



Selected Chronology — European settlement of the Port Phillip District of Victoria

- c. 50,000+ BP Earliest evidence of human occupation of Australia.
- c. 12,000 BP Rising sea levels separated Tasmania from the Australian mainland.
- AD 1642 Dutch navigator Abel Tasman landed in Tasmania and named it Van Diemen's Land.
- 1770 British navigator Captain James Cook sailed up the east coast of the Australia.
- 1788 Governor Arthur Phillip and his 'First Fleet' arrived in Australia and established the first British settlement at Sydney Cove, New South Wales.
- 1798 George Bass proved that Van Diemen's Land was separated from the Australian mainland by the strait that was subsequently named after him.
- 1803 A British settlement was established at Risdon Cove, Van Diemen's Land and soon moved to the current site of Hobart.
- An attempt to establish a British settlement at Port Phillip, on the north coast of Bass Strait was a failure. However, a number of convicts had escaped from the short-lived settlement and one of them, William Buckley, lived with Aboriginal groups for the next 32 years.
- 1806 A British settlement was established at Launceston in northern Van Diemen's Land.
- 1824 Hamilton Hume and William Hovel completed an overland journey from Sydney to Port Phillip, reporting favourably on the land they found.
- 1825 The colony Van Diemen's Land became independent from New South Wales.
- 1834 Edward Henty led a small group from Launceston to establish a farming settlement at Portland, west of Port Phillip Bay.
- 1835 John Batman arrived in Port Phillip from Launceston and signed what he described as a 'treaty' with Aboriginal leaders, exchanging goods such as blankets and axes for Aboriginal land. John Fawkner also arrived in Port Phillip from Launceston soon after Batman and more European settlers followed.
- 1837 With a population nearing 600, the European settlement at Port Phillip was named Melbourne.
- 1851 The Port Phillip District was separated from New South Wales to form the new colony of Victoria. Major gold discoveries were made in New South Wales and Victoria.
- 1856 The colony of Van Diemen's Land changed its name to Tasmania.
- 1871 By 1871 Melbourne (pop. 191,000) had overtaken Sydney (pop. 138,000) as Australia's largest city.
- 1882 The monument to John Batman as founder of Melbourne was unveiled.
- 1885 By the 1880s Melbourne was one of the largest and most vibrant cities in the British Empire and locals delighted in the description 'Marvellous Melbourne' used by visiting journalist George Augustus Sala.