9 October 2014

Celebrating Transportation History in Iowa
Leighton Christiansen, Iowa DOT Librarian
Celebrating Transportation History in Iowa

Being a Short Travelogue on The Iowa DOT Librarian’s Experience in Cultural Outreach & Notes to Future Travellers

Leighton Christiansen
October 9, 2014
Transportation Librarians Roundtable
DOT 100th Anniversary
Planning Committee

Newman Abuissa
Bryan Bradley
Leighton Christiansen
Beth Collins
George Feazell
Mary Godwin
Doyle Jacobs
Lori Jensen
Andy Loonan
George Martens
Linda Martens
Cathy Mather
Cherice Ogg
Krista Rostad
Dakin Schultz
Vicki Stamper
Linda Torgeson
Cheryl White
Sonya Willis

Special thanks to the DOT Strategic Information and Web Design teams, for borrowed content.
Iowa has a rich transportation history that began 10,000 years ago. From nomadic hunters blazing trails as they followed game through the countryside to the whiz of today’s interstates, every step is a unique piece of our history. As the Iowa Department of Transportation celebrates 100 years, we invite you to peruse our stories, ask us questions and share your transportation experiences with us.

05/07/2013

**The evolution of the Iowa driver’s license**

Many Iowans have fond memories of getting their first driver’s license. There is a sense of accomplishment and of maturity, along with a feeling of freedom to travel when and where you desire. Of course, the privilege of driving also carries a heavy responsibility for the safety of others on...

04/05/2013

**Which came first: the driver’s license or the automobile license plate?**

Two of the most frequent questions Iowans have for the Iowa DOT Library are: What year was the first license plate issued? What year was the first driver’s license required? As it happens, the automobile license plate predates the operator’s license by quite some time. When did Iowa first require...
MikeClaggett

My father was a civil engineer for the Highway Commission/DOT for about 36 years. He started out at Decorah right out of college(SDSU) in 1956, when the federal Interstate Highway bill was providing money for interstates. My Dad, a Minnesotan, chose Iowa over Minnesota because, in his opinion, Minnesota would spend more money on snow removal rather than building highways. He wanted to build roads!! We later moved to Davenport, then to Atlantic in 1961 or 1962, where Dad was promoted to the Resident Construction Engineer position. Even though my brother Steve and I were pre-schoolers, then elementary students, at the time. Dad would take us out to see Interstate 80 being built. He had one rule: when he was talking to his men that worked for him or for the firm doing the construction, we were to not talk. We got to go twice a year for years, once in the summer and once in the fall. We go through ditches in his H.C car, going from one site to another, watching concrete mixing plants mass-producing concrete, pouring its mix into open-top transport mixer. Then we traveled the dirt roads and ditches to the next site to watch the paving. We saw pile drivers operating, scapers leveling down to grade the steep hills of western Iowa, bulldozers pushing the loaded-down scapers. We saw bridge concrete poured on chilly fall days.
"Woman's Head" (1976)
An Ames icon first took shape in 1976, on the northeast corner of the Iowa DOT's complex. In 1998 and 1999, it was transformed into a more durable material. Learn how the Iowa DOT became home to Ames' most famous public art work: "Woman's Head."

Welcome to the Iowa DOT's virtual museum.
The virtual museum will highlight the art, artifacts, awards, and architecture collected and created by the Iowa DOT over the past 100 years and into the future. New items and structures will be featured every couple of months, giving the public a view of the Iowa DOT and Iowa's transportation infrastructure they may not have expected.

Please click one of the four tabs at the top of the page to get started with your tour. We hope that you will enjoy the items and stories shared here.

Thank you for visiting.
DOT 100th Anniversary Celebration
May 14, 2013

Keven Arrowsmith
Iowa DOT Worker Memorial
June 16, 2014

Leighton Christiansen
A Journey in Transportation: The Iowa Department of Transportation Centennial and Iowa Transportation History Highlights
“I’ve Been Everywhere…”
2 Names, Several Additions, 1 Address (for 90 years)

Photos from Iowa DOT Digital Archives and Iowa State University Geographic Information Systems Support & Research Facility
2 Names, Several Additions, 1 Address (for 90 years)

Photos from Iowa DOT Digital Archives and
Iowa State University Geographic Information Systems Support & Research Facility
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Iowa State University Geographic Information Systems Support & Research Facility
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Leighton Christiansen
THE IOWA STATE HIGHWAY COMMISSION (IHC) BECOMES AN INDEPENDENT STATE-ADMINISTERED ORGANIZATION

On April 9, 1913, the IHC separated from the Iowa State College, becoming an independent state-administered organization, managed by a three-member commission, comprised of Anson Marston, H.C. Beard and J.W. Holden.

Anson Marston, first highway commissioner
Iowa in the Mud
## Iowa’s Primary Roads, 1920-1930

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Miles</th>
<th>Paved</th>
<th>Gravel</th>
<th>Dirt</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>6619</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>792</td>
<td>5760</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>6616</td>
<td>236</td>
<td>1157</td>
<td>5224</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1922</td>
<td>6615</td>
<td>334</td>
<td>1558</td>
<td>4723</td>
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<td>6641</td>
<td>419</td>
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<td>4333</td>
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<tr>
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<td>6660</td>
<td>502</td>
<td>2164</td>
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<td>650</td>
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<td>1928</td>
<td>6761</td>
<td>1625</td>
<td>3221</td>
<td>1915</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1929</td>
<td>6770</td>
<td>2317</td>
<td>3137</td>
<td>1216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>7274</td>
<td>3272</td>
<td>2863</td>
<td>1139</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


**Pavement’s Progress**
Increased weights, few building codes
BEGAN PAINTING BLACK CENTER LINE ON PRIMARY ROADS

In 1926, Iowa began painting a center black line on every mile of primary road pavement to reduce head-on collisions.
The first automobiles in Iowa were showcased at the Linn County Fair in 1899, and were slow to catch on in the state.

In what year did Iowa first require cars to be registered and display license tags or plates?

A. 1900  
B. 1904  
C. 1908  
D. 1912
Trivia Break 1: Cars & Drivers

B. 1904

Leather License Plates http://www.leatherlicenseplates.com/Iowa_files/107_0275_1.JPG
Trivia Break 1: Cars & Drivers

How many cars were registered in Iowa in 1904?

A. 1
B. 582
C. 931
D. 1398
Trivia Break 1: Cars & Drivers
C. 931
Johnson County Auto Routes
Iowa City’s Auto Routes
Trivia Break 1: Cars & Drivers

When was the first automobile crash fatality in Iowa?

A. 1903
B. 1905
C. 1907
D. 1909
This was the first chapter of a tragic serial story that will never have an ending. The story of Iowa's first fatal motor vehicle accident. It occurred three miles south of Hampton on what is now Highway 65, on September 29, 1905. The driver, R. Harriman, a Hampton attorney, was killed when traveling at a high rate of speed. The truck was so badly wrecked, it left the embankment. The driver of the W. H., took a wrong turn. Harriman was killed instantly. It is said the driver had read that the car would have been an Oldsmobile.

B. 1905
Fatality History
Iowa 1925 - 2012

2013: 317
Iowa’s 511

http://www.511ia.org/
Other Modes of Transport in Iowa

Water
Rail
Trail
Transit
Air
LOCKS AND DAMS ON THE UPPER MISSISSIPPI RIVER

In 1930, Congress authorized a nine-foot channel project on the Mississippi River between Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minn., and the mouth of the Missouri River just above St. Louis, Mo.

The project became the responsibility of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Construction was performed primarily in the decade between 1930 and 1940, but, maintenance, improvements, and construction of auxiliary structures continue today. As a result of the Corps' completion of the initial massive project, there are now 29 locks and dams between Minneapolis-St. Paul and St. Louis.

Because the Mississippi falls approximately 420 feet in the 670 miles between Minneapolis and St. Louis, traffic heading south before the
Iowa City Water Navigation 1841

Mildred Pelzer, “Steamboat Ripple arrives,” iagenweb.org/johnson/PostcardHibbs/Postcard16.htm
Iowa Water Navigation 1860s

Navigable Waterways in Iowa in 1860

Transportation in Iowa, Thompson, 7
Transportation in Iowa, Thompson, 41
Transportation in Iowa, Thompson, 41
Iowa Rail Development and Impact
Iowa Rail Facts

- Rail miles, 1860: 700
- Rail miles, 1880: 5,400
- Rail miles, 1915: 10,500
- Rail miles, 2011: 3,893
Iowa and the Underground Railroad
What Do We Do with Abandoned Rail Lines?

Rails to Trails

http://www.iowadot.gov/iowarail/railroads/maps/RR_to_Trails_07.pdf
Iowa’s Public Transit

http://www.iowadot.gov/transit/interactive_map.html
Iowa Aviation Events

- First manned balloon - Hercules – 1856
- First man-carrying glider – 1898
- First powered airplane – 1910
- First licensed Black male pilot – 1924
- Iowa Aeronautics Commission – 1945

http://www.earlyaviators.com/banning.jpg
Trivia Break 2: Iowa Contributions to National Transportation

What is this?

A. Dune Buggy
B. Tree planter
C. Corn detasseler
D. Slip-form paver
Trivia Break 2: Iowa Contributions to National Transportation

D. Slip-form paver

http://www.iowadot.gov/50thpages/featured_articles.aspx?article=article3.txt
Trivia Break 2: Iowa Contributions to National Transportation

Which of these was first designed and deployed in Iowa?
FIRST NO PASSING SIGN CREATED

In Dec. 1959 the Iowa State Highway Commission placed an experimental "No Passing Zone" sign on U.S. 30 from Clinton to the Missouri River.

The sign was created at a time when the organization was stressing the importance of highway safety through increased signage. The no passing pennant was adopted around the country and later included in the "Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Streets and Highways" which sets the standards for traffic signage across the nation.
Iowa DOT History Highlights: Recent Decades

The Sioux Calumet

http://www.iowadot.gov/history/home.html
Iowa DOT History Highlights: Recent Decades

The U.S. 20 Bridge at the Iowa River

Iowa DOT History Highlights:
Recent Decades

The U.S. 20 Bridge at the Iowa River
The Future?

Passenger Rail Service in Iowa

http://www.iowadot.gov/iowarail/passenger/visionplan.htm
http://www.iowadot.gov/roundabouts/roundabouts.htm
http://www.iowadot.gov/mvd/ods/flashinglyellowarrow.html

Bettendorf, Iowa roundabout: Google Maps
Future Passenger Rail?

http://www.iowadot.gov/iowarail/passenger/visionplan.htm
Future Roundabouts

http://www.iowadot.gov/roundabouts/roundabouts.htm

http://www.ctre.iastate.edu/pubs/8.5x11BROCHURE.pdf

[Image of a roundabout and a roundabout sign]
Future Flashing Yellow Left Arrows

http://www.iowadot.gov/mvd/ods/flashingyellowarrow.html

Stop and wait your turn

Left turn about to become red

Yield to oncoming traffic and pedestrians

Make Left turn, oncoming traffic is stopped.
Current Snowplow Locations

Go to Winter Driving page
Click on “Snowplow Locations”

http://www.iowadot.gov/travel.html/#/winterdriving
Your Turn:
DOT History Conversations

You can:
• Learn more
  • http://www.iowadot.gov/history/home.html
• Comment on a story
• Share using Facebook, Twitter, and Pinterest
• Email: dot.library@dot.iowa.gov
• Put a stamp on it:
  • Iowa DOT Library, attn: 100th Anniversary, 800 Lincoln Way, Ames, IA 50010
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Thank you.

Questions?

www.iowadot.gov/history/home.html