

Suggested names for buildings at the Flaxyard site

<https://www.southwark.gov.uk/housing/new-council-homes/where-we-re-building/peckham/flaxyard-site>

| Suggestion | Summary |
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| Innes Hope Pearse (known as Innes H. Pearse) | Innes was a doctor who co-founded the Pioneer Health Centre in Peckham that became known as the Peckham Experiment. This was a project that studied and promoted social attitudes to health and fitness. |
| Debbie Welch | Debbie was a youth and community worker in Peckham, a Little Ward councillor (between Camberwell and Peckham) and Deputy Leader of Southwark. She was also an advisor in the murder investigation of Peckham schoolboy Damilola Taylor. |
| Annie Brewster | Annie was one of the first Black nurses known to work in Britain. She lived in Southwark. |
| George Arthur Roberts | George was a soldier, fireman and campaigner for the rights of ex-servicemen. He was a founder member of the League of Coloured Peoples and awarded the British Empire Medal. He lived in Peckham. |
| Charles Arundel Moody | Charles was a soldier and the first commanding officer (Lt. Col.) of the 3rd Battalion Regiment in Jamaica. He lived in Southwark. |
| Robert Branford | Robert was the first Black man recruited by the Met Police. He rose through the ranks to become superintendent of Southwark. |

Below text provided by local historian Stephen Bourne

Innes Hope Pearse: was an English doctor who co-founded a health centre that became famous as part of the Peckham Experiment. This was a project rooted in Pearse's interest in studying and promoting health in a social context.

Background:

She grew up in Purley, Surrey with her parents Catherine Beardsley Pearse (née Morley) and George Edgar Hope Pearse, an exporter. She studied at the London School of Medicine for Women where she qualified as a doctor in 1915. After a couple of years at the Bristol Royal Hospital for Women and Children, she was back in London in 1918. Her next post was at the Great Northern Hospital, and then she became a registrar at the London Hospital (one of the first women to become a hospital registrar), followed by a job at St Thomas's. For seven years she was also part-time medical advisor to the Alice Model infant welfare centre in

the East End, a charitable project. She continued this alongside a thyroid research project at the Royal Free Hospital which she joined as a medical registrar in 1921, working with George Scott Williamson.

Pearse's work in infant welfare brought her to the attention of a group wanting to help working-class women access contraception. Out of this the Pioneer Health Centre was born: first in a modest house in Peckham, and later in a modern architect-designed building opened in 1935. The project, presented as a "family club" with leisure activities and health "overhauls", became known as the Peckham Experiment.

Pearse thought doctors and others needed to take a "deeper look at the natural laws governing health in human society". and that the medical profession should not be "overly focused on illness" but should also prioritise "understanding, evaluating, and cultivating health". She believed strongly in leaving responsibility with the individual and, in this spirit, doctors at the Pioneer Centre gave health checks and medical information but left people to decide what to do, whether to seek treatment etc.

Pearse always saw the individual human, and the idea of "positive health", in the context of family and society, leading to an interest in organic food, which she hoped would compensate for the poor quality of food generally available in Peckham. From 1935, Pearse leased Oakley Farm in Bromley, Kent, where organic food was grown for members of the Health Centre.

During the Second World War, Pearse proposed a "homestead" scheme for mothers and children whose menfolk were away at war. She believed they could live healthily and productively in farm communities. A few families from Peckham did go to live at Oakley Farm during the war until it was requisitioned by the RAF.

The Peckham Experiment came to an end in 1950 when it proved to be incompatible with the new National Health Service, which had less interest in community and self-reliance.

Over the years Pearse published various books and articles, several co-authored with Williamson, including papers on their thyroid research in the 1920s. Her 1942 book, *The Peckham experiment*, is still being re-published in the 21st century and the Peckham Experiment is still being written about by others. The Pioneer Health Foundation (also known as the Pioneer Health Centre Ltd.) takes some of Pearse and Williamson's ideas forward.

Debbie Welch: assisted the Metropolitan Police as an independent advisor in the murder investigation of the Peckham schoolboy Damilola Taylor from 2000.

Background:

Debbie started work as a youth and community worker in Peckham in the 1960s. She joined Southwark Council in 1986 and as a Labour councillor she represented the former Liddle Ward, between Camberwell and Peckham. She was outspoken on issues such as social care and health. As deputy leader of Southwark in the early 1990s Cllr Welch was one of the very few Black women to reach such a senior position in a London local authority. In later years she was recognised for campaigning on

youth crime and her work as an advisor to the murder investigation of Peckham school boy Damilola Taylor, for which she received a Metropolitan Police Volunteer Award in 2002.

Cllr Aubyn Graham said “Debbie contributed significantly to the community and quality of life for people in Southwark.”

Annie Brewster: Annie Brewster’s achievements illustrate that there were Black nurses employed in British hospitals before the foundation in 1948 of the National Health Service

Background:

Annie Catherine Brewster (1858–1902), was born in St Vincent, British West Indies, in 1858, the daughter of Pharour Chaderton Brewster, a merchant of Black Barbadian birth. The family moved to England where, in 1871, they were living in Luton, Bedfordshire, as boarders of a farmer. By 1879 the family had moved to London, where their home was at 2 Derby Villas, Grove Vale, Camberwell.

On 16 December 1881, aged twenty-three, Annie Brewster became a probationer nurse at the London Hospital in London’s East End. (Her appointment followed shortly after the death in London in May 1881 of the Jamaican ‘doctress’ Mary Seacole, one of the best-known black women of the Victorian era, though it is not known whether her example influenced Brewster to become a nurse). Eva Lückes, who gained a reputation as a progressive matron of the London Hospital and was evidently willing to recruit a black woman to her nursing staff, recorded that Brewster was:

‘a thoroughly satisfactory probationer, quick, thorough, intelligent and active. She was a favourite with all the sisters under whom she worked. She was equally well fitted for medical and surgical work and I was glad to accede to her request to be appointed staff nurse in women’s medical wards. She was gentle and kind to her patients and shewed a good ‘head’ for managing her ward. (London Hospital Register of Probationers, Nov 1880–May 1884)’

In 1890, after nine years’ service, Brewster defended the London Hospital when it was criticised for its poor treatment of nurses. Her letter, published in the Daily News (29 Aug 1890), refuted allegations of nurses having to undertake menial tasks, such as scrubbing tables, and poor food being given to them, and regretted that critics of the hospital had not made themselves ‘accurately acquainted with facts’ before making misleading public statements.

The last fourteen of Brewster’s twenty years’ service at the London Hospital were spent as nurse in charge of the ophthalmic wards. She became known as ‘Nurse Ophthalmic’ on account of her work with elderly patients who were going blind. Eva Lückes later described how, ‘with her quick intelligence’ Brewster ‘became very skillful in the treatment of “eyes” and her kindness to the poor old people who passed through her hands during this period was unwearied’ (The London Hospital Official Ward Book, 30 Nov 1901–24 May 1902).

Latterly Brewster was in failing health and, following an operation, she died at the London Hospital, Whitechapel, on 11 February 1902, aged forty-three. She was buried in the City of London cemetery where the headstone on her grave was paid for by the London Hospital.

Annie Brewster's achievements illustrate that there were black nurses employed in British hospitals before the foundation in 1948 of the National Health Service, when nurses were actively recruited from West Africa, British Guiana, and the Caribbean.

George A. Roberts: Campaigner for better rights of ex-servicemen including improved rights and higher pensions. In 1944 Roberts was awarded the British Empire Medal.

Background:

George Arthur Roberts (1891–1970), soldier, fireman, and community leader, was born on 2 August 1891 in Trinidad. At the beginning of the First World War he enlisted in the British West Indies Regiment, later transferring to the Middlesex Regiment. As a rifleman he fought in the battles of Loos and the Somme, and in the Dardanelles. He was wounded at Loos and the Somme. In 1916 he was given special leave to return to Trinidad to recruit more volunteers. His speeches helped to recruit more than 250 men. Standing at 6 feet 2 inches, he earned a reputation as the 'Battalion Bomber' for throwing bombs back over enemy lines.

After the war Roberts settled in south London and from 1923 until his death in 1970 his home was at flat 30E Lewis Trust Buildings, in Warner Road, Camberwell. He earned a living as an electrician. He was passionate about the plight of his fellow ex-servicemen and after the First World War he spent many years campaigning with the National Federation of Discharged and Demobilised Sailors and Soldiers.

He led thousands of ex-servicemen, including many who had been wounded in battle and could no longer walk, in a march demanding improved rights and higher pensions. He later recalled, in 'The Battle of Westminster Bridge', published in 1961 in the brochure for the British Legion's fortieth anniversary, that the authorities would not allow them to cross over Westminster Bridge to the Houses of Parliament:

'A scrimmage between our columns and the police began. Our banners were torn to pieces, and the poles broken, and when the police started using their batons we retaliated with our broken poles. The wounded and disabled, game to standing up for their principles, used their sticks and crutches. Yet in spite of this vicious official action against those who had served their country so well, a large proportion of personnel won through and crossed the bridge. In the meantime, other columns reached Whitehall and Trafalgar Square. So ended quite a historic civil battle.'

In 1920 the federation invited similar organizations to merge and this was achieved in 1921 with the establishment of the British Legion (later Royal British Legion). Active in the British Legion from its beginnings until he died, Roberts was the founder and president of the Camberwell branch.

In 1931, with the Jamaican-born activist Harold Moody, Roberts was a founder member of the League of Coloured Peoples. This was one of the first organizations to attend to the needs of Britain's Black community. He remained an active member of the league for many years.

In 1939 Roberts completed his training with the Auxiliary Fire Service (AFS), renamed the National Fire Service (NFS) in 1941. Throughout the London Blitz and the rest of the Second World War he served as a firefighter. He was based at New Cross Fire Station and in 1943 was made a section leader. In 1941 a portrait of him in his AFS uniform was painted by the war artist Norman Hepple and widely exhibited. In 1944 Roberts was awarded the British Empire Medal. The medal was presented to him by King George VI at Buckingham Palace on 15 May 1945.

Charles Arundel Moody: was a Black British soldier who was the first commanding officer (Lt. Col.) of the 3rd Battalion Regiment of the Jamaica Regiment.

Background:

Charles Arundel Moody (15 April 1917, London – 11 January 2009) was the son of Harold Moody and his wife Olive. He attended Alleyn's School, Dulwich.

Moody was 22 when the Second World War started in 1939. Under the impression he was eligible to become an officer in the British Army, he went to Whitehall for an interview, where he was dismayed to learn that only those of pure European descent could be commissioned as officers. However his father mobilised the LCP, the International African Service Bureau and the West African Students Union to campaign against this colour bar.

He served right through the Battle of Britain summer in Dover before the Royal West Kents were posted elsewhere. Moody then served with distinction in the Infantry and the Artillery in England, Africa, Italy and finally Egypt, where he became a Major in 1945.

Robert Branford: was the first Black man recruited by the Metropolitan Police, and he rose through the ranks to become superintendent of Southwark.

Background:

Robert Branford (1817-1869) was born in Stoke-By-Nayland, Suffolk, and lived in Valentine Place near Blackfriars with his wife Sarah. Mr Branford was recruited into the Met's ranks on September 24, 1838. He was stationed at Southwark's former Stone's End Police Station in Montague Street, which used to run parallel with Borough High Street.

According to his records at the Met Police's Heritage Centre, his service number was 14153 and he stood 5' 11". It was eight years before Branford was then promoted to sergeant in 1846, then to an inspector in 1851; and superintendent of M-Division (Southwark) in 1856. Census records also show that Branford and his wife lived in

Weston Place in Bermondsey, and shared a house in Rotherhithe with another local bobby. The officer then lived in Brunswick Street in Newington – now the site of Falmouth Road – before he retired in 1866.

Robert and his wife then moved to a village in Suffolk called Little Waldingfield. Robert died three years later on August 14, 1869.