... a vital account of the spirit, dynamism and cultural transformation of cricket brought about by West Indian cricketers.

COLIN GRANT, HISTORIAN, AUTHOR AND BROADCASTER

1973 and Me

The England v West Indies Test Series and a Memorable Childhood Year

By Colin Babb

From 1968 to 1973, the West Indies did not win a Test series. They lost 2-0 on their previous England tour in 1969. By 1973, and despite this lack of success, West Indian cricket still played a central role as a medium of Caribbean self-expression in Britain. In the summer of 1973, could the West Indies deliver the performances and results to inspire the Caribbean diaspora in Britain?

1973 and Me reveals why this was a landmark year for many of the contributors, exploring the story, legacy, first-hand testimonies and Colin’s personal memoir of this iconic year. This was the year Colin ‘discovered’ cricket on television, which provided intense competition to his devotion to football. Including Leeds United, the legacy of Albert Johanneson, the emergence of Clyde Best and more.

1973 and Me reflects on patterns of Colin’s family and Caribbean migration to Britain, wider perspectives on history, identity, music and politics, shared family experiences of television in the 1970s, a collection of memorable events, and interplay with the 1973 West Indies tour.

Contributors to 1973 and Me include: Dennis Amiss, Clyde Best, Harold ‘Dickie’ Bird, Keith Fletcher, Maurice Foster, Lance Gibbs, Colin Grant, Frank Hayes, Ron Headley, Bernard Julien, Alvin Kallicharan, Simon Lister, Professor Joe Moran, Deryck Murray and Professor Clem Seecharan.

‘1973 and Me articulates, with a vivid authority, the journey made from West Indian boyhood to British manhood. And the guiding light on this twisting and sometimes uncertain road is cricket’. Simon Lister, senior BBC TV news producer, journalist and author of Supercat: The Authorised Biography of Clive Lloyd and Fire in Babylon: How the West Indies Cricket Team Brought a People to its Feet.

Colin Babb describes himself as a ‘BBC’, a British-Born Caribbean. His family is from around the Caribbean, including Guyana, Guadeloupe and Barbados. Colin worked for the BBC as a radio producer, website producer, broadcast journalist; and as a photographer in the Caribbean for education book publishers.

He has been a guest on television in Guyana, and radio in Barbados and Grenada. He has twice been a lunchtime guest with the BBC Test Match Special cricket commentary team.

In 2012, Colin wrote They Gave the Crowd Plenty Fun: West Indies Cricket and its Relationship with the British-Resident Caribbean Diaspora (Hansib); revised and updated in 2015.