

## BOROONDARA CEMETERY, SPRINGTHORPE MEMORIAL

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Original Use: Memorial  
Date of Construction: 1897<sup>14</sup>  
Architect: Harold Desbrowe Annear<sup>15</sup>

DESIGNATION A  
CITATION NO.79

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### HISTORY AND DESCRIPTION

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<sup>16</sup>. The planning of the cemetery was carried out by J.F. Higgins of the Lands Department<sup>17</sup> 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<sup>18</sup>.

Dr John Springthorpe commissioned this memorial to be built for his wife, Annie, who died in January 1897<sup>19</sup>. Likened to a classic Greek doric temple<sup>20</sup>, the marble sculpting of the tomb was carried out by Bertram McKennal<sup>21</sup> while the iron sculpture was executed by Webb Gilbert<sup>22</sup>. An article in the *Argus* at the time considered the memorial to be '...the most beautiful work of its kind in Australia...'<sup>23</sup>. 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<sup>24</sup>, 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.



### SIGNIFICANCE

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.

### HERITAGE LISTINGS

HBR: Registered No.522.

GBR: N/A

RNE: Recommended for inclusion on the register.

National Trust: Classified No.1556

<sup>1</sup> Clerehan, N., 'Three Tombs', in *Historic Environment*, Vol.2, No.4, 1982, p.23

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> Barnard, F.G.A., *The Jubilee History of Kew*, p.104

<sup>4</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> Clerehan, *op.cit.*, p.28

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

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

<sup>9</sup> National Trust of Aust.(Vic), *loc.cit.*

<sup>10</sup> *Argus*, 26 March 1933, quoted in HBC, *ibid.*

<sup>11</sup> Clerehan *op. cit.*, p.26