

Mountain W.I. ask Council for help to publish Tweedsmuir

Although the Mountain Women's Institute would like to preserve their Township's past, they need \$20,000. to publish their Tweedsmuir History book. Two members of the W.I., Betty Allen and Dorothy Gibson, attended the March 2nd Mountain Township Council session, to ask Council's support of the proposal. *March 1981*



Mr. Ewart Simms joined the several members of the Mountain Women's Institute last week to autograph a copy of the organization's book, Tweedsmuir History of Mountain Women's Institute. From left to right are,

Dorothy Gibson, curator; Betty Allen, president; Isabel Forward, curator of the Dundas District Women's Institute.

Dec 8, 1982
Press Photo—Reimer

Institute-compiled history published

MOUNTAIN — A graphic and entertaining history of the villages of Mountain, VanCamp and Hallville and the Mountain Women's Institute is ready for release.

The Tweedsmuir History of Mountain Women's Institute, a glossy, 223-page chronicle of the area's past is the product of years of work by former curator, the late Eva Simms, and the current W.I. executive and membership.

The soft-cover book combines black and white photos with short articles detailing the history of

the women's institute, Mountain village, schools, churches, VanCamp and Hallville communities, golden weddings, a section titled the old and the new, farms in the Mountain community, the Mountain Herald, postcards of yesteryears, personalities, family trees and sports.

The limited edition is available to the public at \$28 per copy. According to the Institute's past president and curator Dorothy Gibson, the Tweedsmuir History of Mountain W.I. is one of the first in Ontario published with copies

made available to local residents.

Eva Simms, who was curator of the women's institute for 15 years, discussed publishing the history with her assistant Nancy Hyndman, many years ago but it was not until 1980 that the work began, using all of the history compiled.

Students of Nationview school have used parts of the book for local history projects.

Much of the information included in the book is reprinted from accounts of the community activity reported in area weekly

newspapers.

Dundas - A Sketch of Canadian History by James Croil published in 1861 was the first published work of local history in all of Ontario, according to Dorothy Gibson.

A tea was held Sunday with Mountain councillor Ewart Simms, son of the late Mrs. Simms, attending to autograph copies of the history book on behalf of Mountain Township council.

Mountain council has provided support for the project.

Mountain WI Tweedsmuir records memories in book

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by Pete McIntosh
Advance Staff Reporter

Fifteen years of dedicated research, encompassing more than a century of Mountain-area history, was unveiled Sunday by the Mountain Women's Institute.

The first edition of the Mountain Women's Institute's "Tweedsmuir History" is now available

in tightly-bound form, rekindling memories of days gone by in the villages of Mountain, Vancamp, and Hallville.

Photographs and articles recording the history of the villages and their schools, churches, century farms, golden wedding anniversaries, and family trees have finally been brought together

under one cover after years of compilation by former curator, the late Eva Simms. Simms was the curator of the Mountain Tweedsmuir History from 1965 to 1979.

Although the term "Tweedsmuir History" may be unfamiliar to many of the publication's readers, the contents certainly

won't be.

The head-on train collision of 1907, another train derailment in 1916, and the tragic fire of January 1975 which levelled the town's post office, a general store, and an accompanying two-storey residence spell out some of the community's bad times. Brightly polished floors in a brand new school, cheerleading champions, winning softball teams, and report cards of 1929 stir up fond recollections.

The village history books have adopted the name of Lady Tweedsmuir, wife of Lord Tweedsmuir, who served as Canada's Governor-General from 1935 - 1940. Lady Tweedsmuir was an ardent member of England's Women's Institute organization and gave firm support to the idea of preserving village memories. Her Excellency visited Mountain in the spring of 1939.

But it wasn't until 1952 that local members became interested in compiling the anecdotes which would eventually lead to their current publication.

The Mountain chapter of the Women's Institute originally assembled in 1938 with 13 charter members but Red Cross work forced the institute to disband in 1942. Nine years later the group got back together and is still going strong today.

Progressive steps to publish the history compiled by Simms began in June of 1980 when a member of the institute received a phone call suggesting the local history be made more accessible to the public. Already local students had made use of Simms' efforts in researching projects regarding the area's early history.

Sunday it all became reality as township councillor Ewart Simms autographed copies in memory of his mother, as former residents returned to their old home town to

reminisce over a cup of tea. Visitors came from Embrun, Ormstown, Iroquois, Winchester, Smiths Falls, Kemptville, and other surrounding neighbourhoods.

The next edition of Mountain's Tweedsmuir History won't be expected for a few years down the road but already the compilation process has begun. Train wrecks and fires are still hitting the headlines in this town and although they are not happy memories, they are events which might otherwise be hopelessly lost or misconstrued as folklore.

Kemptville Advertiser
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