

# THIS DATE IN

# HISTORY

## EVENTS OF LOCAL INTEREST

These historical notes were taken from the *Public Opinion* newspaper archives.

### 1919: 100 years ago...

The Eagle Cafe, for years one of the most successful and popular quick order eating houses in the city, changed ownership at midnight last night. The entire business, including the confectionary and cigars of the cafe annex, was sold by **John Ladendorf** to **John Closterman**. The new proprietor, who has assumed active management of the business, has been the chef at the Grand Hotel for the last seven years where he established a reputation as a culinary artist. His expertise and skill assure the continued success of the Eagle Cafe. Mr. Ladendorf's time will now be devoted only to the management of the Antlers Hotel (116 1st Ave. N.E.) which he purchased at the same time he moved his Eagle cafe from its Broadway location to the building it now occupies in the Hamm building on the corner of Maple St. north and 1st Avenue. He opened the Eagle Cafe nine years ago and by persistent hard work and good management brought it to its present success.

### 1944: 75 years ago...

ABOARD A BATTLESHIP OFF TRUK, CAROLINE ISLANDS – This task force of aircraft carriers and new battleships – the greatest concentration of naval striking power in history – has exploded the myth of Truk's impregnability. A surprise lightning strike out of a cloudy dawn by Hellcat fighters wiped out nearly all of the planes defending this kingpin Japanese fortress and supply base in the Caroline Islands. In all, 127 Japanese planes were destroyed in the air and 74 on the ground – a total of 201 planes destroyed. More than 50 planes on the ground were also damaged. After the first fighter strike, a steady parade of Avenger torpedo planes and new Helldiver dive-bombers blasted targets at will for most of the two days. Now we are retiring with Truk's lagoon well littered with sunken ships and burned-out hulks. Thirty-six ships were caught in the lagoon anchorages the first day. On the second day just 10 remained. Carrier-based bombers set fire to fuel and ammunition dumps. We lost 17 planes.

### Today's sponsor:



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### 1979: 40 years ago...

As **Mrs. Olive Skinner** looks back on the early days of Watertown, many of her "I Remember" thoughts center around musical entertainment. **Olive Farl** started playing the piano at church when she was about 13, continuing all through her high school years. She started playing the piano for dances when she was 14, with a band made up of members of Peck's band, and this continued into her married years. Peck's Band had one or two indoor concerts at the Goss Hall every year. If there was a soloist, Mrs. Skinner would play the accompaniment. She also played with Peck's dance band every Saturday night at the Goss. Later, the Casino was built, with most of the band members buying stock in the building. "But they wouldn't sell me any because I was a girl," she said. Olive Farl Skinner and her two brothers, **Walter and Clay Farl**, also played in the pit orchestras of local theaters - Olive at the Metropolitan, Walter at the Lyric, and Clay at the Idle Hour.

### 2004: 15 years ago...

In less than 60 minutes, 12-year-old **Allison McEldowney** outlasted a field of 24 spellers to win the 2004 Northeast S.D. Spelling Bee in Watertown. McEldowney, a sixth-grader from Castlewood Elementary will represent the northeast region at the S.D. State Spelling Bee this Saturday in Madison. McEldowney is the daughter of **Tom and Deb McEldowney** of Castlewood. She will compete with nine other winners of regional bees Saturday, which are sponsored by the state's daily newspapers. The state bee will be held at the C. Ruth Science Center Auditorium at 10 a.m. Saturday on the campus of Dakota State University in Madison. The winner of Saturday's bee will represent South Dakota at the National Scripps Howard Spelling Bee in Washington, D.C., in May and win an all-expense paid trip to Washington, D.C.

Did today's DIH spur a memory? Do you know where the people mentioned today are and what they are doing? If yes, please email our newsroom at [news@thepublicopinion.com](mailto:news@thepublicopinion.com) and let us know.

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