

# We've Been Here — All Along —



Uncovering BC's Black History  
Workbook

# Credits

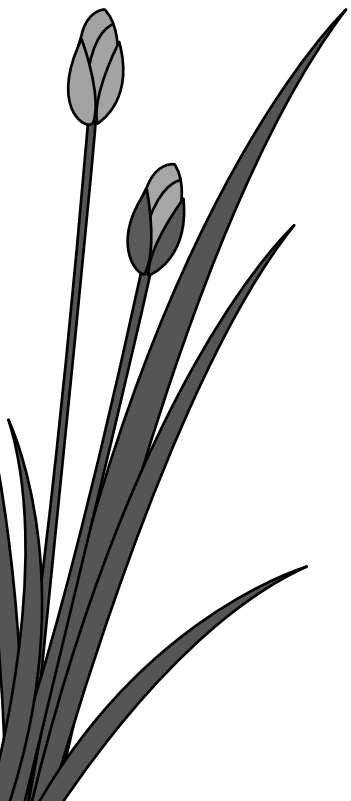
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# Rosemary Brown

**June 17, 1930 — April 26, 2003**

Born June 17, 1930, in Jamaica, Rosemary Brown entertained guests at an early age by reciting poems, making admirers think that she would go on to have a career in law, the church, or teaching. Her childhood was mostly happy with a loving and supportive family, especially her Grandmother Imogene Wilson-James. Her father died when Rosemary was still a toddler, but her Uncle Karl became an important male role model in her life.

As Rosemary grew up she changed from wanting to be lawyer to wanting to be a politician. The children in her family were encouraged to understand and engage with the politics of Jamaica, as during Rosemary's youth Jamaica had not yet gained independence from Britain and would not do so until 1962.

Rosemary immigrated to Canada in 1951 to attend McGill University in Montreal. She encountered racism when trying to get a job and find a place to live while in Canada. This prompted her to join organizations that worked to change the way Black people were treated in society.



Credit: BC NDP

Rosemary settled in Vancouver with her family in the late 1950's and became involved in various types of social work. Some of the places she worked in were the British Columbia Association for the Advancement of Coloured People and Voice of Women. Brown was often a panelist on the national television series People in Conflict.

In 1972, Rosemary Brown entered provincial politics as a New Democratic Party (NDP) candidate. On the 30th of August, she won her seat in the riding of Vancouver-Burrard and became the first Black woman to sit in the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia. During her 14 years as MLA, Brown created a committee to remove sexism in British Columbia's educational material.

Brown received many national and international distinctions in recognition of her exceptional life of public service. the Order of British Columbia (1995), the Order of Canada (Officer, 1996), and in 1973 the United Nations' Human Rights Fellowship.

## Rosemary Brown Word Scramble

Rosemary Brown was born in \_\_\_\_\_ in 1930.

A J M I A C A

The first thing that Rosemary wanted to be when she grew up was a \_\_\_\_\_.

R L W A Y E

When Rosemary moved to Canada she faced \_\_\_\_\_ and began working to change that.

A S R I C M

Rosemary Brown was the first Black woman elected to the British Columbia \_\_\_\_\_ in 1972.

E G I S U R L A E L T L

# Hogan's Alley

## A Vibrant Community



CVA Bu P508.53: View of Hogan's Alley



CVA 780335: Moonglow Cabaret 1966

Hogan's Alley was actually Park Lane, and it ran between Union and Prior streets, from Main Street to Jackson Avenue, located in the Strathcona neighbourhood. The area became a thriving Black community with restaurants, a church, and schools. Being close to the railway station and a hive of activity, also meant that Black Strathcona was a go-to destination for many famous people performing in Vancouver.



AME Fountain Chapel Church Choir 1935.

Artwork by Ejiwa "Edge" Ebenebe



# John Craven Jones

## Education Pioneer

September 10, 1834 — December 17, 1911



John arrived on Salt Spring Island BC in 1859. When he discovered there was not a school on the island, he took it upon himself to teach the children there. In 1865 a log cabin was built to house the school and before that John taught wherever a space could be found.

Artwork by Ejiwa "Edge" Ebenebe



# Barbara Howard

## Trailblazing Athlete

**May 8, 1920 — January 26, 2017**



CVA: AM54-S4-2-: CVA 371-1643

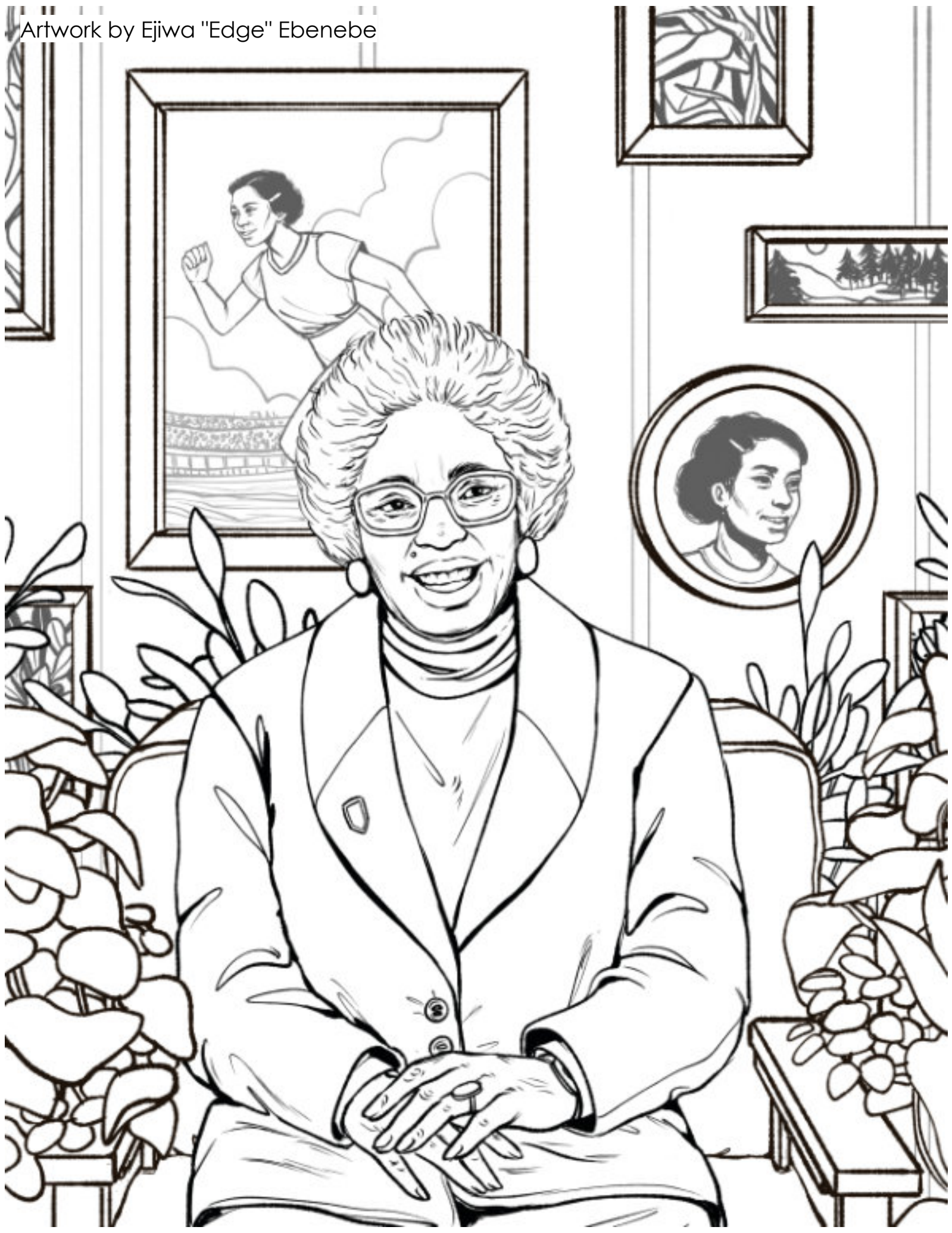


Credit: UBC Faculty of Education

Barbara Howard was the first black woman athlete to represent Canada in an International competition. She competed for Canada at the 1938 British Empire Games held in Sydney, Australia. Barbara went on to become a public-school teacher and was the first member of a visible minority to be hired by the Vancouver School Board, where she taught for 43 years.



Artwork by Ejiwa "Edge" Ebenebe



# Seraphim “Joe” Fortes

**February 9, 1863 - February 4, 1922**

Originally born in Barbados, Spain, Joe Fortes left his home land in his mid-teens and traveled to many different areas before settling in Vancouver. Joe worked in Britain for several years and in 1884 he sailed around Cape Horn from Liverpool on the Robert Kerr. When Joe first came to Vancouver he found work as a shoeblick and was very soon employed by the Sunnyside Hotel as a porter and roustabout. On June 13, 1886, what is now known as the Great Fire destroyed most of Vancouver. During this tragedy, Joe stepped into action and escorted a married woman and her son to safety aboard his old ship, anchored in the harbour. He was also able to save many of the hotel guests' luggage before the building was consumed.

Joe made his home at English Bay, living in a little cottage near the water. He devoted all of his free time to teaching children to swim and patrolling the beach. Although he wasn't paid for his work, Joe continued to patrol the beach, working many other odd jobs to support himself

until, in 1900, the City appointed him Vancouver's first official life-guard. Joe was deeply loved by everyone and was often referred to as "Old Black Joe" or "English Bay Joe." He saved many lives while patrolling the beach, including J.C. McCook, the newly appointed American consul for the Klondike Gold Rush town of Dawson City. Officially Joe has been credited with saving 29 lives; however it is believed that the real number is much higher.

When Joe died in 1922, the city held a record-breaking funeral procession for him and mourners crowded into Holy Rosary Cathedral to bid him farewell. Joe has since been honored in many ways including having a fountain in Alexandra Park dedicated to him, a postage stamp with his image on it, and even being named "Citizen of the Century" in 1986.



Credit: VPL 39420

## Joe Fortes Word Search



- BEACH
- ENGLISH BAY
- FORTES
- FOUNTAIN
- GREAT FIRE
- HONOR
- JOE
- LIFEGUARD
- MCCOOK
- SUNNYSIDE

M	Y	H	C	A	E	B	X	W	Y	E	V	C	Z	Z
V	B	A	M	N	J	G	X	M	R	D	Z	E	X	I
G	Z	M	B	I	O	I	F	I	A	I	I	O	V	C
I	Z	N	E	H	R	C	F	O	W	S	G	J	K	O
W	P	K	N	K	S	T	X	W	U	Y	C	U	P	O
A	J	X	F	W	A	I	S	O	W	N	S	L	A	V
B	Y	C	O	E	B	F	L	E	O	N	T	P	C	M
G	M	M	R	S	W	O	R	G	A	U	D	A	C	O
K	N	G	T	O	V	M	E	O	N	S	M	C	I	U
L	I	F	E	G	U	A	R	D	N	E	O	T	D	N
L	R	E	S	Z	T	F	Z	I	S	O	P	K	S	U
E	S	S	D	B	I	K	S	K	K	G	H	Z	D	G
Y	O	X	P	A	K	J	N	R	I	D	W	A	H	J
X	V	I	D	J	M	P	W	R	D	Y	G	P	G	I
J	V	E	W	W	D	G	Z	R	N	X	R	T	X	E



## Salt Spring Island

John Craven Jones became the first teacher on Salt Spring Island.

## Victoria

Miffin Wistar Gibbs was elected to Victoria City Council.

## Vancouver

Black Strathcona/Hogan's Alley are well established neighbourhoods by this point.

## Vancouver

Eleanor Collins, also known as 'Vancouver's First Lady of Jazz, had her own National Television Show on the CBC network.

## Victoria

Emery Barnes is the first black Speaker of the House, in British Columbia

1859

1858

1862

1866

1886

1923

1925

1955

1964

1974

1994

## Victoria

In response to an invitation from Governor Douglas, approximately 400 Black people arrived in Victoria.

## Giscome Rapids

John Robert Giscome, and Henry McDame travel from Quesnel to Fort McLeod.

## Barkerville

William Allen "Painless" Jones, the first licensed dentist in British Columbia, begins his practice in Barkerville.

## Canada-Wide

The Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters is formed. The Sleeping Car Porters Union fought against discrimination in both jobs and housing.

## Tokyo

Harry Jerome, originally from Saskatchewan, won a bronze medal at the Tokyo Olympic Games.

## Terrace

Selwyn Romilly is the first Black person to be appointed judge in British Columbia. He served in this capacity in Terrace from 1974 – 1978.

# Timeline of Black History in BC