The origins of the Drake Centre are steeped in royalty. Queen Elizabeth II assisted in the sod turning ceremony for what was to be termed the Administrative Studies - Transport Building. The Queen used a golden shovel to ceremoniously begin the construction of the $14.5 million facility before a large crowd. When the building opened in 1987, the facility was split evenly between the Faculty of Management and the Transport Institute. Although at the beginning the Transport Institute only had three staff members and half the office, classroom, and library space of the building, the arrangement ultimately worked very well.