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# Boroondara Cemetery, Syme Memorial



City of Kew Urban  
Conservation Study 1988

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## Location

440 High Street KEW, BOROONDARA CITY

## Municipality

BOROONDARA CITY

## Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO64

HO142

## Heritage Listing

Boroondara City

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

Significance of Individual Memorial

The Syme memorial is of significance as one of the most finely designed and executed pieces of monumental design in Melbourne, of particular distinction for the rarity of its Egyptian reference. The significance is enhanced by the status of David Syme.

### 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.

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| Heritage Study/Consultant | Boroondara - City of Kew Urban Conservation Study, Pru Sanderson Design Pty Ltd, 1988; |
| Hermes Number             | 22343  |
| Property Number           |  |

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## 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 [ 9 ] The planning of the cemetery was carried out by J.F. Higgins of the Lands Department [ 10 ] 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 [ 11 ]

David Syme, political economist and publisher of the *Age*, died at his home, 'Blythswood', in February 1908 [ 12 ] He was buried at the Boroondara Cemetery where his impressive memorial was built from granite and copper--'. The design is one of the most distinctive and scholarly pieces of monumental architecture in Melbourne, drawing on the Egyptian for its stylistic reference. It has a temple-like form with each of the columns having a different capital detail. These support a cornice that coves both inwards and outwards. In addition to the rectangle of columns, the tomb was given balustradings set between granite piers, that create porch spaces leading to the entrance ways.

### References -

1 Clerehan, N., 'Three Tombs', in *Historic Environment*, Vol 2, NoA, 1982, p.24

2 *ibid.*

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

4 *ibid.*

5 *ibid.*

6 Rogers, D., *A History of Kew*, p.99

7 Clerehan, *loc.cit.*

*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/>*