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## CHRONOLOGY

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## **Introduction**

*This chapter contains a brief record of significant events that have impacted on Victoria since European settlement (1770 - 1995).*

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- 1770** First recorded sighting by Europeans of the south coast of Australia, at Point Hicks, by the expedition of Captain James Cook, R.N.
- 1788** Colony of New South Wales founded by Captain Arthur Phillip, R.N., at Sydney Cove.
- 1797** First recorded landing on the south coast of Australia, near Point Hicks; this was by a shipwrecked crew.
- 1798** Western Port first entered by George Bass, Surgeon, R.N., who landed on Phillip Island, named Cape Woolamai, and discovered the western passage. Existence of Bass Strait established by Bass and Lieutenant Matthew Flinders, R.N., later in the year.
- 1800** Lieutenant James Grant, R.N., the first to sail through Bass Strait from the west, discovered and named several capes and islands, including Capes Bridgewater, Nelson, Otway, Patton, and Liptrap, Lawrence Rocks, and Lady Julia Percy Island.
- 1801** Grant entered Western Port through the western passage; his party sowed wheat and other seeds on Churchill Island.
- 1802** Port Phillip Bay discovered and entered by Acting Lieutenant John Murray, R.N. On 9 March, Murray took formal possession of the port in the King's name. Victorian coast explored by French expedition under Nicholas Baudin, making an eight day survey of Western Port and naming various bays and capes. Port Phillip Bay entered, examined, and charted by Commander Matthew Flinders, R.N.
- 1803** A party under Charles Grimes, Acting Surveyor-General of New South Wales, made a land survey of the shores of Port Phillip Bay and rowed up the Yarra River to the approximate site of the future settlement of Melbourne. Grimes' map showed, for the first time, the whole coast of Port Phillip Bay. Lieutenant-Colonel David Collins, with a party of convicts and a few free settlers, attempted a settlement at Sullivan Bay, about 1.6 kilometres from the present site of Sorrento.
- 1804** On 30 January, the Sullivan Bay settlement was abandoned.
- 1824** Hamilton Hume and William Hilton Hovell, having travelled overland from Lake George in southern New South Wales, reached a river which they named the Hume, and later arrived at Corio Bay.
- 1826** Captain Samuel Wright with a party of convicts reached Western Port to form a settlement. He took possession of the site (Corinella) on 13 December.
- 1828** The Western Port settlement was abandoned in April.
- 1830** Captain Charles Sturt, on an expedition to trace the course of the Murrumbidgee River, entered and named the Murray River, a part of which had previously been known as the Hume River.
- 1834** Edward Henty established the first permanent settlement in Victoria, at Portland Bay on 19 November.

- 1835** John Batman, as agent for the Port Phillip Association, arrived at Port Phillip from Van Diemen's Land. He made a treaty in June with the Aborigines for 243,000 hectares of land and chose the site of the future Melbourne. The British Government later refused to validate the treaty. Governor Sir Richard Bourke issued a proclamation, claiming the Port Phillip District as part of the Colony of New South Wales. In August, John Pascoe Fawkner's associates settled on the site of Melbourne, followed by Fawkner and his family in October. New South Wales overlanders began the southern movement into the Port Phillip District.
- 1836** First Population Census of the Port Phillip District taken in May: 142 males, 35 females. Major Thomas Mitchell journeyed through the western portion (Australia Felix) of the Port Phillip District. Proclamation of the Port Phillip District as open for settlement. Captain William Lonsdale appointed magistrate to superintend the settlement.
- 1837** Death of King William IV; accession of Queen Victoria. First post office established at Melbourne. Inspection of site and naming of future township 'Melbourne' (after the British Prime Minister, Viscount Melbourne) by Sir Richard Bourke. Robert Hoddle surveyed and planned the township (now the inner city area of Melbourne), based on an earlier design of Robert Russell and also surveyed the immediate area of the Port Phillip District into land parishes. Bourke approved the plan of the township and named the main streets. First land sales were in June. By December, estimated population of Port Phillip District was 1,264.
- 1838** The *Melbourne Advertiser*, written by hand, first issued by Fawkner. First overland mail from Melbourne to Sydney. Publication of first number of Port Phillip Gazette, Melbourne's first licensed newspaper. First banks opened in Melbourne for general banking business.
- 1839** Charles Joseph La Trobe appointed Superintendent of the Port Phillip District, arriving on 30 September. First general insurance company opened in Melbourne. Angus McMillan explored Gippsland, continuing until 1841. First mail despatched direct from Port Phillip District to England.
- 1840** The *Port Phillip Herald* newspaper (later *The Herald*) first published. Count Paul Strzelecki reached Melbourne after exploration in Gippsland. A public meeting sought separation of the Port Phillip District from New South Wales.
- 1841** Independent Chapel, Russell Street, opened (replaced by present Independent Church in 1866). First resident judge appointed for Port Phillip District. First mail direct from England. First issue of a Government Gazette for the District. Foundation stone of St Francis' Church, Lonsdale Street, laid. Wesleyan Chapel, Collins Street, opened. First Melbourne market opened. Boundaries of town of Geelong defined. First official post office for the Port Phillip District opened on site of Elizabeth Street G.P.O.
- 1842** Royal Assent given to an Act for the Government of New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land by which the Port Phillip District was entitled to be represented by six of the 24 elected members of the Legislative Council of New South Wales. Melbourne incorporated as a town. First Town Council elected, with Henry Condel as Mayor.
- 1843** Port Phillip District divided into four squatting districts: Gipps' Land, Murray, Western Port, and Portland Bay.
- 1844** Petition for separation from New South Wales sent from Port Phillip to England.
- 1845** First government offices built. Site chosen for Botanic Gardens.

- 1846** Foundation stone of first Melbourne Hospital laid. The *Argus* newspaper founded. Melbourne Botanic Gardens founded. Fifth squatting district, Wimmera, gazetted.
- 1847** Mail service between Melbourne and Adelaide inaugurated.
- 1848** Two bishops installed in Melbourne - Dr Perry in St James' Anglican Cathedral, and Dr Goold in St Francis' Roman Catholic Pro-Cathedral. National and Denominational Schools Boards established. Melbourne Hospital opened.
- 1849** Royal Letters Patent signed in 1847, designating Melbourne a city, proclaimed. Successful culmination of campaign against attempts by British Government to use the District as a convict settlement when La Trobe prevented a landing of convicts from the transport ship *Randolph*. Experimental use of gas for illumination of Melbourne. Geelong incorporated as a town.
- 1850** An Act for the better government of the Australian Colonies given Royal Assent; this Act separated the Port Phillip District from the Colony of New South Wales, created the Colony of Victoria, and granted it representative government. The first trade union in Victoria, the Operative Stonemasons Society, established. Victoria's own postage introduced. La Trobe officially opened the first masonry Prince's Bridge, which replaced the previous wooden structure.
- 1851** Separation Act proclaimed and La Trobe became Lieutenant-Governor of Victoria. First meeting of Legislative Council held. 'Black Thursday', 47.2°C temperature and destructive bushfires. Gold discovered at Andersons Creek (Warrandyte), Clunes, Ballarat, Castlemaine, Bendigo, and Daylesford as well as on the Mitta Mitta and several other Gippsland Rivers.
- 1852** Gold discovered at Wedderburn, Heathcote, and Beechworth. Beginning of the overseas gold rush immigration to Victoria. Supreme Court and other courts of law established. The first enterprise to supply gas (the City of Melbourne Gas and Coke Co.) formed, and the first gasworks erected.
- 1853** Gold discovered at Maldon, Stawell, Avoca, Dunolly, Steiglitz, Rushworth, and Buckland River. Bank of Victoria opened. Dr F.J.H. (later Baron Sir Ferdinand) von Mueller appointed Government Botanist. Road districts (the origin of the present shires) established. A permanent quarantine station established at Point Nepean. Work commenced on Yan Yean Reservoir. Legal registration of births, marriages, and deaths provided for by the Registration Act. Coaching firm Cobb & Co. founded. First Murray River paddle steamer *Lady Augusta* sailed upstream as far as Swan Hill.
- 1854** Gold discovered at Ararat, Maryborough, and Beaufort. Telegraphic communication established between Melbourne and Williamstown. Sir Charles Hotham appointed Lieutenant-Governor. Opening of the first Australian railway by Melbourne and Hobson's Bay Railway Company - Melbourne to Sandridge (Port Melbourne). *The Age* newspaper founded. Riots on Ballarat goldfields, culminating in the action at the Eureka Stockade. Municipal institutions established. First Health Act proclaimed. National Museum opened in La Trobe Street.
- 1855** University of Melbourne opened with Redmond (later Sir Redmond) Barry as first Chancellor. Victorian Constitution Act proclaimed. Eastern Market established. Death of Sir Charles Hotham. Gold discovered at Blackwood and St Arnaud.

- 1856** Lying-in Hospital (now Royal Women's Hospital) established. Melbourne Public Library opened. Eight hours of work per day agreed upon by employers and unions in the building trades - later extended to most other trades. First Parliament in Victoria under responsible government opened in new building at Spencer Street, Melbourne. Beginning of public ownership of railways by acquisition of the Melbourne, Mount Alexander, and Murray River Railway Company by the Victorian Government. H.M.V.S. *Victoria*, first ship of the Victorian Navy, arrived.
- 1857** Melbourne's streets lit by gas. Universal adult male suffrage adopted for Legislative Assembly. Zoological Society of Victoria founded. Victoria's first rural railway commenced operating between Melbourne and Geelong. National Herbarium established. Brown coal discovered at Lal Lal.
- 1858** Telegraphic communication established between Sydney, Melbourne, and Adelaide. First Land Selection (Nicholson) Act passed.
- 1860** Burke and Wills expedition left Melbourne for the Gulf of Carpentaria; the leaders later perished at Coopers Creek on the return journey. Building of St Patrick's Roman Catholic Cathedral begun.
- 1861** The first Melbourne Cup run (won by *Archer*). The first Conference of Australian Statisticians held in Melbourne.
- 1862** Bendigo and Ballarat railways opened. Common schools brought under control of Board of Education. Torrens transfer of land system adopted in Victoria. The first medical school in Australia established at the University of Melbourne. Duffy Land Act in operation.
- 1865** The Melbourne Stock Exchange established. Victoria's first woollen mill established at Geelong. Grant Land Act proclaimed.
- 1866** First stages of the tariff protection policy adopted by Victoria.
- 1867** Electric light illuminations in Melbourne for H.R.H. The Duke of Edinburgh's visit. Melbourne GPO building opened.
- 1869** First life assurance company established in Victoria. The Homeopathic (later Prince Henry's) Hospital and the Melbourne Institution for Diseases of the Eye and Ear (later the Royal Victorian Eye and Ear Hospital) opened.
- 1870** Ballarat School of Mines and Industries opened. Children's Hospital opened on a site in Russell Street, Melbourne.
- 1871** Alfred Hospital opened.
- 1872** Branch of Royal Mint opened in Melbourne. The Education Act created the Department of Public Instruction to administer the system of free, secular, and compulsory education. Department of Agriculture established.
- 1873** Education Act came into operation. Bendigo School of Mines and Industries established. Horse trams commenced operation in Melbourne.
- 1874** First Victorian Factories Act and Local Government Act passed. Government Statistics Office established. First Victorian Year Book published.

- 1877** Melbourne Harbour Trust established. First Test Cricket match (England vs Australia) held in Melbourne. State aid to denominational schools abolished.
- 1878** Metropolitan Gas Company established. Government ownership of railways extended by purchase of Melbourne and Hobson's Bay Railway Company. Payment of members of Legislative Assembly approved by Legislative Council.
- 1879** First inter-colonial trade union congress held in Melbourne. Main Gippsland railway completed. The Exhibition Building was constructed in readiness for the Melbourne International Exhibition of 1880 (the building was designated 'Royal' by Queen Elizabeth II in 1980).
- 1880** A mail service between Victoria and England, running at fortnightly intervals, commenced. Women admitted to University of Melbourne under an 1879 Act. Foundation stone of St Paul's Anglican Cathedral, Melbourne, laid. First electric lighting company in Victoria formed. Ned Kelly, bushranger, captured and later tried and hanged. First Australian telephone exchange opened in Melbourne; it was privately owned and operated by the Melbourne Telephone Exchange Co. Ltd. First International Exhibition to be held in Melbourne opened.
- 1882** Austin Hospital opened. New Law Courts in William Street, Melbourne opened.
- 1883** Victorian Railways Commissioners constituted. Victorian and New South Wales railway system (Melbourne to Sydney) linked at Albury, but with change of gauge. Water Conservation Act passed.
- 1884** First Public Service Board for Victoria established.
- 1885** First cable tramway in Victoria began operating from Melbourne to Richmond. Victoria accepted the Federal Council of Australasia Act of 1885.
- 1886** Irrigation Act passed; building of Goulburn Weir authorised.
- 1887** The Working Men's College, later renamed the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, opened with an enrolment of 300. Government acquired the private telephone company. Melbourne and Adelaide linked by rail. Chaffey brothers began the Mildura irrigation settlement and the Victorian Government began the first waterworks scheme, a weir on the Goulburn River. Coode Canal, constructed to facilitate shipping on the Yarra River, was completed.
- 1888** Weekly mail contract between Australia and England commenced. Centennial International Exhibition in Melbourne.
- 1889** Queen's Bridge, Melbourne, opened.
- 1890** Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works created by statute. Great maritime strike commenced in Melbourne. The Fire Brigades Act established the metropolitan and nine country fire brigades.
- 1892** Rich gold finds at Coolgardie in Western Australia attracted large numbers of persons from Victoria.
- 1893** Widespread unemployment. Bank failures and moratorium. Victoria Dock opened. St Vincent's Hospital opened.

- 1895** Income tax first imposed in Victoria. Serious drought commenced; it continued until 1902.
- 1896** Wages boards established under Factories and Shops Act. Metropolitan sewerage system inaugurated. Queen Victoria Memorial Hospital opened.
- 1897** Formation of the Victorian Football League (VFL).
- 1898** The final sitting of the Federal Convention to determine the various requirements for Federation held in Melbourne. A draft Bill to constitute the Commonwealth of Australia was framed and adopted for submission to a popular referendum of the various Colonies represented.
- 1899** Referendum on amended Federal Constitution Bill accepted by Victoria. Plural voting abolished for Victorian Parliament. First Victorian troops left for the South African War.
- 1900** Royal Assent to the Commonwealth of Australia Constitution Act of 1900. Old age pension scheme adopted under Victorian Government statute; replaced by Commonwealth scheme in 1909.
- 1901** Death of Queen Victoria. Accession of King Edward VII. First Commonwealth Parliament opened in Exhibition Building, Melbourne. The Commonwealth Parliament was to meet in Melbourne using the Victorian parliamentary chambers until Commonwealth chambers could be provided at a site to be chosen. First Federal Ministry formed. Interstate free trade established. Recommendations of a commission of inquiry led to reorganisation of the Victorian education system.
- 1902** End of the South African War. Completion of Pacific cable.
- 1903** The High Court of Australia and the Victorian Industrial Appeals Court established.
- 1904** Royal Assent to Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Act 1904.
- 1905** The Pure Food Act passed. The Geelong Harbour Trust and the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission established. The first State secondary school, Melbourne High School, founded.
- 1906** Wireless telegraphy in operation between Queenscliff and Devonport, Tasmania. The first electric tramway, running from Flemington Bridge to Essendon, opened.
- 1907** The first interstate telephone service, from Sydney to Melbourne, commenced. The 'Harvester' award, which became the basis of the basic wage, handed down. Revival of assisted immigration.
- 1908** The Yass-Canberra district selected as the site of the Federal capital. The State Coal Mine established at Wonthaggi.
- 1909** Commonwealth age pensions scheme established. Victorian quarantine powers transferred to the Commonwealth. First Commonwealth-States Financial Agreement.
- 1910** Houdini made the first aeroplane flight in Victoria. Death of King Edward VII; accession of King George V. Printing of Australian bank notes commenced in Melbourne. Geelong proclaimed a city. Victorian Electoral Act granted full adult suffrage for the Legislative Assembly. Education Act providing for State wide network of high schools passed.



- 1911** Commonwealth introduced compulsory military training for males aged between 14 and 18 years.
- 1912** The Royal Australian Navy established a naval base at Crib Point. The first automatic telephone exchange in Australia opened at Geelong. First shore-to-ship radio communication station for Victorian waters opened in Melbourne. Royal Assent to Commonwealth Maternity Allowance Act 1912.
- 1913** Establishment of Country Roads Board. First Commonwealth Savings Bank and General Banking Department established in Victoria. First Commonwealth postage stamps issued.
- 1914** Commencement of First World War; first detachment of the Australian Imperial Force (AIF) left for overseas service.
- 1915** Landing of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (ANZACs) at Gallipoli. Melbourne and Metropolitan Tramways Board appointed. River Murray Waters Agreement signed.
- 1916** The ANZACs evacuated from Gallipoli. Commonwealth Serum Laboratories established. First referendum on conscription rejected. Six p.m. closing of hotels introduced. Open cut operations on Morwell brown coal deposits commenced.
- 1917** Closer settlement scheme for ex-servicemen initiated in Victoria. First aeroplane flight from Sydney to Melbourne. Dr Daniel Mannix installed as Roman Catholic Archbishop of Melbourne. Second referendum on conscription rejected.
- 1918** End of First World War. Establishment of Forests Commission.
- 1919** The State Electricity Commission and the Melbourne and Metropolitan Tramways Board established. Completion of first section of electrification of Victorian metropolitan railways.
- 1920** Walter and Eliza Hall Institute inaugurated.
- 1921** First direct wireless press message from England to Australia.
- 1923** Police strike in Melbourne.
- 1924** First transmission to Melbourne of power generated from Yallourn brown coal; production of brown coal briquettes began. Victoria's first broadcasting station, 3AR Melbourne, licensed; it was privately operated until 1929. Australian Loan Council formed. Plans to electrify Melbourne's tram system announced.
- 1926** Baker Medical Research Institute established. Establishment of Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (later Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization [CSIRO]).
- 1927** Seat of Commonwealth Government transferred from Melbourne to Canberra; first meeting of Commonwealth Parliament at Canberra.
- 1928** Revised Commonwealth-States Financial Agreement 1927, accepted by referendum.
- 1929** Loan Council took over States' debts.

- 1930** Effects of world wide economic depression included growing unemployment. Sir Isaac Isaacs of Melbourne appointed as first Australian born Governor-General. Melbourne's Spencer Street Bridge opened.
- 1931** Death of world famous soprano, Dame Nellie Melba, who was born at Richmond in 1861. Commonwealth Financial Emergency Act 1931 ('Premiers' Plan') proclaimed. Death of General Sir John Monash, Australian military leader in the First World War and first chairman of the State Electricity Commission.
- 1933** The Australian Broadcasting Commission and the Transport Regulation Board established.
- 1934** The Victorian Centenary celebrations opened, and the Shrine of Remembrance was dedicated. Scott and Black won the London to Melbourne Centenary Air Race.
- 1936** Death of King George V; King Edward VIII proclaimed; abdication of King Edward VIII and accession of King George VI. Telephone service between Tasmania and Victoria opened. Commonwealth Aircraft Corporation established. Hume Reservoir officially opened.
- 1937** Mining disaster at Wonthaggi Coal Mine: 13 persons killed. Outbreak of poliomyelitis caused 113 deaths.
- 1938** Severe Australia wide coal strike. Housing Commission of Victoria established.
- 1939** Disastrous bushfires ('Black Friday') followed a long period of drought and very high temperatures in Victoria. The fires killed 71 persons. The first locally-built service aircraft, *Wirraway No. 1*, made its first test flight. Outbreak of Second World War.
- 1940** Australia wide coal strike severely affected transport services. Petrol rationing introduced due to the need to conserve supplies of fuel. Cable trams ceased operating, having been superseded by electric services and buses.
- 1941** Child endowment payments commenced. Curtin Federal (Australian Labor Party) Ministry succeeded the Menzies and Fadden (United Australia Party - Country Party coalition) Ministries. Outbreak of War with Japan. Inauguration of new beam radio service between Australia and the United States of America.
- 1942** Fall of Singapore to Japanese forces, and capture of greater part of the 8th Division, Second AIF. Restrictions on non-essential manufactured goods, rationing of commodities, and price control introduced. Uniform taxation introduced for Australia. Japanese attacks on east coast shipping. Premiers' Conference in Melbourne for discussions on wartime policy with Prime Minister. Limited hotel trading hours (10 a.m. to 6 p.m.) introduced in Melbourne metropolitan area.
- 1943** Ministry of Health Act brought all matters of public health under jurisdiction of Minister of Health. Price stabilisation scheme for Australia introduced.
- 1944** 'Pay as you earn' income taxation plan adopted. The Town and Country Planning Board and the Country Fire Authority established.
- 1945** Cessation of Second World War. First group of returned prisoners of war of the Japanese reached Victoria.

- 1946** Commonwealth-States Housing Agreement.
- 1947** Australian National Antarctic Research Expedition (ANARE) established a scientific research station on Heard Island. Arrival of first 'displaced persons' from Europe under the post-war planned migration scheme.
- 1948** Introduction of the 40 hour week. The Hospitals and Charities Commission and the Cancer Institute established.
- 1949** A State of Emergency proclaimed throughout Victoria during the seven week general coal strike which severely affected transport, fuel, light, and power. Chifley Federal (ALP) Ministry succeeded by Menzies (Liberal-Country Party) Ministry. Introduction of metropolitan planning scheme under the control of the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works. Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization (CSIRO) established to take over functions of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research.
- 1950** Mental Hygiene Authority established within the Health Department. Two month Melbourne tramway strike. Adult suffrage adopted for Legislative Council. The Portland Harbour Trust and the Gas and Fuel Corporation of Victoria established.
- 1951** Commonwealth National Service Act passed. Inauguration of first regular air service between Melbourne and New Zealand. Field-Marshal Sir Thomas Blamey, the only Australian to have achieved such military rank, died.
- 1952** Death of King George VI and accession of Queen Elizabeth II. St Vincent's School of Medical Research established.
- 1954** Establishment of Mawson research station; first Australian permanent base on Antarctic continent. First visit to Australia by a reigning monarch, H.M. Queen Elizabeth II accompanied by H.R.H. The Duke of Edinburgh. 'Tattersall' sweep consultations transferred to Victoria from Hobart.
- 1955** Power generated by first completed section of Snowy Mountains Hydro-Electric Scheme.
- 1956** Olympic Games opened in Melbourne by H.R.H. The Duke of Edinburgh. First Australian television station HSV7 commenced transmission. H.R.H. The Duke of Edinburgh made the first Freeman of the City of Melbourne. Traffic Commission established. Opening of Lurgi brown coal gasification plant at Morwell.
- 1958** Victorian Government signed Snowy Mountains Hydro-Electric Scheme Agreement. Regular global air service inaugurated from Melbourne Airport, Essendon. Integration of Commonwealth and State statistical services.
- 1959** Opening of Sidney Myer Music Bowl, Melbourne. Inauguration of the Melbourne to Devonport (Tasmania) ferry service by the Princess of Tasmania. Petroliferous gas flow discovered near Port Campbell. Electricity from the Snowy Mountains Hydro-Electric Scheme became available to Victoria.
- 1960** Opening of the all-weather deep-sea harbour at Portland. Subscriber trunk dialling (STD) telephone system introduced in Victoria.
- 1961** Monash University opened. National Heart Foundation established.

- 1962** Opening of the standard gauge railway system between Melbourne and Sydney. Coaxial cable system between Canberra, Sydney, and Melbourne opened. First stage of South Eastern Freeway opened. Royal Commission investigated failure of section of new King Street bridge. British Commonwealth trans-Pacific cable opened.
- 1963** Death of Dr Mannix, Roman Catholic Archbishop of Melbourne since 1917. Commencement of inquires of Royal Commission on Victorian liquor laws.
- 1965** Victoria Institute of Colleges established. The La Trobe Library (part of the State Library of Victoria) opened. Tests showed good natural gas flow off the Gippsland coast.
- 1966** Women became eligible for jury service in Victoria. Liquor law reforms, including extension of hotel trading hours to 10 p.m., came into operation in Victoria. Introduction of decimal currency. Australia's first offshore oil discovered in Bass Strait. Broadband microwave trunkline telephone service inaugurated between Melbourne and other cities. Automatic telex system introduced.
- 1967** Increasingly severe drought. La Trobe University opened. Postcode system introduced for mail. Disappearance of Prime Minister, Rt Hon. H. E. Holt at Portsea.
- 1968** Senator J. G. Gorton became Prime Minister. Severe drought ended. New National Gallery of Victoria, the first stage of the Victorian Arts Centre, opened. State Coal Mine at Wonthaggi closed. Uniform Commonwealth-State censorship laws became operative.
- 1969** Connection of natural gas to consumers commenced; the Lurgi brown coal gasification plant at Morwell closed. Equal pay for men and women began to be implemented. First section of Tullamarine Freeway opened.
- 1970** Dartmouth Dam Agreement signed by the Commonwealth, Victorian, New South Wales, and South Australian Governments. The Royal family visited Melbourne and parts of Victoria. Whole of Tullamarine Freeway, second stage of the South Eastern Freeway, and the new Melbourne Airport, Tuillamarine, opened. The \$33m natural gas fractionation plant opened at Long Island, Western Port. Collapse of section of West Gate Bridge resulted in 35 deaths; it was followed by a Royal Commission to inquire into the disaster. Legislation concerning the wearing of seat belts in certain motor vehicles introduced in Victoria. Melbourne's conversion to natural gas was completed at a cost of \$30m.
- 1971** The Victorian Premier opened the new Mercy Maternity Hospital, East Melbourne. The Victorian Premier opened a \$26 million extension to a refinery at Altona. Domestic airline operations were transferred from Essendon Airport to the new Melbourne Airport at Tullamarine.
- 1972** Melbourne suffered the heaviest city downpour ever recorded (78 mm fell within one hour) in February. The Victorian Government bought Corpus Christi College at Glen Waverley for a police training academy. First of Melbourne's stainless steel suburban electric trains came into service.
- 1973** The Victorian Government provided almost \$1m to drought stricken areas. Legislation was approved to give 18 year olds the vote. The Victorian Education Department introduced a special entrance test for universities, advanced colleges, and teachers colleges. Cardinia Reservoir, Melbourne's largest water storage, was opened. The State College of Victoria took over administration of Teachers Colleges. Victoria's first Ombudsman was appointed.

- 1974** The 106 year old Rippon Lea Estate in Elsternwick was acquired by the National Trust of Australia (Victoria). Legislation giving Victoria full control over its Constitution was introduced. Metric road signs were introduced.
- 1975** Transfer of overall responsibility for Aboriginal affairs to the Commonwealth became effective. Colour transmission commenced on Melbourne's four television channels. Capital punishment was abolished in Victoria. First awards of the Order of Australia honours were announced.
- 1976** A Film Corporation, later known as Film Victoria, was commissioned.
- 1977** Five persons were killed and the town of Streatham destroyed when major bushfires burned through large areas of the Western District. H.M. Queen Elizabeth II and H.R.H. The Duke of Edinburgh were greeted in Melbourne on the Silver Jubilee Tour of Victoria. Australia won the Centenary Test Match at the Melbourne Cricket Ground, defeating England by 45 runs. A majority of the State Premiers at a special Premiers' conference held in Canberra opposed a plan to give each State the power to raise its own income tax. Nauru House, Melbourne's tallest office building to date, 52 storeys, was opened. The Victorian Football League Grand Final was televised live for the first time. Power restrictions followed an industrial stoppage in the La Trobe Valley.
- 1978** Sir Robert Menzies, founder of the Liberal Party and former Prime Minister, died at his home in Malvern. The first major tram extension since 1956 was opened to East Burwood. The Premier officially opened the West Gate Bridge.
- 1979** The Victorian Universities and Schools Examination Board ceased operating and its functions were transferred to the Victorian Institute of Secondary Education. Victoria's four Universities agreed to a new assessment procedure for the Higher School Certificate. Dartmouth Dam on the Mitta Mitta River in north-east Victoria was opened by the Governor-General.
- 1980** The City Square was officially opened by H.M. The Queen. Australia's first 'test tube' baby was born at the Royal Women's Hospital, Melbourne. Prospectors, using a metal detector, discovered a 27.2 kilogram gold nugget at Kingower, near Bendigo.
- 1981** The first stage of the Melbourne underground rail loop was opened to traffic, ten years after construction work commenced. Legislation to restructure the Melbourne City Council was introduced into the Victorian Parliament. H. M. The Queen arrived in Melbourne for a 7 day visit. Heads of State from 41 countries visited Melbourne for the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, lasting 7 days and held in the Royal Exhibition Building.
- 1982** Most parts of Victoria were affected by a severe drought. The Omega Navigation Station in south Gippsland was officially opened. The Melbourne Concert Hall was officially opened.
- 1983** On 2 February fires destroyed 24 homes and over 6,000 hectares of land at Mt Macedon. On 8 February Melbourne experienced its worst ever dust storm and recorded its highest-ever February temperature (43.2°C). On 16 February a State of Emergency was called when huge fires, fed by high temperatures and strong winds, spread through many parts of the State. The fires, referred to as the 'Ash Wednesday' bushfires, resulted in 48 deaths, destroyed over 1,700 homes, and burned over an area of approximately 210,000 hectares. The first Australian death of the disease Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) was reported in Melbourne. Western District potato farmer Cliff Young (aged 61 years) became a national hero after winning the first Sydney to Melbourne ultra-distance marathon.

- 1984** The Medicare Health Scheme, financed by a one per cent levy on income tax, was introduced by the Federal Government. The Victorian Arts Centre was officially opened. The Neighbourhood Watch Program was introduced in an effort to help reduce home burglaries. Sunday games of Victorian Football League football were introduced. Deregulation of the Banks by the Federal Government.
- 1985** The Cain Labor government re-elected with a reduced majority, the first time that a Labor Government in Victoria had been elected for a successive term. The major retailer G J Coles Ltd took over the Myer Emporium to form Coles Myer Ltd.
- 1986** A car bomb explosion outside the Russell Street Police Headquarters in Melbourne resulted in the death of Constable Angela Taylor, and the injury of 21 other people. The *Southern Aurora* and *Spirit of Progress* trains were combined to form the Melbourne Sydney Express.
- 1987** Five people were killed and eleven others were injured when gunman Julian Knight opened fire in Hoddle Street Clifton Hill. A world-wide stock market crash occurred in October. Gunman Frank Vitkovic shot dead nine people and wounded five others in a Melbourne office block before jumping 11 storeys to his death. Victorian Pat Cash won the Wimbledon men's singles tennis championship.
- 1988** The National Tennis Centre (Flinders Park) was opened. A two dollar coin went into circulation to replace the note, while a plastic/polymer \$10 banknote was launched to commemorate Australia's bicentenary.
- 1989** The Victorian Division of the National Safety Council was found to have debts amounting to \$180m. Three Sunday newspapers began publication in Melbourne. The Victorian Football League (VFL) became the Australian Football League (AFL).
- 1990** The State Bank of Victoria announced a loss of over \$1.3b, the largest loss in Australia's corporate history. Victoria's largest building society (Pyramid) collapsed. One and two cent coins went out of circulation. The Melbourne *Herald* and the *Sun-News Pictorial* newspapers merged to become the *Herald-Sun*.
- 1991** The State Bank of Victoria was purchased by (and merged with) the Commonwealth Bank of Australia. The Australian Securities Commission commenced operations, replacing the State bodies which had previously been responsible for the regulation of companies and securities. The Australian Republican Movement was launched. Prince Henry's Hospital in St. Kilda Road was officially closed. The Victorian Government passed the Gaming Machine Control Act, which allowed the introduction of poker machines into clubs and hotels. Compass Airlines, which commenced operations in late 1990, went into receivership.
- 1992** Poker and other gambling machines began operating in Victoria for the first time. Swanston Street Melbourne was closed to traffic to create Swanston Walk. Monash Medical Centre at Clayton was officially opened. The Kirner Labor Government in Victoria was defeated by the Liberal-National Party Coalition, which obtained the largest majority in the Legislative Assembly since the Second World War. Optus Communications began operations, in competition with Telecom (now Telstra) for international and long distance telephone calls. The first Anglican women priests in Victoria were ordained at St. Paul's Cathedral.