

RHYME TIME

(A Poetic History of Groundhog Day)
By Terry A. Fye (used by permission)
For Better or Verse

Let us tell you the story of Punxsutawney Phil-
The world's greatest groundhog, the king of the hill.

He predicts the weather and he's known everywhere;
Look for him February 2nd-and he'll be there.

Phil crawls out of the burrow on his special day.
Will there be winter or spring?-Oh, what will he say?

If he sees his shadow, look for more ice and snow!
But spring's-a-coming when there's no black shadow.

Many thousands of people clap, smile, and cheer-
And they have fun Groundhog Day every year.

How'd this little brown animal become such a star?
To find the answer, you don't have to go far.

Travel to Jefferson County in the Keystone State-
Head to Punxsutawney where we all celebrate.

Near town there's a big hill called Gobbler's Knob,
Where Phil does his famous forecasting job.

Long before people came here to build log homes
The fields were the places where woodchucks roamed.

They shared the land with Indians who were here first;
But, when white people came, the tribes of natives dispersed.

Still the groundhogs kept digging their underground rooms
Where they would scamper when the hunters' guns boomed.

Pioneer settlers watched animals to learn about weather;
Some critters were smart, but the groundhog was better.

Did you know Punxs'y Phil's been here since 1886-
Not just in winter but also at the summer picnics.

Only a few men knew the groundhog could tell about spring,
But, more and more people wanted to be part of the thing.

So little by little, Phil's fame grew and grew
And so did the crowds-up to 30,000 it's true!

Bill Murray made a movie they call "Groundhog Day!"
Now the world wants to know where Punxs'y Phil stays.

On February 2nd, the Inner Circle wears tall hats and black suits
They let Phil tell the weather, and then everyone salutes!

Phil returns to his cozy apartment in the groundhog zoo
If you stop at the window, he just might wave back at you!

In the weather capital of the world, the groundhog's supreme.
Come visit him in Punxsutawney and find out what we mean!