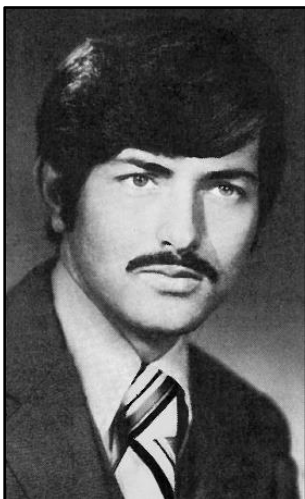


Pieces of Iowa's Past, published by the Iowa State Capitol Tour Guides monthly, features historical facts about Iowa, the Capitol, and the early workings of state government. All italicized text/block quotes in this document are taken directly from historical publications with the actual spelling, punctuation, and grammar retained.

Examining the Zeros: "Come Home To The Dome"

This year marks the beginning of the second 90th Iowa General Assembly session. Some of this year's *Pieces of Iowa's Past* articles will briefly examine the work of the 10th, 20th, 30th, 40th, 50th, 60th, 70th, and 80th General Assemblies, or observe interesting events that happened during those years.

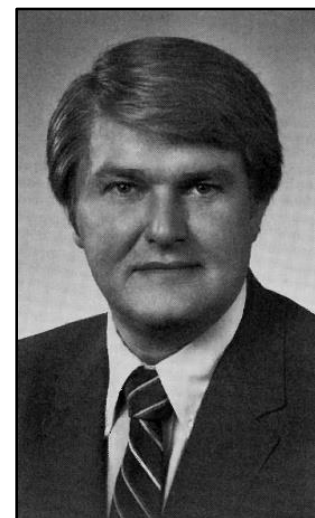
The 70th General Assembly convened for the first session January 10 and adjourned May 14, 1983, a 125-day session. The second session convened January 9 and adjourned April 20, 1984, a 103-day session. The Governor of Iowa was Terry Branstad. Lieutenant Governor Robert T. Anderson presided over the Senate, and Donald D. Avenson was Speaker of the House.



[Governor Terry
Branstad](#)



[Lieutenant Governor
Robert T. Anderson](#)



[Speaker Donald D.
Avenson](#)

There were 22 Republicans and 28 Democrats in the Senate, and in the House, there were 40 Republicans and 60 Democrats. Branstad was a Republican.

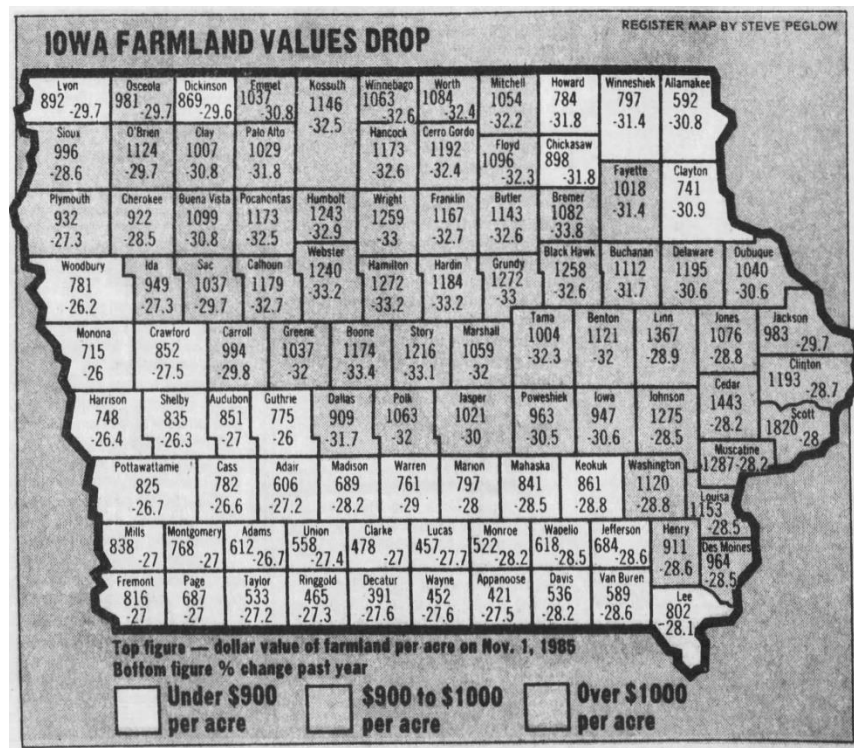
The early 1980s were a time of economic hardship, as well as celebration. Back to back economic recessions caused millions of people across the country, including Iowa, to lose their jobs. During the 70th General Assembly, devising and balancing a state budget was of top importance for legislators.

The 1980s Farm Crisis

In the 1980s, Iowa was the epicenter of a nationwide agricultural collapse “unmatched since the Great Depression.”

During the 1970s, farm commodities were in high demand around the world. The United States began selling large amounts of grain to the Soviet Union. As a result of rising prices, agricultural land increased in value, as well. Many farmers bought more land and larger machinery on credit against the value of their land from banks and the Farm Credit System. Unfortunately, in the decade to follow, the factors that contributed to farmers’ success were also the contributors to financial failure.

The Food Security Act of 1985 (Farm Bill), Farm Credits Amendment Act of 1986, and the Agricultural Credit Act of 1987 were among some legislation later passed by Congress that attempted to provide farmers with financial assistance.



The Des Moines Register; December 19, 1985

While there was hardship, there was also time to reflect on how far the capitol had come.

'Come Home to The Dome'

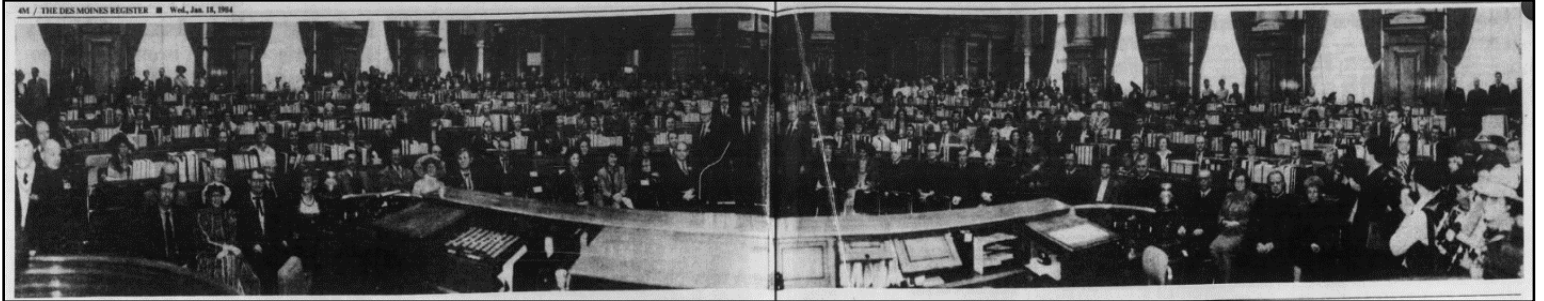
On January 17, 1984, the Iowa Capitol building celebrated its 100th birthday. In January 1884, Iowa's legislators moved from the Old Brick Capitol into the only five-domed capitol in the country. "Come Home to The Dome" was the slogan printed on flyers advertising the big event. The celebration kicked off with a horse-drawn carriage procession from the Kirkwood Hotel in downtown Des Moines to the Soldiers and Sailors Monument on the south side of Walnut Street, where the Old Brick Capitol formerly stood.



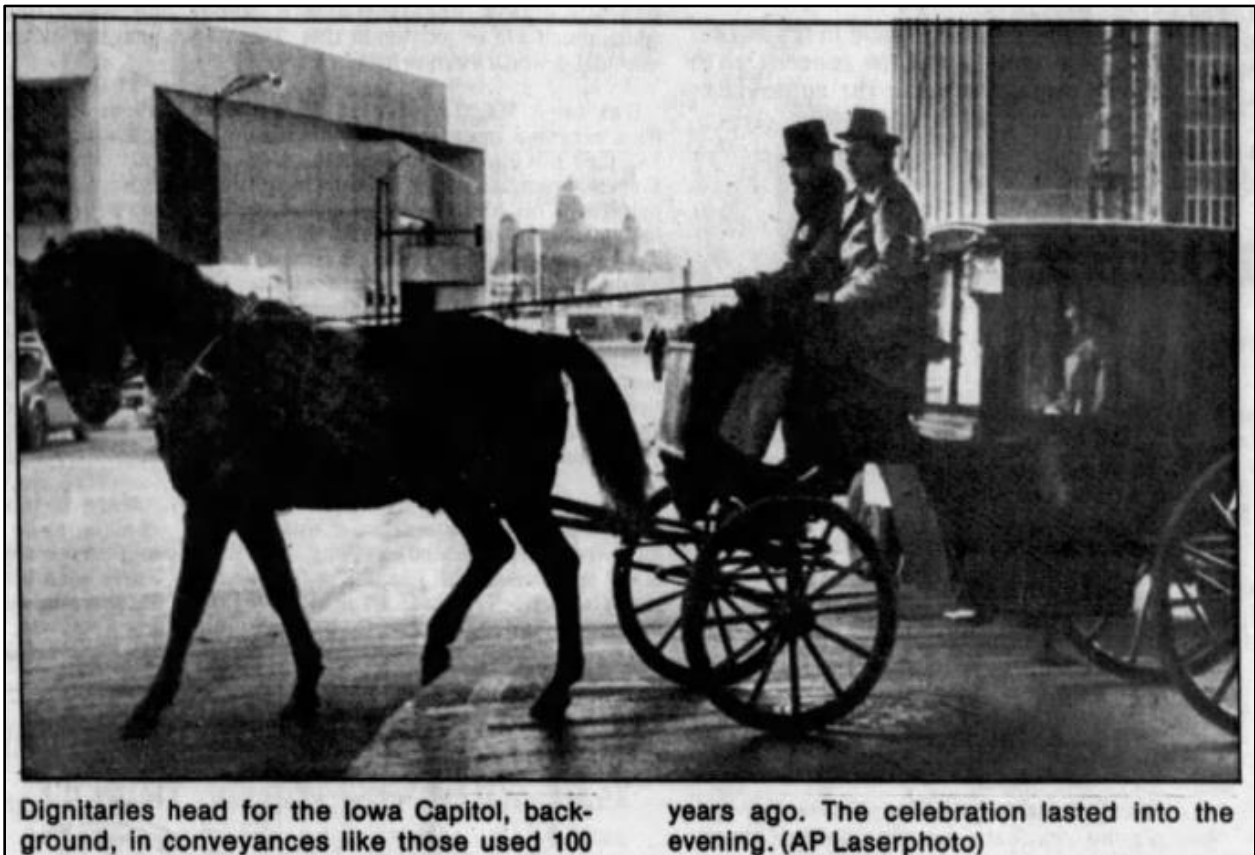
The Des Moines Register; January 18, 1984

Addresses were made by former Iowa Govs. Harold Hughes and Robert Ray, as well as current Gov. Terry Branstad. Former Iowa Govs. Robert Fulton, Norman Erbe, and Robert Blue also made remarks to the joint session. Other events throughout the day included open houses in the offices of the

governor, secretary of state, treasurer, auditor, and lieutenant governor, and in the chambers of the House of Representatives, Senate, and Supreme Court. The evening capped off with a gala ball, where guests enjoyed music and danced through the night. Staff even dressed in late 19th-century attire for the special occasion.



The Des Moines Register; January 18, 1984
Former governors, legislators, judges, and dignitaries fill the House chambers.



The Des Moines Register; January 18, 1984
Horse-drawn carriage procession from the Kirkwood Hotel to the Soldiers and Sailors Monument.

A time capsule commemorating the centennial was buried in the spring of 1984. On April 18, a special ceremony took place to bury the time capsule, more so a vault, south of the capitol and west of the Soldiers and Sailors Monument. Items enclosed in the time capsule include a Rubik's Cube,

Pioneer Seed cap, Olympic coin, Iowa transportation map, seed collection (corn, wheat, soybeans, and alfalfa), Sears catalogue, map of Des Moines, girls basketball rule book, essays from students, Michael Jackson's Thriller album, and much more. The capsule is not set to be open until 2084.

In addition to the burial ceremony, there was a pitchfork fondue feast. Representative Lester Menke and helpers speared angus steaks with pitchforks and plunged them into cast-iron kettles of boiling oil each containing 20 gallons of soybean oil under wood fires. The menu also included baked potatoes, corn on the cob, tossed salad, rolls, pie, and beverages.



The Des Moines Register; April 14, 1984
Representative Lester Menke