

South Mountain Church celebrates centennial

The South Mountain United Church has been celebrating its centennial all year in 1992, but things came to a climax last Sunday when the congregation held a showcase of its musical talent.

The events included a duet by Marlene Fawcette and Dale Williams, and there was also an appearance by the South Mountain Choir. Dick Christie and Charon Richardson sang a duet, and the South Mountain Men sang three numbers.

Also included in the celebrations was the Grenville County Country Singers who put out a much appreciated, and tremendous performance.

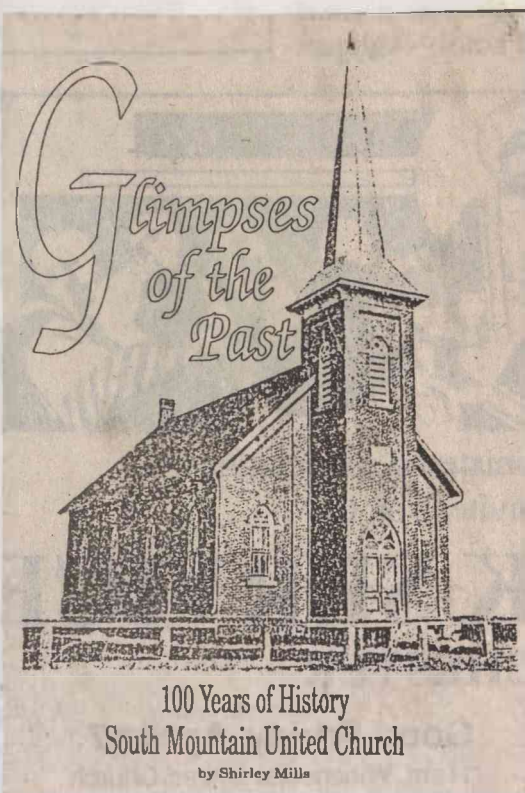
The church has hosted a number of events this year, including a guest appearance by the moderator of the United Church from Saskatchewan, Walter Fargeson.

"November first was the official anniversary of our building," says Aarie Hoogenboom, who helped organise the events. "We celebrated by having two services. We had our regular service at 11:00-am which was filled to capacity, and that included the Harmony Six providing special music, and we had Sterling Irving as the guest speaker."

In the evening the church had another overflow crowd for its list of musical talent. According to Hoogenboom the numbers were around 160-175 people in

the morning, and over 150 people in the evening. Some of the people who were there were forced to stand in the hallways.

The Mountain United Church has now published a book documenting its history. The book was written by Shirley Mills and is available through the church or any of its members.



The Weekly Advance, Wednesday, November 4, 1992

glimpses into South Mountain's past

In the mid-70s, when she lived in Ottawa, she entered a church history contest earning honorable mention for her efforts. In the early 1980s she was asked to write church history for the Inkerman United Church on the occasion of its 100th anniversary.

That work made her the perfect choice for the Mountain-South Mountain United Church congregation who wanted a 100-year history of their church. Members first approached Mills three years ago with the idea, however it was only during the last six months that she has been getting down to the nuts and bolts work.

"There were times when I wondered how could I get all the information in and still make a story out of it," she admits. "It's not a religious book, it's really the story of the people associated with the church and the township they lived in."

She spent many months searching through old records and conversing with elder member of the congregation about the church history. Records, pictures, orders of service, other books and documents from both Mountain and South Mountain churches had to be sifted through.

LAND PURCHASE

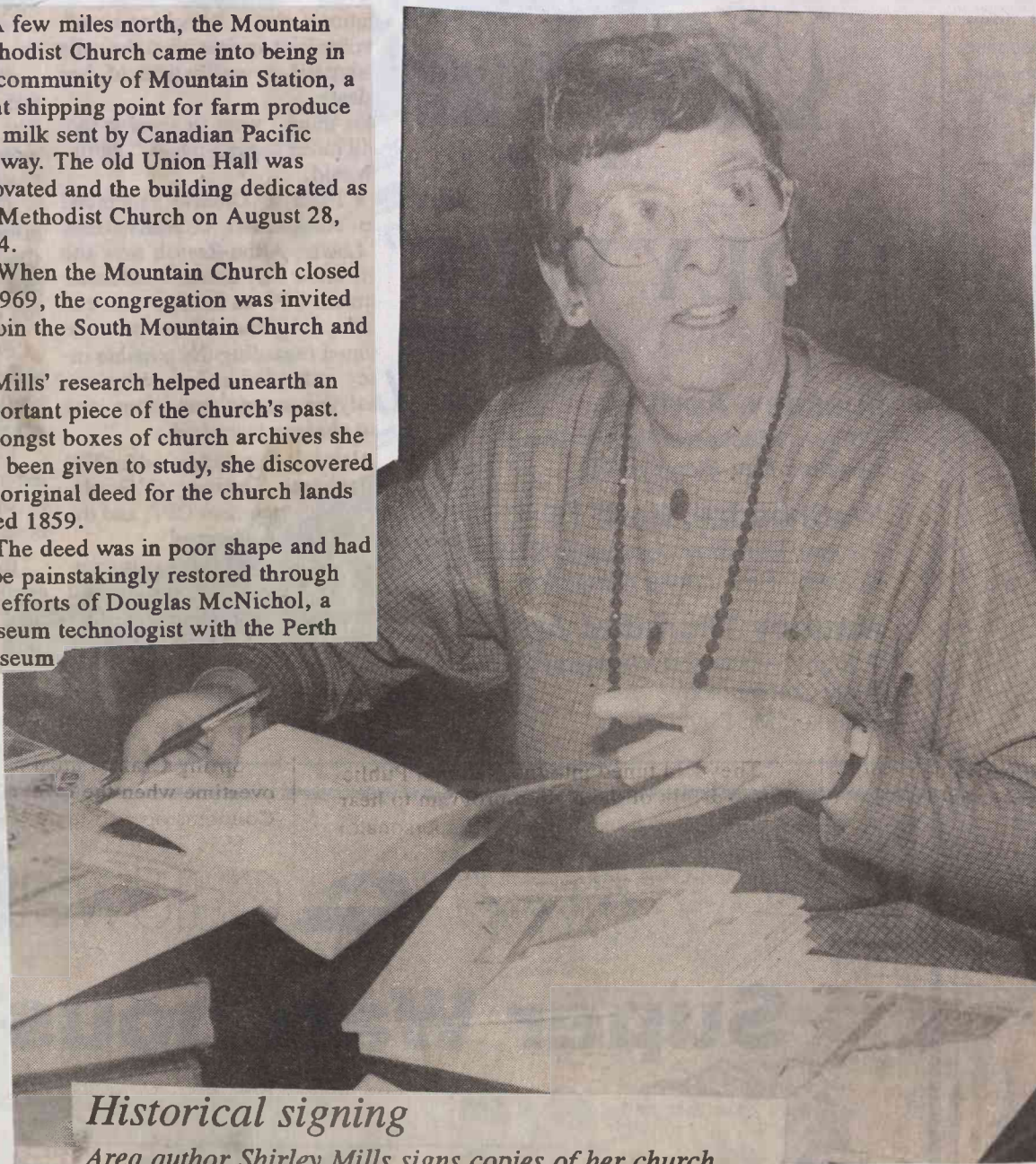
November 16, 1859 was the date the trustees of the Wesleyan Methodist Church bought land in South Mountain. The Methodists, who were one of the partners in the formation of the United Church, held their first meetings in a schoolhouse northeast of the village until a wooden structure was erected in 1860. It was replaced by a more permanent structure, a red brick church which continues to stand today, in 1892 at a cost of \$4,000.

A few miles north, the Mountain Methodist Church came into being in the community of Mountain Station, a great shipping point for farm produce and milk sent by Canadian Pacific Railway. The old Union Hall was renovated and the building dedicated as the Methodist Church on August 28, 1904.

When the Mountain Church closed in 1969, the congregation was invited to join the South Mountain Church and did.

Mills' research helped unearth an important piece of the church's past. Amongst boxes of church archives she had been given to study, she discovered the original deed for the church lands dated 1859.

The deed was in poor shape and had to be painstakingly restored through the efforts of Douglas McNichol, a museum technologist with the Perth Museum.



Historical signing

Area author Shirley Mills signs copies of her church history "Glimpses of the Past" (inset) at South Mountain United Church recently.

The Winchester Press Wed., April 8, 1992

Mountain musings

by Shirley Mills

Famine. We know it exists but few of us have ever had to experience this total lack of food. A group of people in Hallville, however, has decided to do something to help the starving of the world. Shirley Nichol-Scott, Shane Nichol, Marlene Fawcett, Louise Shaw and Dick Christie will be fasting for 30 hours on Feb. 22 and 23, with any money raised by their efforts going to World Vision.

Any one of the five members can be sponsored but there is no competition and the money raised will be sent collectively to World Vision. This organization supports children in Third World countries and indirectly the whole family of such children. Any member of the group will be glad to take your pledge.

The Winchester Press Wed., Feb. 12, 1992