

# Retiree has fond memories of career

□ From printer to pilot, Morris Shields was busy

## Profile

By ARNIM JOOP  
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CARDSTON — At 75, Morris Shields does not regret any of the businesses he was involved with, from selling ice cream to flying a helicopter.

"I regret not a bit," Shields says. "Every one of them was excellent."

Shields was born in 1916 as one of 10 children of Mormon immigrants from Utah.

After finishing high school in Lethbridge, Shields went to Provo, Utah, and earned a degree in science from Brigham Young University.

He went on a mission for the Mormon church to the New England states and returned to BYU to get his teaching certificate.

But before he had even graduated from university, he bought his own farm in Shaughnessy to raise sugar beets, hay and grain.

In 1957, Shields moved to Cardston and taught four years at the local high school. After two years in the ice cream business in Lethbridge and Calgary, he returned to Cardston and bought a printing business.

"We printed everything under the sun," Shields says. "We printed business forms, tickets and hundreds of thousands of wedding invitations. We were never out of work."

Later in the 1960s, Shields tried his luck as a newspaper publisher. Together with Logan McCarthy, he started Cardston Unlimited which was a different kind of newspaper.

"We didn't go by the book," Shields says. "We had no intentions of doing it in the orthodox fashion necessarily. We spelled things to suit ourselves. It caused some of the people physical pain even because of the way we abused the Queen's English. We spelled 'enough' e-n-u-f."

The paper was well received in Cardston. "Most of the population thought it was great," Shields says. "They even used it in schools as a bad example." Shields was not only the publisher but also his own reporter, photographer, editor, advertising salesman and pressman.

Cardston Unlimited did not publish police reports. "We stayed away from the negative side of things as much as we could," Shields says.

In those days, small town newspapers did not have today's sophisticated production equipment, such as computers and laser printers.

"We had an electric typewriter which types like a regular printing machine," Shields says, "and we had our own press."

In the early 1970s, Shields started a newspaper for the Blood Indian Reserve together with Reginald Black Plume, the Sundance Echo, before another group of people got together and founded the Kainai News.

In 1974, Shields sold the printing business and bought a helicopter.

"I had an interest in flying machines for a long time," he says. "I went to Bonnyville, which is 250 miles northeast of Edmonton, with an instructor. He took the helicopter off the ground, I flew it to Edmonton, and he landed it."

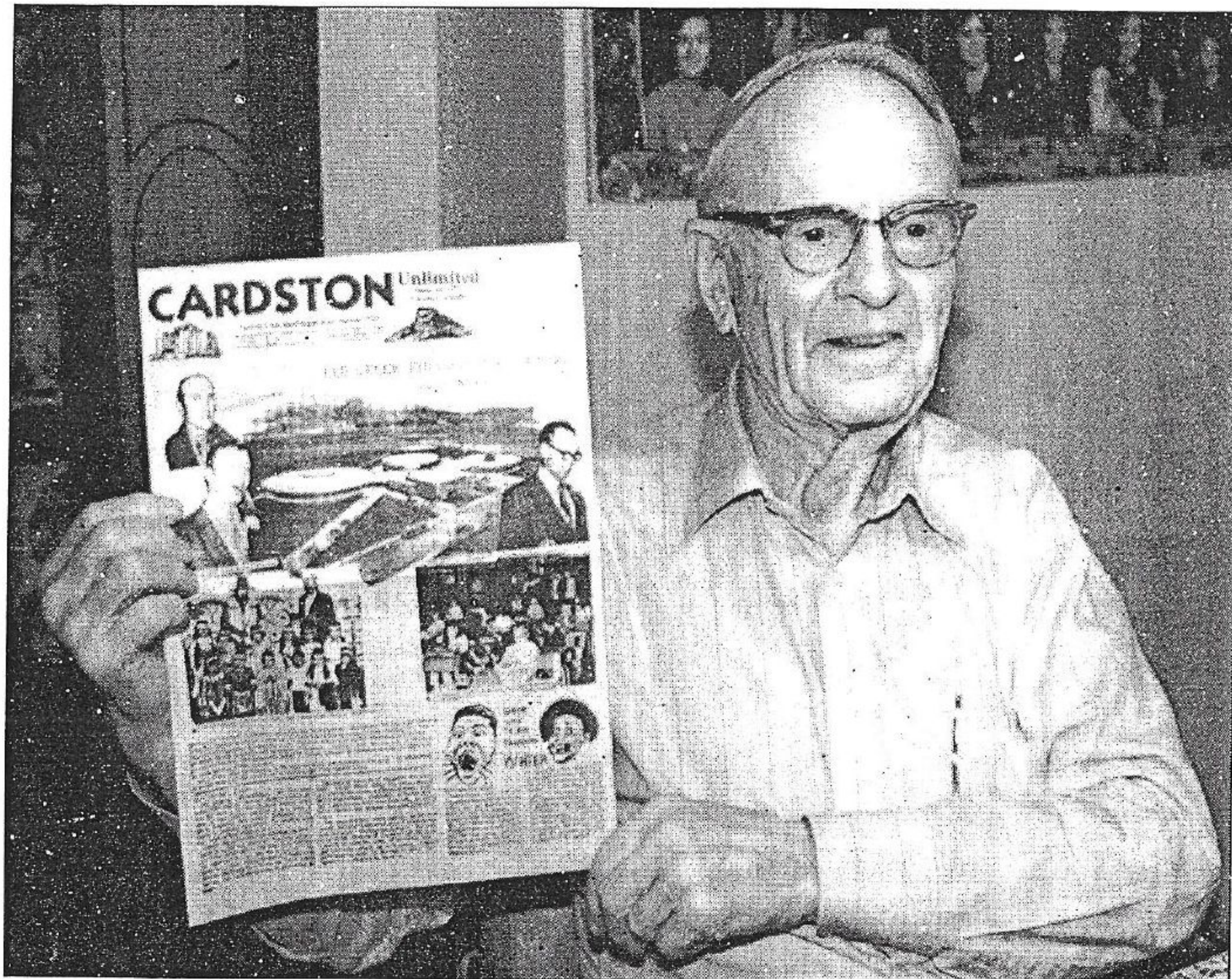
It took Shields three months to get his helicopter licence.

"At that time you only had to have 45 hours for a private licence and 100 hours for a commercial licence," Shields explains.

Shields established his own helicopter business in Cardston.

"I hauled cattle out of the middle of a flooded river, patrolled power lines and dragged power lines across rivers," he says.

"The first job that I did was a search and rescue operation in Waterton." He also set up an infra-



MORRIS SHIELDS holds up a copy of the newspaper he operated in Cardston — one of many jobs he's held in a long, interesting life.

red photography project for an irrigation survey.

In 1979, Shields sold the helicopter. "We were planning to go on another mission, so I sold it, and I have been walking ever since," he says.

In 1981, Shields got involved with the Family Research Centre of the Mormon Church in Cardston where members and non-members of the church do genealogical research.

He worked as a librarian at the centre for a couple of years before

he became the director in 1984.

"The centre has been a changing operation with the introduction of computers about four years ago," Shields says.

"Our computer index carries over 200 million names, and we have about 3,000 rolls of microfilm. Family research has become the leading hobby in the western world. It is astounding how many people are digging to get information about their ancestors."

In his spare time, Shields likes to do gardening with his wife Bessie, to whom he has been married for more than 50 years, and the couple enjoys

traveling. They just returned from a trip to Guatemala and Mexico where they visited ancient ruins.

Shields, who spent about 12 years of his life in the United States on missions and going to school, prefers to live in Canada.

"I'm quite happy to live on the north side of the border," he says. "In spite of the problems we have in this country, it has some benefits. It's a slower pace, the population is not as greedy, and crime isn't as rampant as it is in the States."

But Shields criticizes the government for being too conservative and bureaucratic.

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# Educator adapts to changing system