

Kathy Figueroa poetry reading at CMPL]



By Mike Riley

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The Carlow Mayo Public Library had a reading from poet, photographer, writer, editor and book publisher Kathy Figueroa on April 29, who read from her new self-published book *Canadian Pandemic Era Poems*. The event went very well and both Carrie McKenzie, the CEO and head librarian at CMPL and Figueroa comment on this successful poetry reading, Figueroa's first reading at the library since 2017.

Figueroa read selections from her new self-published book *Canadian Pandemic Era Poems*, at the CMPL on April 29. McKenzie says that there was a lovely turn out to the reading, and that Figueroa read some of the poems from her latest collection of poetry.

?These poems described her thoughts and feelings throughout the time of the pandemic. Included were references to doctors, journalists and public figures that were key components of the pandemic. One of the audience's favourite pieces involved the way the pandemic put a damper on trips to the grocery store for special snacks. Many of us could relate to that one! There wasn't a better way to spend a rainy afternoon than with poetry, tea and Nancy's [White, a library volunteer] famous baking,? she says.

Figueroa tells *Bancroft This Week* that she really enjoyed presenting her work at CMPL and interacting with the many people in attendance and she thought the reading went well.

?I was happy to answer questions about how I self-published *Canadian Pandemic Era Poems* and chat for a bit about pertinent background information pertaining to certain pieces, which helped delineate and maybe give a bit more depth to some of the sentiments I expressed. One person later remarked that she found this additional information quite interesting and at least a couple of women told me afterwards that certain poems really resonated with them,? she says.

Figueroa says that her invitation to read at CMPL came during a phone conversation with McKenzie, when Figueroa called to see if the library would be interested in acquiring a copy of her latest book. She says she had given a poetry reading there back in 2017 after the publication of another collection *The Renaissance of Rhyme*, which the library purchased, and she thought they'd be interested in this new book as well.

?I'll mention that quite a few of the public libraries in this region have been very supportive of my work over the years, by buying

copies of my books to add to their collections. So with the publication of the new one, I've been reaching out to these [libraries],? she says.

Figueroa reveals that Carlow Mayo Public Library is the seventh public library to purchase a copy of Canadian Pandemic Era Poems. To date, other area libraries where it and her other collections can be read include; Haliburton County Public Library, Hastings Highlands Public Library, Killaloe and District Public Library, North Hastings Public Library, North Kawartha Public Library and Wollaston Public Library.

?I'd like to take this opportunity to once again thank the Carlow Mayo Public Library for inviting me out there to do a reading. Additionally, thanks go to all the folks who attended this event and purchased a copy of my book. And to Nancy [White] who brought delicious home-made pastry for the social time after the reading. I had a really lovely time and I hope everyone else did too. If anyone is interested in obtaining a copy of Canadian Pandemic Era Poems, it's available at the Art Gallery of Bancroft, Ashlie's Books and Necessities Retail Store.?