

## Donald E. Shepardson

May 14, 1936 - March 2, 2017

Donald E. "Don" Shepardson (1936-2017)

CEDAR FALLS – Donald E. "Don" Shepardson, 80, of Cedar Falls died Thursday, March 2, 2017 at Covenant Medical Center in Waterloo.

He was born May 14, 1936 in Port Huron, Michigan, son of Francis and Florence Fleming Shepardson.

He graduated from Mattoon High School (Illinois) in 1954. He received his B.S. degree from Eastern Illinois University in 1961 and his M.A. from the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign in 1964, where he also received his Ph.D. in 1970. He taught at Western Illinois University, Bowling Green State University, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, and the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. He began teaching at the University of Northern Iowa in 1970 and was currently offering classes within the History Department. He received the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences Outstanding Teach Award in 1995 and the Regents' Award for Faculty Excellence in 1999. He was a veteran of the United States Air Force, serving during the Korean War.

Survived by: a sister, Margaret Dodd of Anderson, IN; a nephew, David (Shelley) Dodd of Anderson, IN; a niece, Brenda (Richard) Ambrose of

Anderson, IN; one great nephew, Tyler Ambrose; and three great nieces, Samantha Dodd, Sarah Ambrose and Danielle Dodd.

Preceded in death by: a brother, Frank Shepardson; brother-in-law, Robert Dodd; and a great niece, Racheal Ambrose-Stinson.

Memorial Services: 11:00 a.m. Thursday, March 9th in the Great Reading Room of Seerley Hall, on the UNI Campus in Cedar Falls.

Memorials may be directed to: the UNI History Department or Family and Children's Council of Black Hawk County, 2051 Kimball Ave, Waterloo, IA 50702.

Condolences may be left at [www.richardsonfuneralservice.com](http://www.richardsonfuneralservice.com).

Don offered courses in Humanities, German History, History of 19th and 20th century Europe, and most recently Diplomatic and Military History.

# Previous Events

## Celebration of Life

MAR 9. 11:00 AM (CT)

Great Reading Room-Seerley Hall Rm 116  
Cedar Falls, IA 50613

# Tribute Wall



“ I know this is well after the fact (and I remember how you discouraged late submissions), but I want to say that you are among the best instructors that I've had the privilege to study under. I remember especially your masterful lectures in European Diplomatic History. I have adopted your narrative lecture style in my own teaching. Thanks for providing such a fine model of gentlemanly scholarship.

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**Michael Hudson** - December 31, 2024 at 01:05 AM

BB

“ Only today did I learn of Dr. Shepardson's death, which saddened me greatly. I was a non-traditional student at UNI and took night classes for many years in the 1980s . Some of my favorite classes were those taught by "Shep" (although I never called him that to his face). I enjoyed many discussions with him outside of class and remember how he motivated me and also gave me advice. After graduating in 1987 I moved to Guatemala and kept in contact with him by mail and visited him when I made trips back to the States. Unfortunately, time and distance caused me to lose touch with him around 1994, but I still remember his dry sense of humor and I have used him as a model for my own teaching and relationships with students. Shep was a special teacher and an avid tennis player. His classes were informative and entertaining and I remember the patience he had when I displayed my ignorance of terms such as "miscegenation." He helped me to realize that I was capable of doing academic work and gave me the confidence to continue my studies. Lord knows how many other students like me had similar experiences with him. I have not seen him for decades and only now do I realize how much I miss him. Did he ever publish any work? I' want to read it if he did. Thank you, Dr. Shepardson, for touching my life. Bryce Bielmaier

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**Bryce Bielmaier** - October 13, 2017 at 03:44 PM

KY

“ I was one of "Shep's" students in his first years at UNI. He was the only prof that could get me to take an 8:00 am class! I loved his lectures and his dry sense of humor. In 1972, I got to know him better while I worked as a grad teaching assistant, and he was a great sounding board.

*I returned to Cedar Falls in June of this year, and was excited to see his name listed on the faculty board at Seerly. When I stopped to leave him a note, the history department staff told me that he had died in March but they just didn't have the heart to take his name down. They said he had been teaching right up until the end and was still loved by his students.*

*I was heartbroken to have come so close to having one more talk with him only to find that I was too late. I remember him with great fondness. My sincere condolences to his family.*

*Kathie Yoder  
Anchorage, Alaska*

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**kathie yoder** - August 04, 2017 at 08:42 PM



“ Donald was my uncle. Thank you all for your wonderful comments. Having a glimpse of his impact on his students and friends means more than you can know. Mom is thrilled to hear about the her little brother.

*Please know that your words have helped.*

*He really was a gentle soul.*

*David Dodd*

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**David Dodd** - March 08, 2017 at 08:56 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Donald E. Shepardson.*



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March 07, 2017 at 07:28 PM



“ *My daughter and I lived next door to Dr. Don for six years. We were neighbors and his tenants. He was always so kind to us. And, everyone knows how fondly we have and will continue to think of him.*

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**Yolanda Hood** - March 07, 2017 at 06:22 PM



“ *I had class with Professor Shepardson my first semester of my freshman year at UNI and it was my favorite class. He was insightful, intelligent, and extremely nice. He was an inspiration to me, and he pushed my classmates and I to think deeper. He will be greatly missed.*

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**Cassidy Oberreuter** - March 07, 2017 at 01:13 PM



“ *I never met Dr Shepardson, my daughter Avery was privileged to have a class with him her freshman year at UNI. She spoke highly of him and shed crocodile tears when she heard of his passing. She will forever remember him!*

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**Jill Crawford** - March 06, 2017 at 03:23 PM

JR

“ Professor Shepardson's class on military history was my dream class, I wanted to take it to badly but had to wait til my junior year. His class was hard, he spoke the entire class and if you looked around the room you noticed how everyone was frantically writing everything he said then you noticed you were two paragraphs behind. It was hard but everything he said was important.

After I graduated I started working on campus full time and noticed him walking to work almost everyday. It always made me laugh how lazy some college students could be yet here is Dr. Shepardson walking to work.

I'll miss him. Only had one class with him and a handful of interactions but he was memorable to me. His class will always stick with me and I hope to be half as active as he was at his age.

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**Jeremy Rosel** - March 06, 2017 at 01:15 PM

JJ

“ Dr. Shepardson was such an inspiration to me. He was the best professor I had throughout my college career. His passion for history was unmatched and served as such a motivation.

He will be truly missed at UNI. Bless you Dr. Shepardson

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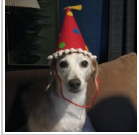
**Jeff Johnson** - March 05, 2017 at 10:51 AM

TE

“ Don was the nicest of gentlemen and best of colleagues. I am privileged to have had him in my life over the years.

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**Trudy Eden** - March 03, 2017 at 06:08 PM



“ *Professor Shepardson was my Humanities II teacher a LONG time ago, but I've never forgotten him. I so enjoyed his lectures. He had an encyclopedic knowledge of the subject matter, and his enthusiasm and love of history were a joy to watch. He was a scholar and a gentleman, and he will be missed.*

*Molly Cormaney*

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**Molly Cormaney** - March 03, 2017 at 04:37 PM

LD

*My condolences to Dr. Shepardson's family. He was my mentor and favorite professor at UNI and I took every single class he taught while pursuing my degree! He challenged me to think on a deeper level than I had ever done before. His knowledge and wit were much appreciated. During my years of teaching high school history classes in Colorado, I often remembered the lessons learned from Dr. Shepardson. I'm thankful for the impact that he had on my life.*

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**LeAnne Smelser Daringer** - March 05, 2017 at 01:12 PM



*I just learned that Dr. Shepardson, my favorite history professor at UNI, had died in March. It deeply saddened me.*

*I got my BA there in 1981 and most of my Masters until beginning law school in 1983.*

*He was always generous with his time, knew his material inside and out, and I took every class he had to offer--and then took the special class *Conversing 101*. When I published my first book, I signed and sent him a copy and he promptly wrote me back and thanked me, and told me how proud of my accomplishments he was. That was worth it all, because he was an inspiration for me to all that followed.*

*Rest in Peace Dr. S. You touched a lot of lives and many will miss you.*

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**Theodore Savas** - July 01, 2017 at 10:01 AM

JD

“ 2 files added to the album *New Album Name*



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**Judith Dohman** - March 03, 2017 at 03:09 PM



“ *Don was a wonderful person and a valued member of our department. I miss our daily chats and his constant words of encouragement. He served as a valued mentor to students, faculty, and staff alike. We all miss him. Kenneth Atkinson, UNI History Department*

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**Kenneth Atkinson** - March 03, 2017 at 02:37 PM

YH

*My daughter and I lived next door to Dr. Don for six years. We were neighbors and his tenants. He was always so kind to us. And, everyone knows how fondly we have and will continue to think of him.*

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**Yolanda Hood** - March 07, 2017 at 06:19 PM

GP

*Don was a great friend of mine, a fellow Illini, and an inspiring colleague for over forty years. I valued hearing about his research, his teaching, and his general impressions of academic life. Even his casual conversation showed how much he loved his work. He was a mainstay of his department and the UNI campus. He was a fine man. I will miss him.--Gerald L. Peterson, University Archivist Emeritus*

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**Gerald L. Peterson** - March 09, 2017 at 09:40 AM