

# Softwear stiffens up

By NIGEL TURNER

Computers are playing an ever-increasing role in our lives. Some of the social issues surrounding this development were discussed in Microcomputers Encounters II, a conference held in York's Burton Auditorium last weekend.

Guest speakers included David Humphries, Dr. Ronald Bordessa, Jay Ingram, Gary Cwitco, and H. Ian MacDonald. The two day show also featured a display of current microcomputer technology—manufacturers demonstrated their software to the 200 people in attendance.

David Humphries, freelance writer and lecturer at Ryerson, opened the conference with what was billed as a discussion on the rising levels of computer literacy. His message was that because of the rapid increase in the quality of software (programs and languages) and hardware (the actual machines), a new, much higher standard of computer literacy will be needed.

Keynote speaker, Donald Cowan, a computer science professor at Waterloo and a researcher in computer communications, discussed "Learning to live with computers." He sighted the one-millionth reduction in size and the one-thousandth reduction in price as a cause for concern. As he said, "people are the most expensive commodity, and the machines are cheap."

But "we are in an information age," and the trend will accelerate.

The remainder of his speech dealt with how University of Waterloo organized their microcomputer net.

The final part of the conference was a forum, "Computer—Friend or Foe." The panel consisted of moderator Jay Ingram, host of quirks and Quarks; Gary Cwitco, from Communication Workers of Canada; H. Ian MacDonald, president of York University; and David Humphries, sitting in for Jane Armstrong and Dr. A.J. Cordell.

Humphries stated they were not a foe but can be used badly. For instance, if implemented in a well-managed company, it will help the company. If implemented in a poorly-managed company it might speed their decline.

He said he is concerned about laid-off workers and how they will cope with their redundancy. Areas where computers are implemented are characterized by high efficiency and high unemployment.

Gary Cwitco talked about the altered life of telephone operators since the advent of the computers. He said they used to enjoy their work, taking pride in the speed with which they could operate. He said now their's is one of the most stressful jobs around.

MacDonald's talk concentrated on the role of education in retraining workers. He said that humans are still in control over technology and in general, he expressed optimism about the future.

# Career day to be held

By LILY CONTENRO

An initiative has been taken by the career and student employment centres to provide undergraduate and graduating students, from the York and Glendon campuses, with the opportunity to become more familiar with career planning.

Career Day, which will be held on October 5 in Central Square, is sponsored by the Council of the York Student Federation (CYSF), the office of the Vice President in charge of student relations, and several employers from major companies.

Representatives from the Econo-

mics Student Association and the Committee of the International Association of Economics and Commerce students will also contribute.

In an effort to promote their companies, employers from various industrial sectors such as communication, advertising, social services, banking, and insurance will be available to students concerned about future employment.

Dorothy Becker, coordinator of Career Centre, advises interested students "to talk as professionally as possible with employers" in order to

make "impressive" contacts and to establish "a first good impression with them."

Terri Farkas, coordinator of Career Centre, asserts that "career day is planned to assist students to explore company profiles, obtain job information, and discuss career opportunities with a variety of employers from various industries."

Becker said she is confident about Career Day's success. "Last year when the event took place for the first time, more students than expected consulted the employers," she said.



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