

**The Teddy Bear**  
**120<sup>th</sup> Anniversary – 1903-2023**  
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Toy store owner Morris Michtom, a Russian immigrant, placed two stuffed bears in his candy store shop window on February 15, 1903, advertising them as “Teddy bears.” He had received permission from President Theodore Roosevelt to use his nickname, Teddy. Soon toy stores began manufacturing these stuffed bears and it became a national childhood institution!

The true inspiration for the Teddy Bear occurred the year before. Theodore Roosevelt was an avid hunter. On a bear hunting trip in Mississippi in November of 1902, Roosevelt had not located a single bear. His assistants decided to help him, tying up a black bear to a willow tree so he could shoot it. Roosevelt refused, saying it was unsportsmanlike.

The news spread quickly throughout the country that the President refused to shoot a bear. Roosevelt’s commitment to the ethics of hunting, combined with his fame as a soldier and now President, caused political cartoonist Clifford Berryman to lightheartedly satirize his refusal. (Morris and Rose Michtom, who made stuffed animals,) saw the cartoon and decided to dedicate one to Roosevelt! The rest, as they say, ‘is history.’ Watch for this year’s ‘Teddy Bear’ in America’s Hometown Thanksgiving parade on November 18!

