

February 3, 2009

Thank you Pam, and thank you to everyone here today.

This is an exciting presentation – the first of its kind.

This artwork, here now for everyone to enjoy, is in honour of Victoria's first Poet Laureate – Carla Funk.

It is in recognition of all that Carla brought to the City during her tenure. And a standing reminder of how important art – in its many forms – is to the City of Victoria. A reminder of how much art and poetry enrich us as individuals and as a community

I just want to take a minute to speak about Carla.

Carla became the City of Victoria's very first Poet Laureate in 2006 – since then she has worked tirelessly as our cultural and literary ambassador.

She has brought her talent and passion into our homes, our neighbourhoods, our classrooms, and our streets

Not only has Carla written poems for us, poems that inspire and challenge us, but she has taken that inspiration and spread it far and wide – infusing the City with new and creative perspective.

She has filled her role with grace and commitment – and the City of Victoria is a better place for her efforts.

Our City is truly lucky – for as we say goodbye to Carla and thank her for all her gifts, we welcome Linda Rogers, our current Poet Laureate, who will now carry the creative momentum forward still.

Linda, we are all so pleased to have you here.

The combination of poetry and sculpture, in a space where all can enjoy and ponder it, is the most befitting of a legacy I can think of.

This wonderful sculpture was designed and fabricated by local artist Glenn Closson. Glenn, your contribution to this project is so valuable – thank you. You've added to our community in a lasting way

I understand that Glenn and Carla worked together to create this piece – the matching of sculpture and words into something profound.

Contained within the tree branches are the ribbons of words that speak the poem 'Hide and Seek"

I will let Carla speak to her inspiration, but I want to add that inspiration moves outward and cannot be controlled.

I look forward to the times when I walk down this street only to find someone standing reading, thinking, feeling, and taking something away with them – something personal and valuable.

So again, Carla, you've been a true inspiration. You've started a tradition that will be filled by many wonderful and talented people...and on behalf of the City of Victoria I thank you for your contribution, your passion and commitment