

Michigan Every Day **By Patrick Sullivan and Carole Eberly**

Oct. 28, 1929

Opening of famous Detroit restaurant

The building on Gratiot Avenue in Detroit was built around 1880. It had been a grocery store. Later it was a cigar factory. In 1929, Joe Muer, who had run the cigar manufacturing business at the site with his father for more than 20 years, decided to turn the building into a restaurant. It opened on Oct. 28.

The following day, markets on Wall Street crashed, signaling the start of the worst economic period the country had ever seen, the Great Depression. A restaurant that opened on the eve of the world's most horrific economic collapse did not have much of a chance for survival as fortunes were lost and people tightened their belts. Nonetheless, Muer's Oyster House, later known as Joe Muer's, would go on to become one of the city's greatest and best-known restaurants. The family would go on to reign over a restaurant empire. In 1993, Muer's grandson, Charles Muer, disappeared with his family in a storm while they were sailing on a 40-foot yacht in the Bahamas. Joe Muer's closed in 1998 after the company filed for bankruptcy.