

Emergency Services Centre - 3333

University

Way of life for some; necessity for others

Night people operate in a different world

Most of us sleep at night — in residences, at home, or in the various nooks and crannies of the 30 or so buildings found on York's piece of real estate.

We sleep, satisfied at having at least survived another day, at times an accomplishment in itself.

But for a special corps of workers, the day begins at almost the time most heads hit the pillow. They're the night people — the security men, cleaners, engineers and other support staff who oil the machinery of the University for the thousands who pour in after 9 a.m.

They're sometimes joined by scientists working on research projects, and at the end of term by students cramming for an exam or finishing the overdue essay that must be in before the prof. arrives in the morning.

But for this second group, being a night person is an aberration, a break in the pattern of at least moderately regular hours. It's generally a challenge and sometimes even fun.

A way of life

For the regulars, it's a way of life, sometimes from a preference for working when the rest of the world sleeps, at a time when they won't be disturbed by the noise or confusion that arrives with dawn.

More often it's from necessity because there's a job to do that pays the rent.

York has three million square feet of floor space to clean, 10 miles of roads and walkways to plow when the snow hits, and a multi-million dollar plant to maintain and protect.

And yet the night people number less than 150. In a walk around campus in the early morning you can almost believe the place is a citadel, visited only on feast days.

It's possible to stand in front of the Ross Building for an hour and see perhaps three people — and those are likely to be a security officer, a shadow moving between two residential complexes, or occasionally someone trying to find out what the campus is like at night so he can write about it for a newspaper.

The only other sign of life is likely to be a mouse scurrying across the snow from one hole to another.

Inside, the pace is different but the mood is similar. With a small staff — four security officers, 112 cleaners and three men in the Central Utilities Building — there's ample work to do.

Nobody rushes

But nobody rushes. Partly because of a well-established routine; partly because that routine is rarely broken by the kind of interruptions common in the daytime.

The night cleaners take two 15-minute breaks and a half-hour for lunch. Aside from these times, when they doze, play cards or simply chat with each other, they may see only one or two people in the course of a shift.

Dave McVeigh, night caretaker in the Ross Building who spent 25 years as a butcher before coming to York, said yesterday morning "very few people really want to work nights — I'm not crazy about it — but we really have no choice. This is when the work has to be done."

"But it must be hard for people with young children...and it screws up your whole mode of living really. You can't go out in the evening, even to a show, if you have to be at work at 11 o'clock."

And many of those on his staff do have young children. A high percentage of the caretaking staff at York is made up of Italian immigrants, usually in Canada only a short time.

Many of the women go home from work just in time to prepare breakfast and see the kids off to school. They catch a few hours of broken sleep, often sandwiched between household and family chores.

And family relations are less than ideal if one partner works nights and the other days. One man at York gets home in time to say goodbye to his wife — as she heads to a secretarial job on the campus. They've been married a year.

Some enjoy it

Still, some enjoy night work. Ann Lamb, who was on the night shift this week in the Emergency Services Centre, said simply: "I like it. This is the first full-time job I've had since I was married and I find it a nice change of pace after working days for a while."

Like the security and engineering staff, she's on shift work, and draws the "graveyard" shift only once every six weeks. Night cleaners have the same hours year round.

"I just hate getting up in the morning — but I love to go to bed then. Everybody else is getting up to go to work and I'm just snuggling in. It's great."

Bill Selles, on the other hand, who's a shift engineer in the Central Utilities Building, replied with one word to a question of how he liked working nights — "lousy".

"But," he said, "you can't help it. Somebody's got to be here."

"Here" is monitoring the complex control systems that show how everything from the air conditioning to the water pipes are working. There are 12,000 check points throughout the campus hooked up to the control panel shown above and should any of them fail, an alarm sounds immediately.

They rarely do, but there, as with security, ESC or the cleaning staff, trouble at night usually comes in batches.

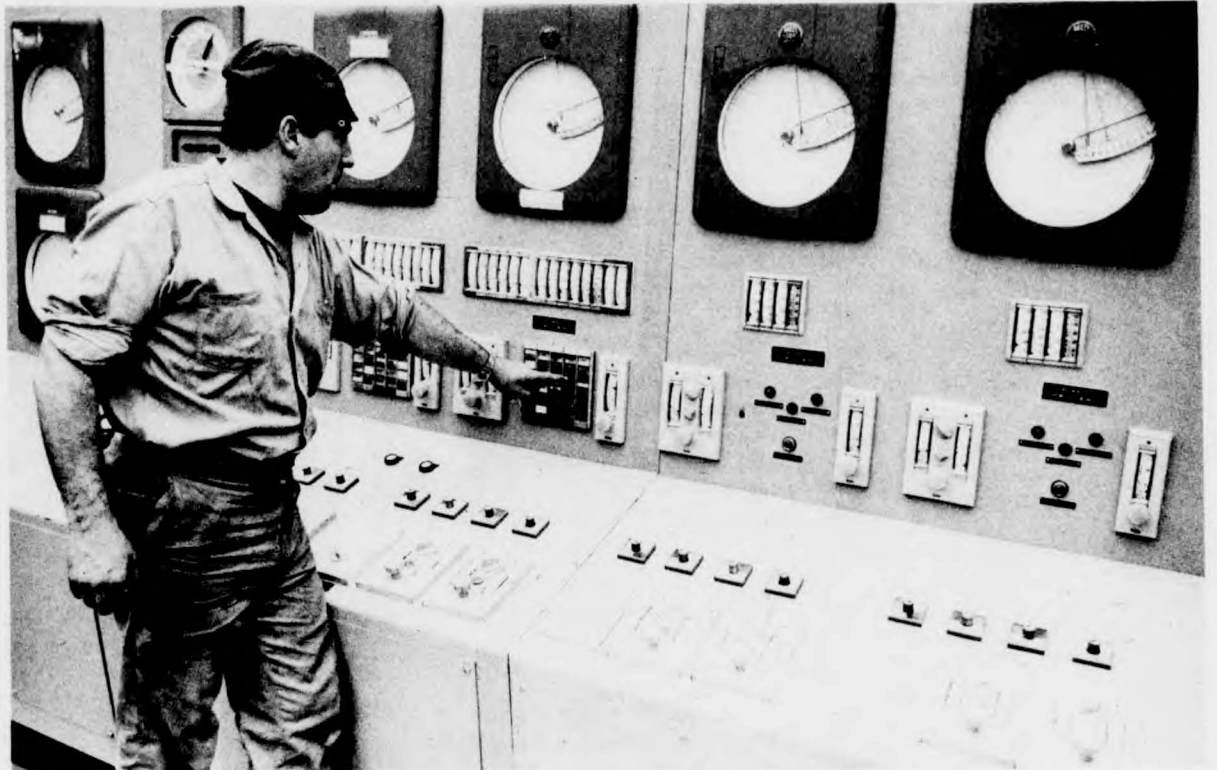
A fire alarm coupled with an accident and report of a theft could tax the resources of twice the security staff on hand if they happened at roughly the same time, and according to Mrs. Lamb, once a serious call comes to the ESC it's usually followed closely by one or two others that are unrelated.

Bulk of work routine

Still, the bulk of the work at night is routine, "enough to keep you busy so there's never a question of boredom" according to virtually everyone interviewed.

There are problems with loneliness, particularly among cleaners who often sing to keep themselves company and in some cases with nervousness among those working alone in remote areas of the larger buildings.

But generally it's a world of quiet equilibrium at night completely different from the daylight hours.



Shift engineer Bill Selles checks the control panel in the Central Utilities Building. It's the nerve centre of the campus maintenance systems,

hooked up with 12,000 check points in the York buildings.

Aside from the chronic drunks in the Excalibur office on press nights, people appear to work steadily and competently, whether they're in the Student Clinic or manning the ESC

switchboard.

On the basis of one night consciously walking the campus simply to observe, it's possible to see it as a place of total schizophrenia. And

among other things, for all the family and personal uprooting caused by regular night work, if you do meet someone, it's possible to talk to them without an excuse.

Odds & Sodds

Indian classical music finale

Students of Trichy Sankaran (classical drum), Shambhu Das (sitar), and John Higgins (vocal) will join together for a grand year-end performance of Indian classical music on Wednesday, March 29 from 3:30 to 6:00 p.m. in the McLaughlin Junior Common Room. A demonstration of the traditional Indian learning process will be integrated with the sequence of musical compositions of increasing complexity and difficulty. Indian snacks and coffee will be served. The event is co-sponsored by the Program in Music and McLaughlin College.

Early music recital

York's Studio for Early Music of the Faculty of Fine Arts will present a recital of early music next Tuesday at 8:30 p.m. in the McLaughlin College Dining Hall. Admission is free, with all interested persons welcome.

Calumet proposal up for discussion

The Senate Sub-Committee on Campus Planning is preparing its recommendation to the Academic Policy and Planning Committee concerning the proposal for the Calumet College building. Representatives of a number of

groups having particular relationships with the colleges will be at a meeting next Tuesday at 10 a.m. in the Senate Chamber, S915 in the Ross Building.

Other members of the York community are welcome to attend. Copies of the Calumet College Draft Statement of Program Requirements have been placed at the reference desk in the Scott Library.

Sale, craft forum at Bookstores

A craft forum coupled with the York Bookstores' annual spring sale continues today and tomorrow with sessions on horticulture and wine-making. Denes Kiss, superintendent of the campus greenhouse will be in the York store today, with Sandy Mammott of Vintage Craft discussing wine-making tomorrow. Thousands of regular stock books and special purchase titles are being offered at sale prices.

Student exhibits at Winters

Today through Friday April 7, Winters College Art Gallery is holding an exhibition of paintings,

prints, sculpture and drawings by York student Stewart Simpson. In past years, along with his serious work, Simpson has done many of the cartoons for Excalibur and Pro Tem at the Glendon Campus. Gallery hours are 12 noon to 5 p.m. Monday to Saturday.

Atkinson program meetings

The following program meetings will be held for Atkinson students this weekend: Saturday — sociology from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and psychology from 2 to 5 p.m.; Sunday — English from 2 to 5 p.m. The meetings will be held in the Atkinson Common Room.

Lifeguard wanted at Glendon

A summer lifeguard is required for July and August by the Glendon College athletics department. Applicants must have their bronze lifesaving certificate. Pay is \$2 per hour. Hours Monday through Friday are noon to 1:30, 4 to 6 and 6:30 to 8 p.m.; Saturday and Sunday 1:30 to 5 p.m. For further information and application forms contact Mrs. Anne O'Byrne at 487-6151.

Symposium on citizen power

York's Urban Studies Program is hosting a symposium on citizen participation in urban planning and government tomorrow in Curtis Lecture Halls.

The morning and afternoon sessions, entitled What is Citizen Participation and Alternate Ways to Give Citizens a Voice in Policy-Making, take place in Lecture Hall G, and will involve addresses from and discussions with Toronto planners and politicians, academics, and representatives of ratepayers' organizations.

Times and names of speakers are noted in the On Campus section of these pages. The symposium is free and open to anyone wishing to attend.

Quote of the week

There is no earthly hope for a man who is too lazy to acquire enemies.
Robert C. (Bob) Edwards,
Calgary Eyeopener, June 15, 1918.

New magazine on stands

Waves, a new magazine designed to provide a forum for writers of all persuasions, styles and disciplines, has recently been published by members of the York community.

Although in the first issue of Waves York authors predominate, the editors hope the magazine will become broadly-based, reflecting and contributing to the Canadian scene by publishing committed opinion and commentary.

The publication is available for \$1.00 at campus bookstores. For further information contact Waves, Room 141, Petrie Science Building.