“GRR!” Bushy stepped closer, then slowly began to circle the black cat. We knew the game Bushy was playing; we knew what would happen next.

To our surprise, though, the cat lifted its tail and lowered its head. Suddenly we noticed a white stripe running from his head to its tail. Yikes! This was no cat!

“Bushy...NO!” we shouted. Too late.

“Yi, yi, yi, yi, yi!” he cried as the skunk’s spray hit him square in the face. He ran, but we ran even faster—inside, doors and windows slammed—looking out to see our poor stinky dog crying there by the door.

It took Mother several days to bathe that stench out of Bushy. Only she knew how many baths he had

that week. Poor Bushy learned about loneliness because none of the rest of us wanted to be near him until he smelled better.

But the most important lesson he learned was to be careful of what you challenge. Even the little guy may have hidden powers.

For the rest of Bushy's life, he was more careful about his choices, and usually made better ones. That's why he became known as

—Bushy Charger Challenger—

Chapter 4

PEETROD

If you know boy dogs, you might guess how Bushy earned his name. It was simple. All male dogs mark their territory, and macho male dogs mark more. Since Bushy was the most macho of the macho, you can guess what he did. Each day every tree, bush, flower, blade of grass, post, hydrant, outside wall, EVERYTHING in Bushy's territory had to be marked. And if any other animal crossed the path, Bushy had to mark the area again—and again—and again.



Bushy resting after marking everything in sight

Marking looks like peeing, but that was a word Mother wouldn't let us use. Mother was very smart and read voraciously. She knew dozens of words for everything, and she wanted the three of us to grow up as proper young ladies with proper vocabularies. So there were some words we couldn't use. We knew that "pee" was one of these words. Dad knew that "pee" wasn't proper, so he invented a new word for us to use to describe Bushy's proclivity to "pee", or mark, then tread all over his territory repeating this process...over and over again. What was that descriptive word? Peetrod! Mother couldn't object when we used this word because Dad had made it up. It was a wonderful word. It was a beautiful word. We all felt somewhat naughty when we used it, which we did at every opportunity. "There he goes again... good job, Peetrod!"

Usually we joked about this trait of his, but one time it came in very handy.

When we were teenagers, Dad and Mom took us camping in the redwood forest far up a logging road where Dad had been working. What fun we had that

day. While Bushy was marking every rock near the river, every tire on the car, every tree near the campsite, and everything else in sight, we pretended to sip beer from Mom and Dad's empty cans, struck "glamour" poses for the camera, ate S'mores, and listened to Dad tell Big Foot stories around the camp fire.



Mary, Bushy and me striking "glamour" poses

Dad was a big believer in Big Foot—or at least he pretended to be. And he was a great story teller, too. So he had us shivering and shaking before we crawled into the tent that night. It was a small tent, just big enough for Mary, Sarah, and me, with Bushy

for protection. Mom and Dad slept in the back of the station wagon nearby.

We crawled into our sleeping bags—Mary on the far wall, Sarah near the door, and me in the middle. Bushy lay between Sarah and me. We talked and told more stories, wondered aloud if there really were such a creature as Big Foot roaming these hills, listened to the fire crackle and pop as it burned out, and were just dozing off when Bushy made one strange low “grrr.” That was all—just one. I reached over to rub him and felt the hair on the back of his neck standing on end. He was definitely on edge about something. Just then we heard something brush the tent near Mary. We held our breaths. Something brushed the tent wall again. Bushy’s hair still bristled, but he didn’t make another sound. I couldn’t see Mary or Sarah. I was afraid to move for a better look. Terrified that the creature outside—was it Big Foot?—was about to get us at any second, I did the logical thing. I buried my head into the sleeping bag, closed my eyes tight, and stayed totally still.

When I opened my eyes again, it was morning, the fire was crackling again, and Dad was humming as he made coffee over the fire. I unzipped the tent door, tore out of there, and flew into Dad's arms. Mary, Sarah, and Bushy were right behind.

"Did you hear it, Dad?"

"Was it Big Foot?"

"What?" he asked.

"Dad, was it you? Were you trying to scare us?"

"No, Mom and I went right to sleep. I didn't get out of the car until the sun came up."

We didn't know whether to believe him. We walked around the tent looking for evidence, but didn't find even a foot or paw print. What was strange is how Bushy acted that night. He was scared of something, and we'd never seen that before. He surely wouldn't have been scared if it had been Dad sneaking around the tent trying to frighten us. We were sure there was an animal of some kind checking us out that night, and we were pretty confident that Bushy's marks all over sent the message to Big Foot or

whatever other animal that some super macho creature was protecting us.

That super macho creature better known as

-Bushy Charger Challenger Peetrod-

Chapter 5

STINKY

Logging is a fickle job. Some years were great and some terrible. When the recession of 1954-5 hit, Dad was out of work for almost a year. Finally he found a job in the redwood forest two hundred miles away. He had to move there, and we visited when we could. We'd pile into the station wagon and off we'd go...up and over the Coast Range and into the Redwood forest.



On our way to visit Dad

Bushy loved these trips. He'd ride along with his head out the window, catching the wind, smelling the new smells. When we'd stop, he'd explore each new place, being sure to mark this new territory. "Good job, Pectrod. Let those other animals know who's here!"

Dad's job was near the beach, and, oh, how we loved the beach. Sometimes we'd fish off a pier. Sometimes we'd walk the shore collecting special rocks and shells. We loved running from the waves. And always, always Bushy was there playing, running, protecting us. What were the dangers? Well, the first were those waves that needed to be challenged and sent back into the sea. But foremost were those dang birds. Those seagulls would taunt him something terrible. They'd walk just at the water's edge—squawking and teasing him until he ran at them. Then off they'd fly just out of his reach, and he'd race in hot pursuit.

He never tired of this and neither did those seagulls. They pretended to ignore him; he'd sneak up quietly, then ATTACK, but never actually catch a

bird before off it flew. Unfortunately, Bushy couldn't fly.



Bushy chasing the seagulls

When they had Bushy in hot pursuit, they played another trick on him. They'd turn and skim out over the ocean. His eyes on the birds, Bushy followed, only to get tossed head over tail by the waves. But that was okay; Bushy liked water, just not baths. Back he raced, snorting the water out of his nose, shaking the salt water out of his eyes and ears. Then he would tear up to the dry sand to roll and roll until he was dry.

After that, he'd find where we were playing, and shake, shake, shake sand all over us. "No, Bushy! Not here!" So off he'd go in another direction, roll again, and come tearing back to shake all over us again. "NO!"

One weekend as usual we were playing in the sand, we girls building sand dikes, then frolicking with Bushy in the waves. Mom and Dad lay on a blanket nearby...Mom reading and Dad snoozing. There had been a storm that week and high tides had brought ashore lots of flotsam and jetsam...in other words, things to explore. We found seaweed to play jump rope with. We found crab and clam shells strewn all over. There were even jellyfish stranded there. We avoided these because they can sting. Lots of birds were exploring this treasure trove, also, and where the birds went, Bushy followed.

As we gathered around the blanket for a picnic, Bushy set off to explore on his own. We watched him play chase with the gulls, laughed when they tricked him into the ocean, nodded expectantly as he raced out into the sand to dry off. But this time, he ran straight

to the flotsam and jetsam where most of the seagulls had been moments before. And he rolled and rolled and rolled. Then he tore down the beach toward us, raced past, circled and raced past again. “What’s that smell? Dad asked.

Back to the treasure trove, Bushy tore, rolled again and again, and raced back to us. Around and around he ran. “What is that awful smell?”

“Bushy!!!”



Bushy carrying flotsam and jetsam

We never did find out what he rolled in; it had to be something dead. We blamed the seagulls for enticing Bushy to that spot. Who could blame Bushy? He was just doing what he always did, rolling off the wet, but this “wet” stuck to him and try as he would, he couldn’t get rid of it.

And neither could we. We girls coaxed him back into the ocean to try to rinse him off, but when he got out, he just raced back to his special spot to roll again.

Too soon it was time to load the car and head back to our hotel. By unanimous verdict, Bushy was ostracized to the back of the station wagon. It didn’t help. His rank smell permeated all.

“Bushy!”

All the way back to the hotel we drove with the windows open--Mom and Dad in front—Mary and Sarah on the sides—all their heads at the windows trying to catch some fresh air. And me? Poor little Anne who always got the middle seat. What about me? Well, I had to sit there and breathe that foul, rank, horrible, putrid smell all the way back.

We hosed him off at the hotel, bathed him multiple times with scented shampoo, but still he stank. The next day we girls and Mom had to drive all the way home with our stinky dog. The only thing good about this trip was that there were only 4 of us, so we each got a window. I'd like to report that I got a front seat, but, alas, Mary, the eldest, got that honor. Sarah and I at least had window seats for the 5 hour trip back home.

And Bushy—well, he didn't learn any lessons this time; however, thereafter he had another name—well-deserved and never forgotten:

—Bushy Charger Challenger Peetrod Stinky—

Chapter 6

CORKY

Bushy loved riding in cars, whether we were headed to the ocean, the river, the forest, or just the grocery store. When the car door opened, Bushy jumped in. He preferred a window seat, and if a window were open, Bushy would walk across anyone to stick his head out the window for the fresh air.

Usually, he was the reason we needed the fresh air. You see, Bushy didn't like baths—water, yes, baths, no. After every bath, he ran outside to roll in the grass, the dirt, the sand, the doggie do-do—whatever he could find to get rid of that “awful” smell of the scented shampoo we used. Then as he grew older, he developed flatulence—gas. At home, we seldom noticed, but in the car—“Pee-ewuuuuuuu!”

On one of the long trips we made to visit our grandparents in Portland and Seattle, Bushy was particularly odoriferous. It was cold outside, so no one wanted to open a window. Besides an open window meant a stinky dog on your lap. But every so often,

“pee-ewuuuuu”—the windows would fly open, and we’d all get a chance to breathe again. We’d shut the windows, warm up; then “pee-ewuuuu!” Over and over again.

We tried stopping and walking Bushy, hoping he’d “do his duty.” Instead he just marked all over the place, climbed back in the car, only to stink it up again.



Taking Bushy for a walk on trip to Seattle

“Mom, Dad, what can we do?” we complained after hours of this.

"I think we just have to live with it," was Mom's reply.

But Dad came up with a novel suggestion. "Let's get a cork and plug him up!" What a funny suggestion! What a hilarious image! We all laughed and laughed, and we didn't mind this terrible odor so much anymore.

Whenever it happened, we'd just say, "Hey, Corky!" Then all of us would laugh again as we stuck our heads out the windows.

As much as Bushy loved riding in cars, he also loved exploring new places. So we had to be careful wherever we went because he would jump out of the car and go racing here and there. Usually we girls were there to keep an eye on Bushy; however as we grew up, sometimes Bushy and Mother did an errand without one of us.

One afternoon when Dad came home from work, Bushy wasn't standing guard awaiting the King's return. Where was he?

"Bushy, Bushy, here, Bushy!" Dad called. He didn't come, but we girls came running.

“We thought he was with you. We’ve been looking for him all afternoon.”

We went inside. “Mom, have you seen Bushy?”

“Not for awhile,” she said. “He’s not with you or Dad?”

“No.”

Out we ran around the neighborhood, calling ...calling. Memories of Sookie’s disappearance flooded our minds. Where was Bushy? We searched all the places he loved to explore with us: the school yard, the swimming hole, the bridge. No Bushy.

Mom remembered that she and Bushy had gone to the next town for groceries that morning. Did he jump out of the car? Did she leave him there? She and Dad headed there. We girls waited and waited.

Finally back they came, Dad and Mom smiling broadly, and Bushy happily hanging his head out the window smelling the familiar scents of home.

As they drove up to the store, there Bushy was, sitting on the curb, waiting. People said he had sat there all day, just looking up and down the street. Was

he remembering a time long ago when he'd jumped out of a car and been left? A time when he had wandered looking for his master, but had never found him...but he found a new family...us. He had learned a lesson: If he was lost, he needed to stay put—stay where he'd last seen his family.

Mom and Dad said that as they drove up, his ears perked and he stood at attention. The minute they opened the car door, he raced to them, jumped onto Mom's lap and cried as he spilled out all his fears.

After that, Bushy never jumped out of the car again. He waited for Mom or Dad or one of us girls to take him out for a walk. Then he rushed back to wait for us right beside the car. He had learned his lesson. And so had we. Henceforth we counted "heads" whenever we went somewhere.

Dad: "Here." Mom: "Here." Mary: "Here."
Sarah: "Here." Anne: "Here." Bushy: "Pee-
ewuuuuuu! Yep, he's here!"

**-Bushy Charger Challenger Peetrod
Stinky Corky-**

Chapter 7

FIFI

Bushy was male...all male...the most macho of the macho. He walked the walk, strutting proudly to show his machismo. Barked the bark whenever a threat seemed imminent. Marked the mark to let all intruders know whose territory this was. Dad always said that the two of them (he and Bushy) were macho enough for all four of us gals.

But Dad wasn't always home, and then poor Bushy was out-numbered. Mother knew Bushy was a dog, so she wouldn't annoy him with foo-foo things unless he needed a bath, which was always. She bathed him once, twice with good smelling shampoo, gave him a quick rinse with apple cider vinegar to make his dark hair shine, and toweled him dry. But as soon as he could, he raced outside to roll and get his doggie smell back.

Some girls played with dolls. Mary, Sarah and I were never much into that. But we were into playing with Bushy.



Sarah sunbathing with Bushy

One Saturday when Mom and Dad were out on a date (that's what they called their weekly outing to take the garbage to the dump), we girls decided to get Bushy all "dolled up."

We used Mom's nicest smelling shampoo to bathe him. After his vinegar rinse, we praised him, "Oh, Bushy, you smell soooooo clean!" Bushy wasn't happy.

We dried him, then sat by the furnace and brushed him 'til he was dry and fluffy. "Oh, Bushy, you look wonderful." He whined.

We put him on a leash to take him for a walk. He tugged. He wanted to run and roll. No way! Back inside we came.

Sarah found some hair ribbons. Mary tied bows to his ears. Bushy shook his head trying to get them off. "That's okay, Bushy. You look soooo darling." He wouldn't look at us.

He needed one more touch. I ran into Mom's room and found her special Faberge Tigress perfume. Mmmmm, perfect. I dabbed it behind Bushy's ears and under his chin. I knew how to do this from watching Mom when she got all dressed up. Bushy sneezed and shook his head. "Mmmmm, oh, Bushy. Just wait 'til Mom and Dad see you." He did NOT look happy.

Just as we finished, we heard the truck. "Wait right there," we called as Mom and Dad came in the front door. "We have a surprise for you."

We opened the basement door. "Come, Bushy. Come here." No response.

Mary whistled; we coaxed. No response.

“What’s the matter?” Dad asked. As soon as he heard Dad, Bushy sneaked into the room, hiding his head, as if embarrassed.

“Hey, Boy,” Dad said. Bushy ran over to him. Then he spotted Mom, and he raced to her, whining and crying as if to tell her the awful things we girls had done to him.

“Hmm. What’s that smell?” Mom asked.

“We bathed him just like you do...shampoo and vinegar rinse.”

“Oh, and we put on some of your perfume. Doesn’t he smell wonderful...just like you, Mom!”

“He certainly smells...interesting,” Mom said. She didn’t seem too fond of the combination of floral shampoo, cider vinegar, Tigress perfume and dog.

“I’m going to call him Fifi!” I announced proudly. Bushy was NOT happy.

Dad looked at Bushy; then he looked at Mary, Sarah, and me. “Girls, Bushy is a boy. I’m afraid these girlie scents just aren’t his thing. It was nice of you to try, but.... Now let him go play.”

The first thing Bushy did was rub his ears on the carpet until the bows came off. Then he tore around the house looking for a place to roll. We finally let him out, and he rolled and rolled in the dirt, grass, and doo-doo until he smelled like himself again.

Bushy was Fifi for only an hour, but that memory lived on. Guess who wouldn't let us girls bathe him again? That's right, it was

**-Bushy Charger Challenger Peetrod
Stinky Corky Fifi—**

Chapters 8/9

MOO-MOO BAA-BAA

Bushy was a born entertainer. Some perform for audiences, and this was definitely Bushy. When he knew he had our attention, he went all out.

One of his favorite places was the big picture window in the living room. Bushy liked to look out the window, watching for dogs or cats or birds. It didn't matter the size either. He'd look to make sure someone in the family was watching. If he had an audience, he raced back and forth in front of the window, ruff, ruff, ruffing at the top of his lungs. Dad taught us to stroke his ego by saying, "Atta boy, Bushy. You're soooo tough. Sic 'em!" This was all the encouragement he needed. Off he tore again. We girls soon learned that all we had to do was stand at the window and say, "Sic 'em, Bushy," and he'd take off. Sometimes there wasn't even anything outside to bark at. Bushy just enjoyed strutting his stuff. "Atta boy, Bushy. You're so tough."

Another lesson Dad taught us was that if we take from the earth, we need to give back to the earth. That meant we planted trees, lots of trees. When we were little we loved these outings, but when we were teenagers we wanted to be doing more fun things. Every so often, whether we wanted to or not, Dad would load us all into the car and we'd head to the hills to plant seedlings, or baby trees.



Relaxing by our station wagon while tree planting

On one of these trips as we were driving past a field of cows, we decided to liven things up by playing the Sic 'em game. "Cows, Bushy...Sic 'em!" It didn't work. He gazed where we pointed, but he was clearly

uninspired. So I had an idea. Instead of saying "cow," I exclaimed, "Moo-moo, Bushy!" His ears perked. "Sic 'em!" I urged.

And he did. Up he leapt. "Ruff, ruff, ruff." He jumped over the seat to the back of the station wagon. "Ruff, ruff, ruff." He chased those cows away, or so he thought. How proud he was.

We came to another field of cows, and it worked again...and again...and again. This was great! What a smart dog!

Mom was less than enthusiastic about Bushy's new trick. It didn't matter to Dad; he had a special way of handling such disturbances. He'd just turn off his hearing aids!

If Bushy could learn one new word, I was sure he could learn another. So the next time we went for a drive into the countryside, I noticed a field of sheep. "Sheep, Bushy! Sic 'em." Nothing, nada, zilch.

"Now, Anne..." Mother began. Dad just turned off his hearing aids; he knew what was coming.

"Baa-baa, Bushy!" His ears perked; it was working. "Baa-baa, Bushy. Sic 'em!" And off he

went, barking at the window, then over the seat to the back window, ruff, ruff, ruffing until those sheep were gone. “Atta boy, Bushy. You’re sooooo tough.”

He relished our praise. He loved showing off whether in the car or in front of the living room window. Bushy chased away all the animals—real or imaginary.

We loved this rowdy game. We were never serious about Sic ‘em, and Bushy seemed to know it was all in fun.

Years and years later, long after Bushy was gone, Mary and Sarah come to my house for Fourth of July. Sarah took our little Shih Tzu—Prince Humperdink, or Dinky for short—out into the front yard to play.

About an hour later as we gathered inside for dinner, there was a knock on the door. “Is your mom or dad home?” the policeman asked. All eyes were wide.

“Mom, there’s a policeman here for you!”

Dinky followed me to the door. “May I help you?”

"We have a complaint about a woman siccing a dog on a little girl here awhile ago. Ma'am, was that you? Is this the dog?"

"What? There must be some mistake. I wouldn't do anything like that. We have children. I would never sic a dog on a child," I explained. "Besides, Dinky doesn't even know what 'sic' means." To prove my point, I looked around the room and saw Mary and Sarah sitting there. "Sic 'em, Dinky," I said. He just stood there wagging his tail and looking at me.

"I'm sorry, but there must be a misunderstanding," I told the policeman.

The officer left.

The room was silent. Then Sarah said softly, "It was me. I did it."

"What?" I exclaimed.

"I said, 'Sic 'em, Dinky!'"

"WHAT?"

"When Dinky and I were outside, a little girl and her father came bicycling around the cul-de-sac," Sarah explained. "Dinky saw the bike, and he raced along the sidewalk barking at this strange 'animal'."

Sarah, who was always the tease in the family, said, "That's when I remembered the old Sic 'em game. I called, 'Atta boy, Dinky. You're so tough. Sic 'em!'"

"But he didn't sic; he just came right back to me. I was just joking." Sarah grimaced.

Well, we lucked out that day. No one was hauled off to jail or the pound. I don't think Mary, Sarah, or I ever again said "sic 'em" to our dogs.

I remember well Bushy's mischievous grin. At that very moment up in doggie heaven, guess who was grinning at us for getting off scot-free?

**-Bushy Charger Challenger Peetrod
Stinky Corky Fifi Moo-Moo Baa-Baa—**

CHAPTER 10

LINDELL

Those were all the names Bushy earned. He was part of our family for almost 12 years, and certainly could have earned lots more names. Though we girls grew up and developed other interests, we all still adored Bushy. One by one, we girls all left for college. Bushy, Mom and Dad were the constants in our lives.



*Saying good-bye to Bushy
as I left for college*

Bushy was getting older. He wasn't as active as before, but he was always there waiting for us when we came home. Now he was grey around the nose and chin. He looked quite distinguished. He was hard of hearing, but that is a trait of lots of Lindsells, and we manage quite nicely. So did he. Cataracts clouded both eyes, and this was a concern. Mom and Dad decided that he should now be mainly a house dog.

Bushy's favorite place was the rug near the front door. He was right in the middle of every traffic pattern so he wouldn't miss out on our comings and goings. He was always there.



Mom, Dad and Bushy were always there.

I was at college when Mom's letter came. Bushy had died. He was gone. My heart broke. What would it feel like when I went home. What would home be like without Bushy? Who would cuddle with me when I was down? Who would greet me so fondly every morning?

How I remember that first trip home. Even with Mom and Dad there to greet me, the entryway was empty. There was no little black dog wagging in greeting ready to give me all his love and attention.

The next morning when I came downstairs, I saw him—a little black shadow of a dog on his spot. Was it possible? I looked again, but he was gone. Mom and Dad told me that they had the same experience. So did Mary and Sarah their first time home. I think Bushy's spirit came to say goodbye to each of us. Somehow that was comforting, though I shed a few more tears.

Through his life, Bushy gave us lots of joy, and taught some important life lessons. The most

important was about unconditional love. This is what Bushy gave us all.

As time passed, we learned that Dad, our King, was not infallible...that Mother couldn't make all things right...and that we girls weren't the ultimate playthings. Sometimes we'd ignore him, but he always gladly came when we called, cuddled up with us when we needed it, and played when we wanted. He showed us what it is to love unconditionally.

And finally he taught us to let go. When you truly love, that person (or dog) remains alive in your heart and stays with you as long as you remember.

Some people say dogs don't go to heaven. I disagree. I think even God needs a little black bundle of love to cuddle with from time to time. But I don't suppose I'll know for sure until I get there. I fully expect to see a little black dog waiting for me just inside those pearly gates, welcoming me home.

**-Bushy Charger Challenger Peetrod
Stinky Corky Fifi Moo-moo Baa-baa
LINDSELL-**

Anne Lindsell Doherty had an idyllic childhood growing up in small towns in Oregon and northern California where she had lots of freedom and adventures. The family dog, Bushy, was everyone's favorite companion.



Bushy and me playing

She and her husband, Dennis, raised their four children in Eastern Oregon, where they, too, had lots of freedom and adventures. Are there more stories to tell?

Like her father, Anne loves to tell a good story. Her ten grandchildren love to listen.