

About Bodil Jelhof Jensen:



Bodil Jelhof Jensen emigrated from Copenhagen to Edmonton, Alberta, as a pre-schooler with her parents and older sister in 1954. Her father, Erik Jelhof Jensen (1917-1989), was a chemical engineer, and her mother, Agnes Jelhof Jensen (1916-2007), was already an established writer and journalist in Scandinavia.

After graduating from the Edmonton public school system, Bodil attended the University of Alberta where she studied history in preparation for law school. Her ambition to become a lawyer was sidetracked when she was engaged to do a history of the County of Mountain View, Alberta. To complete this project, an MA was added to her BA. After five and a half years at university, a change of scene was in order, and Bodil became a foreign service officer with the Canadian Department of External Affairs. She spent two years in Ottawa (a very foreign posting for someone from the Canadian prairies) and two years at the Canadian Embassy in Oslo.

Diplomatic life was not her calling, and Bodil returned to the University of Alberta where she graduated with a law degree in 1979. She then fulfilled another ambition, to see Canada's north. She articleed in Yellowknife, NWT, and spent five years travelling throughout the north, mostly by plane, often with the court in her role as defense counsel.

Bodil met her husband, a crown prosecutor, in Yellowknife, and their daughter was born in Yellowknife on April 17, 1982, Canada's first law day, the day the Canadian charter of rights was signed into law. Sadly, the north was not big enough for two lawyers on opposite sides of the courtroom, and Bodil and her family moved to Edmonton in 1984. A year later, a son was born. In 1991, the family moved to Laval, Quebec, to be near her husband's family. The original plan was to stay in Quebec for three years, but almost thirty years later, only the children have pulled up stakes. Bodil and her husband retired from practising law in 2014, Bodil on April Fool's Day and her husband on Good Friday, April 17.

In the employment vacuum of moving to Quebec in 1991, Bodil began to seriously collaborate with her mother. Bodil translated her mother's novel *Dilemma* and received the John Glassco prize from the Literary Translators Association of Canada in 1996, on the same day she was admitted to the Quebec Bar. She also received a travel grant from the American Literary Translators Association based on that translation, and attended ALTA's annual conference in Indianapolis. The next year Bodil's translation of her mother's book *Hallo Canada* was published as *Hello Canada* with a grant from Heritage Canada. Over the years, Bodil and her mother have collaborated on other projects. At the same time, her mother wrote more and more in English.

Bodil has been on the board of the Danish Canadian Society, Montreal Inc. (DCS) since 1992, including 20 years as treasurer. She is the author of *Alberta's County of Mountain View ... A History*, which, unlike her master's thesis on which it is based, is fully illustrated with photos from the era. Her children's book, *Sana and Morgana Go to School*, is illustrated by Kirsten Petersen, a graduate of the Emily Carr University of Art and Design in BC. In 1997, Bodil and her mother attended the Northwest Danish Association conference in Menucha during which Bodil gave a lecture on *Faces of Change: the Danish Community of Montreal* (author, Rebecca Mancuso). Bodil was chair of this history project sponsored by the DCS and a contributing author. She remembers her mother sitting in the front row of the lecture room at Menucha, having a post-lunch snooze -- perhaps an editorial comment which Bodil hopes to correct in her lectures this year.