



**Lloyds Barber shop** situated on **204 Bellenden Road, SE15**, remained a community hub for over 20 years on this site and other sites in Peckham. Prior to setting up a very successful business in Peckham, Lloyd had a barber shop in Lavender Hill, Battersea during the 1970s. More popularly known due to the TV series 'Desmond's', the interior and exterior of Lloyds barber shop, was often featured in the popular comedy series.

### **Who is Lloyd?**

'Lloydie' as he was affectionately known is from the **Windrush generation**, immigrating to the UK from Jamaica in the 1960s. Now retired, Lloyds barber shop was always a welcoming place where members of the Windrush generation and their families would congregate and catch up on news from the Caribbean, UK and elsewhere.



### **Barbering and cultural nuances**

The Barber shop had at least three chairs in operation at all times; rented to professional barbers who had honed their trade in the Caribbean whilst keeping abreast of changes within the profession. Women, men and children would sit patiently on the long leather lounge waiting their turn for a haircut, trim or hair dye. Friday evenings and Saturdays being amongst the busiest days.



Some barbers were 'old school' and preferred to do the traditional trim with a side part, reminiscent of the eloquent passengers disembarking MV Empire Windrush in 1948. Others catered to a younger audience who preferred fancy fades and other patterns, whatever style was trending at the time. The other type of barber show degrees of flexibility and could adapt to any style requested. **Barber Shop Chronicles**, currently showing at The Roundhouse Theatre <https://www.nationaltheatre.org.uk/shows/barber-shop-chronicles-at-roundhouse> captures the essence of the atmospheric nature of the African and Caribbean barber shop.

### **Community Hub**

As well as a barber shop, the space provided invaluable community services:

1. **Employment:** Apprenticeships for trainee barbers & Work experience for school children
2. **Educational exchange:** space to discuss Caribbean culture, history and politics
3. **Skills exchange network:** professional services traded within community
4. **Financial services:** Partner or Sou Sou, (community credit union); financial advice
5. **Information, Advice and Guidance:** conflict resolution, counselling, mentoring services
6. **Courier service:** messages & goods exchanged between family members in the UK and the Caribbean
7. **Social hub:** space to relax and unwind on Friday evening and on weekends



### ***International acclaim***

Both Lloyd's barber shop and Desmond's its alter ego have received international recognition. Lloyd as an avid boxing fan always attracted boxing aficionados of any age, who would meet at the barber shop and discuss the engaging sport and boxing personalities. Pride of place on the barbershop wall was a signed picture of Mohammad Ali, alongside a boxing belt, boxing gloves and other boxing memorabilia gifted to Lloyd after one monumental fight or another. Lloyd was un-phased by the celebrities such as ex-boxer Lloyd Honeygan and others who passed through the shop for a trim or just a chat. If you wanted to spot the celebrity and get an autograph, it was certainly the place to hang out.

As 'Desmond's', the barbershop attracted many visitors from all over the world. On more than one occasion on trips to Jamaica, the checking in assistant at Sangster International airport, Montego Bay would ask me if I lived near Desmond's whilst checking in my luggage. The television programme still attracts many enquires. Those who visited Lloyd's were never disappointed. Lloyd's barber shop replicated the vibrant atmosphere in the TV show Desmond's. Visitors were greeted by a friendly relaxed Lloyd, other barbers and customers. Visitors always left Lloyd's happy with pictures reminding them of their visit, Windrush stories and fond memories of the warm welcome in Peckham.

The Barber shop closed around 2015, marking the end of an era and bespoke community services. Sadly, the building is now up for sale with the Windrush generation who used to hang out there feeling displaced.

**Written by Charmaine Brown:1 July 2019update**