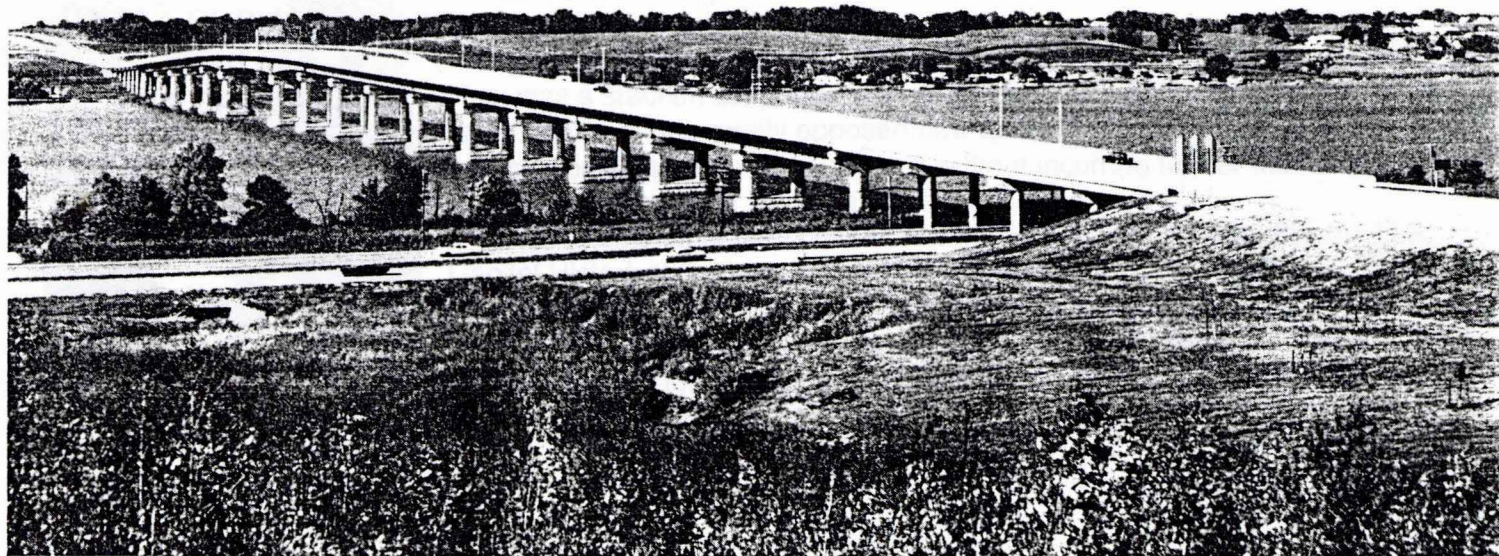


Fred Schwengel Memorial Bridge

Signing Ceremony

August 16, 1995 - 3 p.m.



Program

Master of Ceremonies

Darrel Rensink, Director, Iowa Department of Transportation

Welcome

Raymond G. Parris, Mayor of LeClaire

Remarks

The Honorable Tom Harkin, U.S. Senator

The Honorable Jim Leach, U.S. Representative

The Honorable Terry Branstad, Governor of Iowa

Mrs. Fred Schwengel

History of bridge

The dedication of this Interstate 80 bridge over the Mississippi River at LeClaire on Oct. 27, 1966, marked a major milestone in linking Iowa to other major locations in the nation. It was the final link in the superhighway from Iowa to the East Coast, and with the opening of the remaining segments of Interstate 80 in Iowa later that year, provided all of Iowa with greatly enhanced access.

The bridge was the first Mississippi River Crossing built under the supervision of the Iowa State Highway Commission. The \$5 million structure was financed jointly by the states of Iowa and Illinois, and the U.S. Bureau of Public Roads through the Federal Highway Trust Fund.

Work on the substructure of the 3,486-foot bridge began in October 1963, and superstructure work started in October 1965. The bridge rests on 27 piers, and has a 370-foot center span carrying traffic over the main channel of the Mississippi.

Fred Schwengel

Frederic (Fred) Delbert Schwengel was born May 28, 1906, near Sheffield, Iowa, and was active in numerous community activities in Missouri and Davenport, Iowa, during his early adult life. He was also active in politics, and was elected to the Iowa Legislature in 1944. He won re-election to four more terms in the Iowa House. In 1954 he won election to the U.S. House of Representatives from Iowa's First District, and served a total of eight terms in Washington, retiring in 1973.



While serving in the U.S. House, Mr. Schwengel was a consistent and strong advocate for construction of the Interstate Highway System, which was authorized by Congress in 1956. He spoke eloquently of its benefits to the nation in terms of highway safety, convenience, national defense and the economy.

He was also a strong advocate of the pay-as-you-go philosophy, and as such was a staunch supporter of the Federal Highway Trust Fund. As a fiscal conservative, he generally opposed new taxes. However, to keep the construction of the Interstate System on track without incurring further federal debt, he supported an increase in the gasoline tax.

A long-time student of history, Mr. Schwengel helped establish the U.S. Capitol Historical Society. He served as the Society's president until 1992, and as chairman of the board until his death April 2, 1993.

Shortly after his death the Iowa Legislature authorized the naming of the Interstate 80 bridge over the Mississippi River in his honor.

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