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# Boroondara Cemetery



B6824 Gussen Memorial @  
Boroondara Cemetery

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## Location

Cnr High Street and Park Hill Road,, KEW VIC 3101 - Property No B6824

## Municipality

BOROONDARA CITY

## Level of significance

National

## Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H0049

## Heritage Listing

National Trust

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on - May 9, 2005

Dating from 1855 and having been in continual use for over 140 years, the Boroondara Cemetery is of national significance for the following reasons:

Its importance in the course of Australia's cultural history as a sophisticated and substantially intact example of a Victorian garden cemetery in the romantic style. It exhibits unusual cultural features associated with the development of romantic style Victorian garden cemeteries. This cemetery type had a significant role in the human occupation and evolution of the nation as it influenced cemetery design for more than half a century in Australia.

Its possession of uncommon aspects of Australia's cultural history as a Victorian garden cemetery. Its importance in demonstrating a distinctive way of life, custom, and design no longer practised and in danger of being lost. It is of exceptional interest, as most Victorian garden cemeteries no longer demonstrate their characteristic design as twentieth century overcrowding and neglect have generally resulted in the loss of earlier Victorian schemes. For its collection of trees and plants, including Bhutan Cypress (*Cupressus torulosa*) and Italian Cypress (*C. sempervirens*). The Golden Funeral Cypress (*Chamaecyparis funebris* "Aurea") is the only known example in Victoria. For trees planted last century and therefore of some botanical interest as being amongst the earliest surviving tree plantings in the metropolis.

It's potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of Australia's cultural history.

Its importance for information contributing to a wider understanding of Australian history, by virtue of its use as a research and reference site.

Its importance for information contributing to a wider understanding of the history of human occupation of Australia. For example by providing information about the patterns of deaths in the colonial city by age, religion and family; and sometimes giving causes, occupations and other information. By illustrating the importance of homelands in epitaphs and also by demonstrating the range of technical and craft skills and materials available. For its value as a historical record, a collection of individual memorials, its continuity and security, for the manner in which it inspires a respect for the dead, as a social document, and for its role in education and recreation. Its importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of: A class of Australia's cultural places, being Victorian Garden cemeteries in a romantic style.

Its importance in demonstrating the principal attributes, which are characteristic of the class. These are: an ornamental boundary fence, curvilinear paths and landscaping, highlighting of topographical contours with established view lines and landmark features, provision of recreational facilities such as rotundas, symbolic plantings, and high quality Victorian buildings, enclosures and monuments.

\* Its importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of the range of human activities in the Australian environment (including way of life, custom, process, land use, function, design or technique). It demonstrates the Victorian approach of seeing burial grounds also as a public park. For health reasons the cemetery was located outside populated areas but was designed to be an attractive destination for visitors. It also demonstrates that, although this was a secular cemetery, religion was very important with the allocation of land based on religious census figures.

Its importance in exhibiting Victorian aesthetic characteristics valued by the colonial community.

Its importance to the community for aesthetic characteristics held in high esteem is demonstrated in the value of the cemetery as a place of picturesque and tranquil beauty, a destination with a tram terminating at its entrance and tea rooms opposite, and as a public park with facilities like a rotunda, shelter and seats. The Trustees actively pursued policies to encourage high quality monuments and enclosures with good maintenance.

Its importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement of the Victorian period. Its importance for technical, creative, design or artistic excellence, innovation or achievement, including monuments of national significance such as the Springthorpe Memorial, the Halfey monument, the Syme Memorial and the Cussen Memorial and the cemetery's collection of memorials, tombstones and other funerary art.

Its strong or special associations with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons.

Its importance as a place highly valued by a community for reasons of religious, spiritual, symbolic, cultural, educational and social associations. Boroondara Cemetery has special associations for the community because of its Victorian aesthetic but is also of importance to post war migrants with family monuments at the cemetery. Its special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in Australia's natural or cultural history.

Its importance for close associations with individuals whose activities have been significant within the history of the nation, State or region and are illustrated in the monuments and epitaphs to them, including the pioneering Henty family, artists Abram Buvelot and Charles Nuttall, businessmen John Halfey and David Syme, author Georgina McCrae and actress Nellie Stewart. Also the association with the prominent Melbourne architect Albert Purchas who made a significant contribution to the design of the cemetery and is buried at Boroondara.

Classified: 01/09/1997

See also B1555 David Syme Memorial & B1556 Springthorpe Memorial.

Hermes Number 64888

Property Number

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*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/>*