

1982-1983

Part 4: New Directions, 1982-1988

Shortly after taking over as President, Don Shields launched his New Directions strategy, which he hoped would "revitalize" Sheridan and allow it to thrive in the face of the world economic crisis, decreases in provincial funding and "unprecedented financial problems." Sheridan's New Directions involved an intensified focus on microprocessing, decreased expenditures, the development of new revenue streams through research and development, "continuous" program review, and greater disciplinary and institutional cooperation. To accomplish this new strategy, Shields stressed, Sheridan would have to "increase creativity" at every level.

1982:

The Argus Road Campus opened in Oakville with a focus on the skilled trades.

Summer 1982:

The Future Pod at Ontario Place opened with the largest high technology exhibition in Canada. Right next to 24 cutting edge technology displays, Sheridan showed off its computer graphics, animation and computer assisted engineering technology. 800,000 people visited the Pod, with Sheridan's computer graphics booth amongst the most popular stops.

Fall 1982:

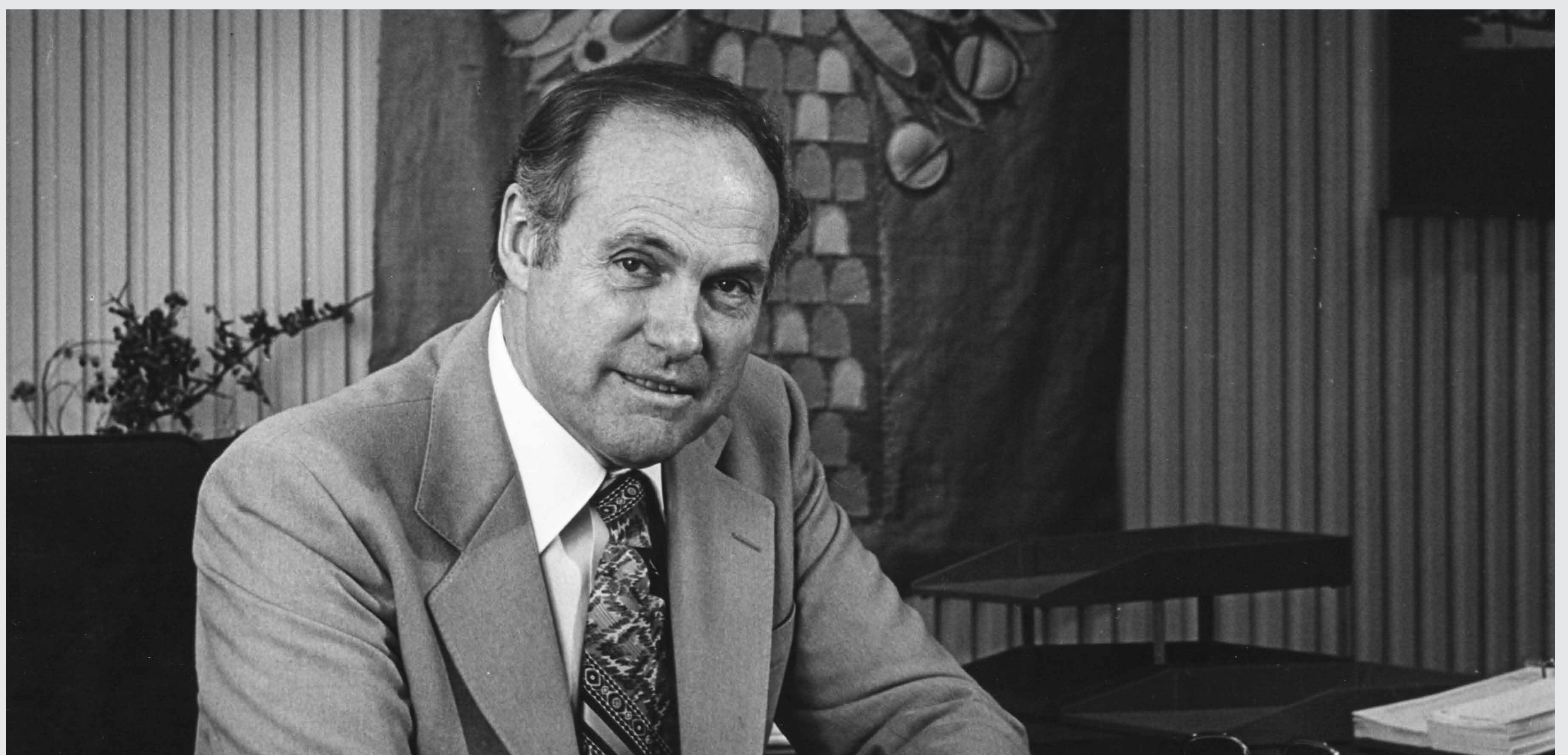
Research and development became a key part of Sheridan's strategy moving into the 1980s – which made Sheridan unique in Ontario's community college system. Faculty were encouraged to get involved in research – especially in partnership with the community and industry – and integrate research projects into curriculum. The Sheridan College Research Centre provided support for these efforts.

1982-1983:

This school year brought consistent student complaints about overcrowding at each main Sheridan campus.

“The relevance and vitality of this college also depend on launching new programs and maintaining our leadership position. No educational institution will survive the 80s without rapid change and adjustment.”

Sheridan Focus | January 1982



President Donald Shields

“Sheridan is in a unique position to enter this field because of its animation school which is the largest in North America, its strength in graphic design and its reputation as a leader in micro-electronic education... We will bring together students from the visual arts, computer programs and computer studies and they will work together on common problems. In this sense, they will be unique...The excitement is being involved in a program which is on the leading edge of technology and conceptual visual development – involved in something where you are right in the forefront. It will be a very creative, innovative environment.”

Robin King | 1982



Brampton Campus in the 1980s



Brampton Campus Orientation | 1985

“It’s really bad this year. The college should add an expansion to the school for more classrooms.”

Ron Reis (Business Administration) *Sheridan Sun* | October 13, 1983



Trafalgar Campus Orientation



Trafalgar Campus in the 1980s

Winter 1983:

Dick Ruschensky, the Director of Athletics who had been with the college since 1970, coined Sheridan's new motto "A Step Ahead" which President Shields thought captured "the spirit of Sheridan."

“It has been the College philosophy to try something new before anyone else. Since the inception of the College we’ve been leaders, particularly in areas such as animation, performing arts and fashion design. Now our involvement in high technology reflects this philosophy.”

Dick Ruschensky, Director of Athletics | 1983

1984-1985

1983-1984:

Sheridan's football team had played for 12 seasons, many of them very successful, but this year the team hung up its cleats for good.



September 1984:

Sheridan became the first college in Canada to offer computer-assisted writing instruction through a unique software system called "The Writer's Workbench" – created by the college's research and development division.

“We’ve been used to living in the country at Sheridan. We’ll have to adapt to a changing environment, and the proximity of our growing community.”

President Don Shields, *Sheridan Focus* | September 1984

1984-1985:

In a banner year for the Sheridan Bruins, the Women's Volleyball team won its one and only Ontario College Athletics Association (OCAA) championship, as did the Women's Soccer team. The Men's Outdoor Soccer team also secured its first championship, while the Men's Basketball team won the national title.

January 1984:

With high unemployment and a sputtering economy, many Ontarians were forced to seek new career directions through Sheridan's Continuing Education department. 35,000 Halton and Peel residents enrolled in 2,000 Continuing Education courses. These students had an average age of 35 to 45. The next year, the number of part-time students rose by 20 per cent – Sheridan's largest increase ever.



Theatre Sheridan's 1984 performance of *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*



“Sheridan has the satisfaction of putting something of value into society whether it’s a well-educated person or a new product. We’re now doing both. We have expanded beyond a people project.”

Carl Nygren, Director of the Innovation Centre | January 23, 1986

Fall 1984:

Students returning to Sheridan in September found almost 1,000 new homes built across from the Oakville Campus – the city was finally starting to surround the campus.

November 18, 1984:

Student-produced films by Sheridan's Media Arts department were featured at a screening at Canada House in London, England.



Sheridan Stock Footage | 1980s

February 1984:

Sheridan decided to intensify its efforts to accommodate students with special needs. As part of this journey, in March 1988 Sheridan established its first Special Needs Office.

October-November 1984:

Sheridan's first faculty strike over quality of education issues lasted 18 days until the province imposed back to work legislation.

December 1984:

The 30,000 square foot Computer and Related Studies Building opened at Trafalgar, outfitted with a microcomputer centre, a computer graphics lab and classrooms. Sheridan soon added 25 Apple computers. With the computer wing in place, Sheridan expanded its microcomputer programs, including Microcomputer Management, which focused on the business applications of the technology – the only program of its kind in North America at the time. Students in all programs would have access to the space 24 hours a day, though many soon started to complain about the lack of available computers – they were in use constantly.

To complete the computer wing, Sheridan received \$3.7 million in capital funding. “It’s great that we are the only college being funded for this addition... we’re certainly the envy of 20 other colleges.”

President Don Shields, *Sheridan Sun* | October 6, 1983

October 1985:

The official opening of Sheridan's Innovation Centre, which focused on the "commercialization of innovative ideas, products and processes through a variety of business and technical support." The centre made Sheridan's technology and expertise available to the surrounding community and industry.

November 1985:

Sheridan implemented its first series of multiculturalism workshops at Brampton Campus, helping faculty and staff prepare for the rapidly changing demographics of Peel.

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1986-1988

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After a rocky start to the decade, Sheridan's graduate placement rate started to improve by the mid-1980s. In 1985, 96% of Sheridan's latest graduates found jobs in 6 months or less. The next year, 98% of the 1,568 members of the 1986 graduating class found employment, 87% in their field of study.

“Don has given Sheridan a balance of creative arts, fashion and animation programs, along with traditional college offerings like business and technology. He has been able to introduce a number of programs other colleges don't have.”

A fitting tribute from the President's wife, Betty | 1988

March 1986:

Bernice Lever helped establish the Canadian Writing Centre at Sheridan College. She hoped the centre would become a "national resource centre for the teaching and appreciation of Canadian Writing."

May 1986:

After five years, the Illustration Exhibition at the Brampton campus really took off in the spring of 1986 with over 1000 pieces of artwork on display.

1987-1988:

Sheridan's Burlington Campus moved from a crowded industrial complex on Fairview Street to a spacious former public school building on New Street – Lawrie Smith Public School, which Sheridan purchased from the Halton Board of Education for \$900,000.

Why Square One? “The experience, over a decade, of universities in Indianapolis indicating that there is a large sector of adult learners who prefer to learn in conjunction with shopping expedition in major shopping centres ('Learn and Shop').”

Sheridan College of Applied Arts: Multi-Year Plan | 1986

“We are all fortunate to live and work in a vibrant, growing community where educational opportunities increase every year.”

President Don Shields, *Sheridan Sun* | December 11, 1986

February 1987:

Sheridan had been seriously considering a new Mississauga Campus since 1981 and the development of the Square One Shopping centre provided a perfect opportunity. In the winter of 1987, Sheridan's new campus provided a learning centre for students enrolled in retail and business programs.

August 1987:

Sheridan's new Oakville Campus opened at 700 Dorval Drive, Suite 2, offering courses in the skilled trades.

Fall 1987:

Sheridan's Women's Centre changed its name to the Equal Opportunity Centre. The centre closed its doors in 1991, after 15 years of service.

Fall 1987:

Sheridan celebrated its 20th anniversary.



Sheridan's latest student magazine, *The SCAM*, also celebrated the 20th anniversary.

February 29, 1988:

In a ceremony with Lt. Governor Lincoln Alexander, Sheridan's School of Craft and Design officially moved from Lorne Park to its new home at Trafalgar, which provided studio space for 400 students.



June 30, 1988:

After 21 years of service, President Donald Shields retired. The Sheridan Focus remembered Shields as an energetic President, who consistently encouraged people to be "innovative and creative" and brought many unique programs to the college. His retirement represented a clear transition point in the history of Sheridan College – the end of an era. He was one of the last original administrators and had helped to grow Sheridan from the ground up. His replacement, Mary Hofstetter, was the first President to come from outside the college's community.



Brampton Graduation | 1987

“The economy is on an upswing and that's being reflected at the college...there's no reason to believe that will change. That says something about Sheridan students, employers want them.”

Rob Till, Director of Placement and Career Education | December 5, 1985