

Chez-Nous Feb-Mar 1992

On February 2, 1992, Punxsutawney Phil, Pennsylvania's famous groundhog, saw his shadow, resigning us to six more weeks of winter. He has been performing this "service" since 1887.

Phil has been famous for years. Enjoy the following recollection of Henry Bernard about Grafton, North Dakota, 1912.

"I must have been four or five when this incident occurred. My father, Henry Bernard, was the chief engineer at the flour mill. During the summer the fellows caught a woodchuck (groundhog) and put him in a cage. He was named "Pete". Pete gave a lot of amusement to visitors. His ability to peel and eat a banana was a source of awe to visitors. However, his ability to eat a soda cracker without losing any crumbs was remarkable. Pete was kept in the cage until fall when he became very drowsy and slept almost all the time. Dad decided that Pete was ready to hibernate and took him home and released him in the unfinished basement that we had. Pete got busy and dug a hole in the dirt wall, "stole" bananas, apples, carrots, etc. and took them inside the hole and sealed it from the inside.

Dad remembered the story about the groundhog and on February 2nd told mother to watch and if Pete came out to send the "boy" (that was me) over to the mill to tell him. Sure enough Pete did come out. Saw his shadow and went back into the hole for another six weeks. We must have had more winter. Then he came out again but was sickly and died shortly after. The veterinarian said it was because he lacked certain things for his diet that he would have picked up if he had run wild. Dad had Pete mounted and kept him for many years. This story was often repeated and even I have repeated it many times since that time."

DO YOU HAVE SIMILAR KINDS OF RECOLLECTIONS?
If you have a favorite story write it down and send it to us for Chez Nous. Don't worry about the grammar, etc. Send to Dick Bernard, ~~7632 157th Street W #301, Apple Valley MN 55124~~. We publish about every other month.

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