

Bell Engineering Training School Attracts Students From All Parts of Canada

Established back in 1959 a Bell Telephone Engineering Training School drawing "students" from all across Canada and from half way across the world, has been operating with little public awareness in downtown Belleville.

At any one time between 40 to 50 telephone engineers will be attending classes held in the former Bell manual exchange building on Pinnacle street just north of Bridge.

The "students" many of them just out of engineering or technical schools, are sent to Belleville by their telephone company employers and attend classes for a week before returning to their jobs. As many as 26 different courses are given at the training school with up to five being in session at any one time.

MANY ASPECTS COVERED

The courses cover all aspects of telephone mechanics but there is strong emphasis on theoretical study and fundamentals as opposed to equipment instruction. The main purpose of the training school is to upgrade engineers and keep them conversant with new developments.

Many of the engineers taking the courses are part of the Bell organization but other phone companies from all parts of Canada also send their engineers to Belleville.

In some instances instructors from the local school conduct courses in other centres for private phone companies with about 20 such field trips being made so far this year.

This week there are four

"students" from India and Pakistan attending the Bell school in Belleville. One of them, Amar Chawla, is from New Delhi, India, but is now working at Saint John, New Brunswick.

OPERATED FROM MONTREAL

There was a two fold reason for Bell locating its engineering training school in Belleville.

The main reason was that Belleville is midway between Toronto and Montreal and therefore cuts down travelling time. Actually the school is operated by remote control from Montreal headquarters.

The second reason for the Belleville location is that there is not the big city night life attraction here and the engineers are able to concentrate more on their courses.

The classes are held about ten months of the year from September to the first of July, the other two months being utilized in setting up courses for the next term.

This year there will be about 1,500 student weeks registered at the school. Some of the engineers might return to Belleville four or five times to take different courses. The training school has a staff of 11, including two secretarial personnel.

And like most other seats of learning, the Bell school is having accomodation problems.

The Pinnacle Street building has three class rooms and with up to five courses being operated at one time, other temporary classroom space has to be provided.

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