

# WINDRUSH DAY

Celebrating and commemorating  
the Windrush Generation and  
their contribution to British life.

**CRICKET.**



*“The boundary markers were generally small tress or large stones white washed...The bats we would use for our games were generally made out of coconut bows or bamboo joints. The ball was also made out of wood.... you can imagine playing forward to a delivery either a) you may be given out, hit on the front foot or b) you are in agonising pain which could hold up play for a few minutes.”*

Eaton Swaby describing schoolboy cricket in Jamaica during his childhood.  
( E. Swaby, In the Firing Line )

*“I arrived towards the end of September, greeted by not the warmest weather. I paid the extra twenty pounds and came over by boat...[sailing in] the Caribbean, the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean...first stop Barcelona...then on to Naples and Genoa in Italy...[then by train] through Switzerland on to Calais...then the ferry to Dover.”*

Eaton Swaby describing his journey from Jamaica to England in 1956.  
( E. Swaby, In the Firing Line )



### **Fast-bowler Eaton Swaby in action c.1960.**

Eaton Ohio Swaby was born in Craighead, Jamaica in 1929. He began developing his cricket skills from the age of seven, accompanying his father ( a talented player ) to matches and practicing at the edge of the pitch with other local children.

At the age of 14 he was introduced to adult cricket, playing alongside his father to win a local derby. His cricket talent was nurtured by his headmaster and he later played successful league cricket in Jamaica.

After a brief stint in the Jamaican police force, Eaton moved to the UK in 1956 to join his girlfriend. He found work at the Fry's Metal Works in Colliers Wood, which already had a small number of Jamaican employees. His colleagues introduced him to the Carnegie ( Caribbean) Cricket Club near Brixton and Eaton was a regular player from 1957.

Eaton was introduced to Mitcham Cricket Club by one of the managers at Fry's, Eddie Haynes. He was a key member of Mitcham XI until 1978 and took over 1300 wickets, including 1000 in 1st XI matches.

*“The place was Fry’s metal foundry and I got the job...a nice little number in the stores checking and packing small metal. This was right up my street as it was an indoor job with plenty of heating. Under no circumstances could I work outside, just coming from the tropics. There were eight other Jamaicans working there and I didn't take me long to make friends with them and the rest of the English lads that worked in our department. At weekend after work most of us would go for a few beers.”*

Eaton Swaby describing his first job in England.  
( E. Swaby, In the Firing Line )

*“Can you imagine the attention that was drawn that evening to a West Indian driven by an English man in an open sports car! As we proceeded down Church Road, people were gazing...One man took his cap off and turned around to make sure he was seeing right...Another was looking at us so much, that as I glanced back, he was walking straight into a brick wall.*

Eaton Swaby describing local reaction to his first arrival at Mitcham Cricket ground in 1957.  
( E. Swaby, In the Firing Line )



**Fast-bowler Eaton Swaby pictured on the cricket green with the Mitcham XI c.1958.**

Known affectionately as “Swabes” or the “The King,” Swaby formed strong friendships with his teammates, including Captain Pat Batty. He also became a firm favourite with the Mitcham fans and the area between the score box and the trees in the eastern side of the cricket ground - Eaton’s favourite fielding position, came to be and is still affectionately known as “Swaby’s Corner.”

*“I started to measure my long twenty five yard run. The onlookers were amazed to see such a long run up. I worked up a tremendous pace and clean bowled every single batsmen that batted that evening. Some were beaten for pace, the stumps knocked out of the ground, landing on the nets yards behind. After the net practice quite a lot of batsmen told me I was the quickest bowler they had ever batted against.”*

Eaton Swaby describing his first play at Mitcham Cricket Club.  
( E. Swaby, In the Firing Line )

*“They were bowled out by the two Jamaicans - Mitcham’s adopted terror twins - for a very low score of 38 all out; Marriott claimed his first hat trick on the Green taking 4 wickers for 18 runs and I took 6 wickets for 18 runs.”*

Eaton Swaby describing a typical match and the demise of Catford Cricket team.  
( E. Swaby, In the Firing Line )



**Eaton Swaby, pictured sharing a joke with his friend, the Mitcham CC captain, Pat Batty ( far right ) 1959.**

In 1958 Eaton Swaby started working at the psychiatric hospital in Banstead. This employed a number of West Indian staff and soon developed a successful cricket team. Eaton played for the London Mental Hospital Sports Association which staged a number of matches against teams from other hospitals.

During his years with Mitcham CC Eaton also formed the talented "Eaton Swaby All Stars XI". During the late 1960s and early '70s, this team consisted of young Players from Guyana, Jamaica and Barbados. In addition to local teams, the Mitcham XI also played against visiting National sides, including India.

After retiring from the Mitcham XI in 1978, Eaton moved to Sutton Cricket Club and spent many years training the Colts. He died in 2012 but is remembered with huge affection by fans and players alike.

*“Eaton is still talked about as being one of the best ever club bowlers of all time, who never gave less than his best and certainly he remained one of the most popular throughout his career.*

*He has been a fine ambassador for his native Caribbean he has always been immaculately turned out and was always a thorough gentleman on and off the field.*

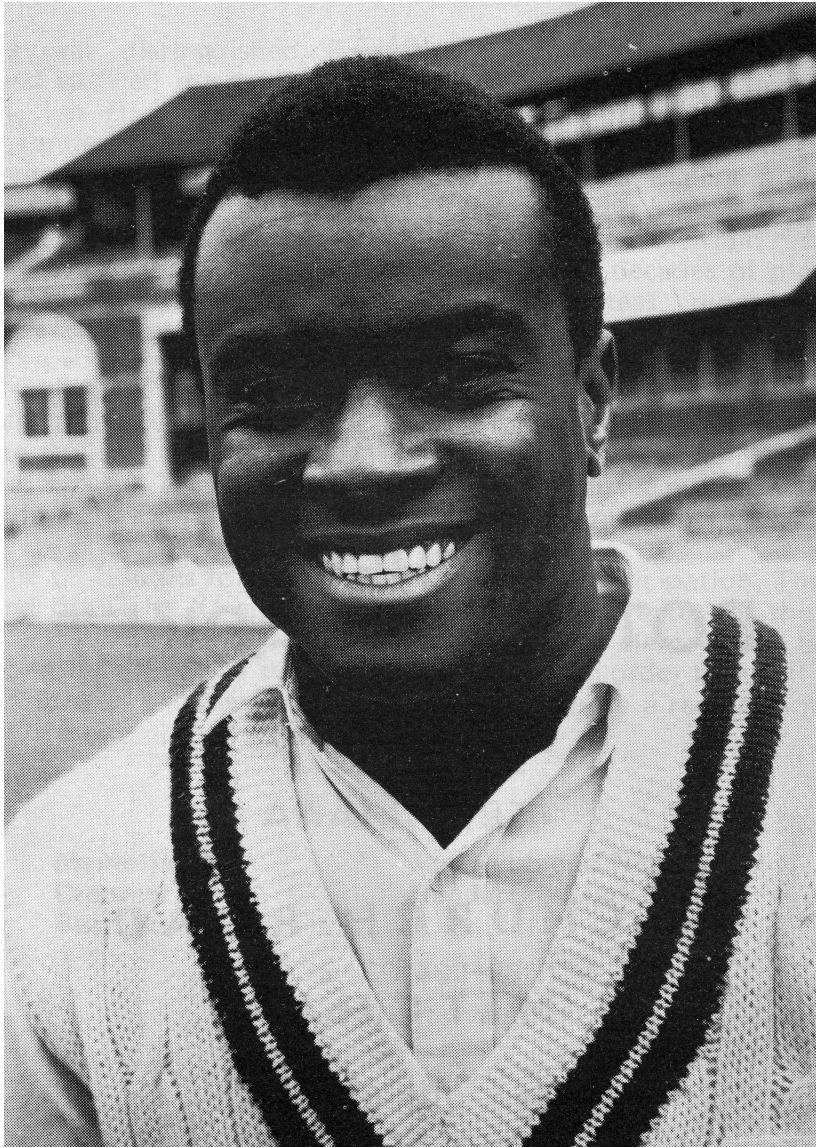
Former Mitcham CC Captain Pat Batty describing Eaton Swaby.



**Mitcham Cricket Club, 1st team - pictured after becoming Surrey Cricket Clubs C A Champions, 1970**

This successful team included several Caribbean players: Winston Stafford ( standing 3rd from left ) and Dennis Marriott ( standing 2nd from right, ) with Eaton Swaby, front row, far right.

( Picture: Mitcham Cricket Club )



Picture: Mitcham Cricket Club

### **Dennis Marriott.**

Dennis was born in Saint Thomas, Jamaica in 1939. He came to the UK in 1957 as a 14 year old to join his brother, who was already living in Balham. He studied at Norwood Technical College, then found work as a lab technician at a Mitcham paint company.

Described as *“the best all rounder in Club cricket,”* Dennis initially spent his weekends playing for Carnegie Cricket Club. This was founded at Ruskin Park near Brixton in 1955 and was set up by Caribbean players, many of whom had faced hostility when trying to join other local clubs.

Dennis was introduced to Mitcham Cricket Club in 1961 by fellow Jamaican. Eaton Swaby. His skill as a bowler was obvious, as he took six wickets on his first game! A regular for the Mitcham Sunday XI, Dennis played many amateur matches between 1962 and ‘63. He was then offered a professional contract in 1964 and joined the Surrey 2nd XI, taking 140 wickets in four seasons.

A medium pace bowler, Dennis played first class Cricket for Surrey from 1965 to 1967 but his progress was hampered by a persistent ankle injury.



( Picture: Mitcham Cricket Club )

### **Dennis with Mitcham and Surrey players at the unveiling of a plaque on Cricket Green, 2013**

Dennis returned to Club cricket for Mitcham when his Surrey contract ended. Against Banstead in 1968 he took 9 for 68. In 1970 he took 114 wickets, including two performances of 9 wickets and a remarkable 7 for 7 against East Molesey. In the Surrey Club Championship 1971 he was again a major factor in Mitcham's retaining the title and broke all Club records claiming more than 160 wickets in Saturday and Sunday games. His 65 wickets in the Championship was a record at that time.

Dennis partnered with fast bowler Eaton Swaby amounted to *"the most devastating pair of opening bowlers in the Surrey Championship."* He played county cricket for Middlesex between 1972 and 1974 and took 67 wickets with a best of 5 for 71 and an average of 29.7 in 30 first class matches. Back with Mitcham, in 1978 he took 64 wickets at 15.39 and another 64 at 14.56 in 1980, taking him to over 1,000 wickets for the Club. He was also only the 2nd bowler to take over 500 wickets in the Surrey Championship.



Dennis Marriott pictured with former Mitcham CC Captain, Ewan Green, 2013.  
( Picture: Mitcham Cricket Club )

Dennis Marriott was Captain of Mitcham Cricket Club in 1984. Bowling consistently, he took 46 wickets at 14.98 and 5 in an innings on 5 occasions.

He also supported the club in other ways, coaching youngsters and organising fundraising raffles and functions. He also staged an appeal for a motorised heavy roller to help restore the first-class condition of the Green.

In 2013 Dennis joined the celebrations on Mitcham Cricket Green to mark the unveiling of a plaque on the Tom Ruff Memorial Stone. This records the names of eminent cricketers who have played for Mitcham, including Dennis himself.

Dennis Marriott died in 2014.