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# Fintona Girls School (formerly Tourmont)



Camberwell Conservation  
Study 1991

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## Location

79 Balwyn Road BALWYN, Boroondara City

## Municipality

BOROONDARA CITY

## Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO169

## Heritage Listing

Boroondara City

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

Architecturally, a highly successful .and picturesque design, using European Medieval motifs in a manner characteristic of John Beswicke's work, and a prelude to the medieval emphasis adopted by the prolific Queen Anne villa style in Victoria: of state importance.

Historically, created for and the home of David Symes, an important Victorian business figure. Both Murray, the original purchaser, and Syme, the first resident are critical figures in the history of Victoria if not Australia. Murray

combined his newspaper interest with wine-growing and service in local municipal politics; Syme was an influential member of the Victorian corporate world. They were probably a cut above other Camberwell residents in political and economic influence.

Tounnont reflects some of this local standing. The building's later career as a private girls' school indicates another phase in the history of Camberwell, when its mansions were turned to new uses, private schools in particular; of state importance.

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|---------------------------|--|
| Heritage Study/Consultant | Boroondara - Camberwell Conservation Study, Graeme Butler, 1991; |
| Architect/Designer        | Beswicke, John,  |
| Other Names               | Fintona Girls School, Tourmont,                                  |
| Hermes Number             | 14955  |
| Property Number           |  |

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## Physical Description 1

Tourmont appears to consist of two building of three-colour face brick: one a two-storey, Iron verandahed house; the other .a French chateaux with a dash of English Tudor, This duality is pronounced by the central placement of a trussed gable set into the upper verandah of the northern wing which, with its sparse detail, differs markedly from the other ornate and Tudoresque half-timbered and trussed gable to the south. Ribbed chimneys, the pressed metal cladding and fretted detail of the southern gable and the turned verandah posts of the northern wing are all common attributes of the Melbourne Queen Anne villa style of the Edwardian era, Late Victorian period detail and finishes are also apparent given the cast iron friezes and balustrading, polychrome brickwork, the pointed arched openings and general two-storey towered form (see 13 Victoria Road), which may also be seen in Italianate villas such as Parlington (q.v.), The Queen Anne styled villa adjoining highlights this contrast.

The picket fence and mature trees (elms) are sympathetic to the house construction date, whilst added wings, to the west and south, match in general form and materials to that of the original.

## Integrity

The building is generally original (elevations visible from Balwyn Road) with the exception of school additions to the south and west. It IS possible that the section south of the tower was added early this century.

*This place/object may be included in the Victorian Heritage Register pursuant to the Heritage Act 2017. Check the Victorian Heritage Database, selecting 'Heritage Victoria' as the place source.*

*For further details about Heritage Overlay places, contact the relevant local council or go to Planning Schemes Online <http://planningschemes.dpcd.vic.gov.au/>*