

---

# Boroondara Cemetery, Springthorpe Memorial



City of Kew Urban  
Conservation Study 1988



City of Kew Urban  
Conservation Study 1988

---

## Location

440 High Street KEW, BOROONDARA CITY

## Municipality

BOROONDARA CITY

## Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

## Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H0522&nbsp;

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO64

HO142

## Heritage Listing

Boroondara City

---

## Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

## Significance of Individual Memorial

The Springthorpe memorial is of significance as one of the most exciting and scholarly memorials to have been built in Australia, for the outstanding use of a variety of materials in its execution, and the quality of its workmanship.

## Significance of Boroondara Cemetery

Boroondara Cemetery is an historic site of significance to Kew, that contains monuments of wider significance. Four monuments within the cemetery have been designated as Grade A structures (mainly on architectural grounds), however the cemetery's significance lies in its overall intact state and the historic nature of many of the graves within it, and for its proximity to Victoria Park.

Heritage Study/Consultant	Boroondara - City of Kew Urban Conservation Study, Pru Sanderson Design Pty Ltd, 1988;
Architect/Designer	Annear, Harold Desbrowe,
Hermes Number	22342
Property Number	

---

## Physical Description 1

Originally set aside for reserve purposes, a portion of a triangle of land situated almost in the centre of Kew, was proclaimed the Boroondara Cemetery in 1859[16] The planning of the cemetery was carried out by J.F. Higgins of the Lands Department[17] and the first burial, at what was later to become one of Melbourne's historic landmarks, noted particularly for its memorials, took place on 12 March 1859[18].

Dr John Springthorpe commissioned this memorial to be built for his wife, Annie, who died in January 1897[19]. Likened to a classic Greek doric temple[20], the marble sculpting of the tomb was carried out by Benram McKennal[21] while the iron sculpture was executed by Webb Gilbe[22] An article in the *Argus* at the time considered the memorial to be '...the most beautiful work of its kind in Australia ...'[23] The memorial is scholarly in its design, exciting in the use of a variety of materials, and beautifully executed. The materials adopted in the work include the Ionian order columns executed in black, Labrador granite [24], grey granite to the entablatures and pediments, wrought iron on the balustradings, vibrantly coloured leadlight to the domed ceiling and mosaics and encaustic tiles to the floor. In addition to the temple form of the memorial itself, it was given an impressive entrance way that remains substantially intact, built in grey granite with metal plaques and gate.

## References --

1 Clerehan, N., 'Three Tombs', in *Historic Environment*, Vol.2, NoA, 1982, p.23

2 *ibid.*

3 Barnard, F.G.A., *The Jubilee History of Kew*, p.104

4 *ibid.*

5 *ibid.*

6 Clerehan, *op.cit.*, p.28

7 National Trust of Aust.(Vic), 'Historic Buildings Documentation- Springthorpe Memorial', held in File No.1556

8 HBC, 'Amendment of Register of Historic Buildings - Springthorpe Memorial', 30 March 1982, held in file No.81!184

9 National Trust of Aust.rVic). *loc.cit.*

10 *Argus*, 26 March 1933, quoted in HBC, *ibid.*

11 Clerehan *op. cit.*, p.26

*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/>*