
Scotch College

Location

491 Glenferrie Road HAWTHORN, BOROONDARA CITY

Municipality

BOROONDARA CITY

Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO608

Heritage Listing

Boroondara City

Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

What is significant?

Scotch College, at 491 Glenferrie Road, Hawthorn, is significant. The school was founded in 1851 by the Free Church of Australia Felix (the Scottish Presbyterian Church). Its first home was in the city of Melbourne, but it moved to a site in East Melbourne in 1854, before outgrowing it and beginning a gradual move to Hawthorn in 1915 under the leadership of Principal William Littlejohn. In Hawthorn the school first occupied the 1875 mansion 'Glen House', before a whole suite of purpose-built classroom, assembly, dining, and residential buildings were constructed between 1917 and 1926. They were all designed in a picturesque Queen Anne style, by architect Henry Hardie Kemp, who was synonymous in Victoria with this style. A second major stage of development took place during the 1930s, beginning with an architectural competition for a chapel commemorating Principal Littlejohn. The competition was won by architect John Scarborough. With his practice, Scarborough, Robertson and Love, he went on to design a suite of distinctive buildings in a style which combined the Moderne with the Scottish Baronial throughout the 1930s, with a final one in the 1950s. A number of Kemp's buildings were remodelled in this period by Scarborough to match his other works. It is thought that Scarborough was influenced by the work of Swedish architect Ostberg, particularly, the design and brickwork of Stockholm Town Hall of 1907. Scotch College buildings which are of individual significance, including views to their principle elevations, are:- Junior School (former Preparatory School), 1917- Callantina Lodge and Gates, 1917- Senior School and

quadrangle, 1920-26- War Memorial Hall, 1920-26- School House and McMeckan House, 1925- Littlejohn Memorial Chapel, 1934-36- Health Centre and Residences, 1935-36- John Monash Gates and Lodge, 1936- Arthur Robinson House, 1937-38- Shergold Building (former Sub-Primary Building), 1956 Buildings which are contributory, including views to their principle elevations, are:- Laundry (former rear wing of 'Glen House'), 1875- TDP (former Gymnasium), 1920-26 The Hawthorn site is a large, undulating piece of land comprising a hilltop, which was occupied 'Glen House', with views over Gardiner's Creek and Yarra River flats. The grounds of the new school were laid out by groundsman Bob Horne the Elder, who had been with Scotch College since 1895. School buildings ring the flat hilltop, allowing mutual views between them. The intensive building programme in the 1930s was accompanied by an equally ambitious tree-planting programme led by leading interwar landscape gardener and Superintendent of the State Parks and Gardens, Hugh Linaker. This included the creation of an elm avenue along Monash Drive, and replacement of the pines on the slopes of the hill with mostly native trees chosen for their attractive foliage.

How is it significant?

Scotch College is of historical, architectural and aesthetic, associational and social significance to the City of Boroondara and potentially to the State of Victoria.

Why is it significant?

Scotch College is of historical significance as the oldest surviving independent school in Victoria, founded in Melbourne in 1851. Upon its move to Hawthorn from 1915, it joined other prestigious denominational colleges that characterise the area, particularly Kew. The impact Scotch College has had on Victoria and Australia as a whole is seen in the list of its illustrious graduates, including Sir John Monash, a prime minister, three governors-general, a Victorian governor and seven premiers, as well as nationally recognised names in the arts and sports. The War Memorial Hall and the tiled honour board within it is of particular historical significance for its association with the contribution of Scotch College graduates who served in the armed forces during World War I. (Criteria A & B) Architecturally, the buildings of Scotch College are distinguished for their thematic and stylistic coherence over the interwar and early post-war period. Architect Henry Kemp's buildings are all in his signature picturesque Queen Anne style, and the use of materials - red brick, roughcast render and half-timbering - and decorative detailing - such as curved timber brackets and incised quatrefoils - are applied to the whole suite of buildings, creating a sense of visual unity, despite their different massing and sizes. The Memorial Hall (and the east elevation of the Junior School in its original form) clearly expressed the Scottish roots of the school, with its crow-stepped gable ends and crenelation to the parapets. Architect John Scarborough also drew upon medieval inspiration and massing for his buildings, with their distinctive high hipped roofs and round tower motif, combined with clear expression of the school's Scottish roots in details such as the thistle reliefs on the Littlejohn Memorial Chapel. All of Scarborough's work here is also unified by the consistent use of apricot-tone 'Rippletex' tapestry brick. Aesthetically, Scotch College is significant as a cohesive visual entity, picturesquely sited on the banks of Gardiner's Creek and the Yarra River, with playing fields on the river flats and a collection of significant and contributory buildings sensitively sited on and around the heavily treed hill at the north-east corner of the site. Trees include the elm avenue along Monash Drive, and other mature exotic and native plantings, particularly in the north-east quadrant of the site. The trees have been introduced as part of deliberate planting programmes, designed to complement the topography and built form of the site. The lower, flat areas of the site allow mutual views between other significant buildings, particularly the two memorial chapels which stand on either side of the Main Oval. (Criterion E) The Littlejohn Memorial Chapel is considered an exemplar in the State of Victoria of the restrained Gothic that was popular for seminary and college chapels during the 1930s. It was highly acclaimed at the time of its construction, and is still appreciated for its striking massing and stripped-back interpretation of Albi Cathedral in France. The Chapel, as well as all of the other Scarborough-designed buildings, displays extraordinarily high-quality brickwork, in its complexity, design and execution. (Criterion F) Scotch College is of associational significance for its links to the three people that were most instrumental in shaping the Hawthorn campus: Architect Henry Hardie Kemp (1859-1946), a distinguished architect whose name is synonymous with

the Queen Anne style. Many of his finest works, including those as part of the practice Ussher and Kemp, are in the City of Boroondara. The suite of buildings he designed for Scotch College is some of his last work before his retirement in 1929, and can be seen as a summation of his oeuvre. Architect John Scarborough (1901-73), undertook many commissions for the Presbyterian Church during the interwar period, but only came to prominence upon winning the design competition for the Littlejohn Memorial Chapel. William Littlejohn, principal of Scotch College 1904-33, was instrumental in creating the Hawthorn campus, and helped shape the vision for its form. His crucial role is commemorated by the Littlejohn Memorial Chapel, whose site he chose shortly before his death in 1933. (Criterion H) Scotch College and its buildings are of social significance for the strong associations the school's alumni, or old boys, hold. (Criterion G)

Heritage Study/Consultant	Boroondara - Hawthorn Heritage Study, Meredith Gould Conservation Architects, 1993;
Other Names	Scotch College,
Hermes Number	140970
Property Number	

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.

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