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Our Friend Joe: The Joe Fortes Story

By Lisa Anne Smith, Barbara Rogers

Ronsdale Press, Canada, 2012. Paperback. Book Condition: New. 226 x 150 mm. Language: English . Brand New Book. Literary Nonfiction. African American Studies. Biography. When a young black man named Seraphim Joe Fortes arrived in Vancouver in 1885, with little to his name, no one could have possibly suspected that one hundred years later he would be voted Citizen of the Century. OUR FRIEND JOE is the first biography of the West Indian sailor who became a local legend, saving dozens of lives and teaching three generations of Vancouver children how to swim. On a chance rowboat ride not far from the city, he would find his perfect place in English Bay, where the untold story truly begins. In 1900, after years of volunteering, Joe was officially hired by the City as lifeguard, swimming instructor and special constable of English Bay beach. Colorful, often poignant details chronicle Joe s many adventures both on and off shore, his genuine rapport with citizens of all ages and his deeply personal relationship with one Vancouver family. On February 7, 1922, thousands of mourners lined Vancouver s streets to bid farewell to our friend Joe. His legacy continues today, with one of Vancouver s...

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