

SHERIDAN PARK ASSOCIATION
A MODEL IN SHARING RESOURCES

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ABSTRACT

This large industrial research park, located in Mississauga, Ontario is a working model for sharing resources and costs. The structure and membership of the Sheridan Park Association are discussed and the numerous activities of its twenty-nine member Library and Information Science Committee are used to illustrate industrial cooperation.

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UN MODELE POUR LE PARTAGE DES RESSOURCES

RESUME

Ce grand centre industriel, situé à Mississauga en Ontario est un modèle pour un système de partage de ressources et un partage de frais. La structuration des membres de l'Association est illustrée par une coopération industriel des activités de leur vingt-neuf comités de Science d'Information et de bibliothèques.

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INTRODUCTION

The Sheridan Park Research Community, located approximately twelve miles west of Toronto in Mississauga, Ontario, is a campus-like arrangement of Canadian industrial research and development laboratories. The 340-acre site contains the research facilities for the following companies:

- Abitibi Research Centre
- Atomic Energy of Canada Limited
- Canada Systems Group
- Cominco Limited
- Domglas Incorporated
- Dunlop Research Centre
- GSW Research Centre
- Gulf Canada Limited
- Inco Metals Limited
- Mallory Battery Company of Canada Limited
- Ontario Research Foundation
- Warner Lambert Research Institute
- Xerox Research Centre of Canada

The majority of these facilities are owned and operated by industrial for-profit research and development organizations. The Ontario Research Foundation is an independent non-profit organization that undertakes research, development and other technical investigations on a confidential contract basis for fees. Atomic Energy of Canada Limited, is a crown corporation with its Power Projects Group located in the Park. Canada Systems Group is a for-profit computer service organization, whose high technology computer operations compliment other Park residents.

The Sheridan Park Association is a voluntary, non-profit association of companies owning property and/or buildings in Sheridan Park. A Board of Directors elected from company representatives sets policy which is then executed by an Executive Committee through the General Manager and an Assistant to the General Manager. The Association's objective is to promote the joint interests of the member companies so that the maximum benefit is derived from their location in Sheridan Park. Opportunities for continuing education and social and recreational activities are provided, as well as joint operation of community land and facilities. The Sheridan Park Association provides a cafeteria and licensed facility at the Sheridan Park Conference Centre for the benefit of member company employees. The Association is financed through annual dues paid by member companies. Dues are determined by a formula reflecting the number of employees and the assessed value of the company facilities located in Sheridan Park. The average amount paid by a member company in 1978 was \$9,000.

There is a second category of membership called associate membership. Companies which operate research and development facilities comparable to

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Sheridan Park members but not physically located in the Park may request associate membership. For a fee of \$150 annually, these companies may participate in all technical and social activities offered by the Park but may not vote on financial matters of the Sheridan Park Association. Twelve companies have become associate members. They are:

- Algoma Steel Corporation Limited
- Diversey (Canada) Limited
- Dominion Foundries & Steel Company Limited
- ERCO Industries Limited
- Erindale College of The University of Toronto
- Falconbridge Nickel Mines Limited
- Ontario Hydro
- Proctor & Gamble Company of Canada Limited
- St. Lawrence Starch Company
- Shell Canada Limited
- Sheridan College
- Steel Company of Canada Limited

Active committees within the Sheridan Park Association include the Architectural, Government Relations, Library and Information Science, Maintenance, Safety and Security, Social and Recreational, Staff Relations and Technical Coordinating Committees.

LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE COMMITTEE

The Library and Information Science Committee of the Sheridan Park Association, hereafter called LISC, is one of the most active committees of the Association. It has been a major factor in increasing the visibility of the Sheridan Park Association. In Southern Ontario, this specialized information committee has found its reputation spreading so rapidly that the LISC Committee which numbered six in 1973 numbers twenty-nine in 1979. Several technical libraries whose companies did not qualify for full or associate membership in the Sheridan Park Association have expressed a desire to join only the LISC Committee. Therefore a third category of membership was created. A technical library may become an affiliate member of the LISC committee for a fee of \$100 annually. Affiliate members can participate only in LISC sponsored activities and may not vote on financial matters of Sheridan Park Association. Currently there are four affiliate members:

- Consumers Glass Company Limited
- Kilborn Limited
- NCR Canada Limited
- Weston Research Centre

Several other applications are currently being considered.

The activities of the LISC Committee have been divided into the following areas:

- LISC as a lobby group
- Resource and cost sharing
- Academic-industrial relations

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Professional contacts
Continuing education opportunities
On-line information

LISC as a lobby group

The Sheridan Park Association represents the interests of for-profit industrial research and development organizations. In 1967 members of the LISC group prepared and submitted input to the Tyas Report on scientific and technical information in Canada. (Science Council of Canada, Special Study No.8) In 1977-78 the LISC committee spent a great deal of effort studying the implications of Copyright in Canada: Proposals for a Revision of the Law by A.A. Keyes and C. Brunet. As a result we prepared and submitted a Copyright Brief to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. Basically we disagreed with the concept of fair dealing as only a defense for photocopying and suggested instead that fair dealing should be considered a right. More recently we have addressed the National Research Council Canada concerning the future of CAN/OLE as a national information resource. There has been an effort to move CAN/OLE databases into the private sector. Although this may be a feasible move for publically available databases such as Chemical Abstracts, Inspec, Engineering Index, etc. we feel that files such as OON, the holdings of CISTI and its electronic mailbox must be maintained by CISTI. The combined voice of these twenty-nine industrial research and development centres represents a significant cross-section of Canadian industrial research and development. Recently Ottawa has been anxious to solicit input from industry and the Sheridan Park is one group they have been able to query.

Resource and Cost Sharing

The prime motivation to create the LISC committee was for the purpose of sharing resources and costs. In the late 1960's considerable study was made to test the feasibility of a central library facility to serve each of the research centre libraries. This concept however was overshadowed and eventually dropped in favour of the active committee environment. The LISC committee in its early stages therefore met on a rotating basis at different centres to allow each participant to become familiar with each others library holdings. In about 1969, the LISC committee created its first Sheridan Park Association Union List of Serials. This major resource sharing tool is now in its sixth edition. For the first five editions, the Union List was produced totally with labour and materials contributed by participating libraries. Input data was keypunched on cards and printed via computer. Beginning with the sixth edition in 1979, we have purchased a more sophisticated computer program called Infodex from Shepherd and Watters Information Systems Limited, London, Ontario, which is now installed at Canada Systems Group. Now real dollar costs have been expended to buy the program and print the Union List. The system has one hundred searchable

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fields and several output formats. Our main output is the Union List of Serials, however the data can be searched by subject, holding library, cross references, etc. The database now contains 3,000 unique serial titles representing the holdings of twenty Sheridan Park libraries. The total production cost for the sixth edition was approximately \$5,000. These costs were shared by SPA member companies through their dues to the Association. Interlibrary loans among LISC members are free and because of cluster arrangement of laboratories, materials are available within a few minutes. Considering the resources of all Park members approximately 6,000 journal titles and 320,000 books are accessible to each SPA LISC member.

Copies of the Union List are available upon written request as long as the supply lasts. We remind all recipients that each participating library is a small special library, and that staff time for interlibrary loans outside the Park is limited. Therefore please use Sheridan Park only after normal public and academic resources have been exhausted.

Academic-Industrial Relations

The Sheridan Park Research Community enjoys a cooperative relationship with Southern Ontario universities and colleges. Work-study arrangements are made available for numerous students including those studying in the field of library and information science. The campus-like arrangement of Sheridan Park makes tours of a number of special libraries convenient. The LISC committee annually offers awards to local students who have shown outstanding academic achievement in library and information science programs. Clearly this academic-industrial relationship brings many fresh ideas to the Park and its libraries, while also increasing the student awareness of professional opportunities within the Park.

Professional Contacts

One of the strong motivating forces in the recent growth of the LISC committee has been the opportunity to make professional contacts with others in similar industrial libraries. Industrial research and development facilities have similar information needs, therefore their key information people use this committee as a way to enhance their professional expertise. It has been found that competitors in the marketplace can communicate successfully via the LISC committee, without disclosing any proprietary information. It is refreshing to find that one's colleagues are addressing similar situations within their organizations. In the case of several one-person libraries, committee members express satisfaction that the feeling of isolation tends to disappear with regular LISC participation.

Continuing Education Opportunities

The LISC committee meets monthly from September through June. In

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addition to the regular business, the majority of meetings contain a special continuing education program. Because most members are from research and development organizations in for-profit companies, common interests are easy to identify for program material. Programs range from practical day-to-day problems to the future technologies applicable to information science. Occasionally programs are of such general interest that they are open to all laboratory staff as well as to outside visitors. Examples of this have been a Chemical Abstracts workshop, an on-line searching seminar, a program on patents, one on records management and most recently a presentation by Gerry Kirouac of the Technical Information Service of the National Research Council Canada. Other LISC programs which might be noted include a combined book exhibit presented by twelve Toronto publishers, database suppliers training session, sessions on acquisitions of patents, standards and conference proceedings, copyright issues, binding techniques and SDI services.

On-line Information

The LISC committee played an influential role in the development of on-line information searching in Canada. In 1974, Sheridan Park was involved in a pilot project with the Canada Institute for Scientific and Technical Information (CISTI) to test the applicability of the CAN/OLE on-line search system to industrial research needs. Since that time CAN/OLE has moved from a system of very limited availability with its hard-wired terminals to a dial-up system with access available to most Canadian requestors. With the growth of on-line searching, Sheridan Park members have been in the forefront of adding new systems such as Infomart (SDC), Lockheed, QL, CAN/OLE and others. Non-bibliographic databases are becoming a target of our interest with one of the first being NRC's SPIR database (a Search Program for Infrared Spectra). As a result of these activities an informal Sheridan Park on-line users group has evolved.

CONCLUSION

The concept of the Sheridan Park Research Community has been studied internationally by several organizations who are contemplating similar research parks. Other Canadian provincial governments and universities, two groups from France, one from each Australia, Italy and Israel have travelled to Mississauga, Ontario to gather first hand information about the operation of the Sheridan Park. Two research parks in Alberta and one in Saskatchewan, modelled after Sheridan Park, are currently under development. It is evident that the Sheridan Park concept of sharing resources and costs has been successful and that it will be duplicated in several other locations.