

LONG BIO: Kathy Jessup

(word count: 489)

Edmonton storyteller and children's writer **Kathy Jessup** has been entertaining audiences for two decades. Over the years she has performed in countless schools, libraries, concerts and festivals across Canada--- from Inuvik to Regina, and from Vancouver to Halifax. Her stories have appeared in magazines, newspapers and an Alberta Centennial anthology, as well as on several CDs produced by T.A.L.E.S. (The Alberta League Encouraging Storytelling). Kathy's solo CD ***LISTEN UP! Tellable Tales for Hungry Ears*** is included in the Canadian Children's Book Centre guide "Best Books for Kids and Teens."

Kathy is also a popular presenter at Teachers' Conventions and Professional Development days. In addition, her writing workshops for young students have earned top marks from many experienced teachers. Through an entertaining mix of storytelling and classroom visits, Kathy inspires young authors to create their own wonderful stories.

Growing up, Kathy never dreamed there was such an occupation as "Storyteller." She was raised in Fort Nelson, (British Columbia, Canada), a remote northern village in the heart of the oilpatch. One fateful day, Kathy opened a brochure in her school counsellor's office, and discovered a career called Broadcasting. "*You mean you can get PAID just for talking?*" For a kid who never shut up, it was a dream come true. Kathy spent a decade with CBC Radio in Calgary, Alberta, and loved her job working on various programs.

After a move to Edmonton, Alberta, Kathy and her husband welcomed a third daughter and a dog in to their growing household. By this time Kathy had said goodbye to her broadcasting career and was enjoying the glamour, great salary and flexible working hours of full-time motherhood. However: once a performer - always a performer. Kathy soon connected with the local storytelling community and from that moment on, she knew she'd found her true calling. Looking back, Kathy now realizes she's *always* been a storyteller. She was the middle child in a family of eight. If you didn't speak up often ---and loudly--- you'd never be heard!

Humour plays a large part in Kathy's storytelling. She often draws upon childhood memories and real-life situations as the spark for creating new stories. During a performance Kathy shares the roots of each story with her listeners, revealing how the smallest ideas can grow into tellable tales. Kathy also enjoys telling world folk tales. She is especially fond of stories that make people laugh!

For Kathy, one of the best things about storytelling is that it gives her the opportunity to travel and meet people. She's told stories in a tent at the Yukon International Storytelling Festival, to Irish school children in Connemara, and to tourists wandering through historic military barracks in Fredericton, New Brunswick. She loves visiting different communities, and especially enjoyed her time on the prestigious *Canadian Children's Book Centre* "Book Week" tour.

Whether relating an original story or a favourite folk tale, Kathy creates a welcome story circle that draws everyone in.

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