

Development of Richmond from 1835

1835

John Batman came from Tasmania in search of land. He met with aborigines from the Doutta Galla tribe. He exchanged goods such as blankets, crockery, cutlery and axes for some half a million acres of land, formalizing the agreement in a contract. This contract was later deemed void. Melbourne grew very quickly and soon the large number of people living together without drains, good roads, sewerage or even a clean water supply meant that life was very uncomfortable and unhealthy. Wealthy businessmen and land speculators were looking for a place to reside outside of the city. Richmond and Collingwood were beautiful country areas surrounded by the river. The land was mostly flat with only a few hills. Many accounts refer to the splendid countryside of well timbered bush, with many large gum trees, wattles and weeping willows around the river. The first building was thought to be a bushman's hut in South Richmond.

1837 Sept

Robert Hoddle conducted early surveys of the Richmond and Collingwood areas with the intention of establishing farms of approx 100 acres. This was rejected and he was directed to survey blocks of 25 acres to cater for future demand from the rapid expansion of Melbourne's population.

1838 Sept

A Survey plan consisting of 25 acre portions was submitted to the Deputy Survey General of NSW. They were classed as "rural retreats for gentlemen" and were approved for subdivision.

1839 Aug 1

First Land auctions -12 portions (21,22,23,24,25,26,36,37,38,39,46,47). The Rev. Joseph Docker purchased lots 21 and 22 for £24 and £15 an acre respectively. He planned to build a township called Clifton, with Docker Street as its main street. Although the prices of land varied, Richmond was more expensive than Collingwood and Fitzroy.

1839 Oct 3

Second Land auctions -10 portions (16,17,18,19,20,27,28,29,30,31).

1830s (late) Speculator's paradise

1840 March

Melbourne land prices had risen in 7 months from £24 per acre to £350 per acre. Working class people moved from Melbourne to the flats of Richmond and Collingwood. Rent was cheap and it was only 2 miles or a 20 minute walk from Melbourne. Richmond Hill became a fashionable place to live. Being on the hill the residents were safe from floods and all the other drainage that ran down to the flats. Richmond and Collingwood experienced quite a lot of flooding. In the first ten years there were recorded six floods and one snowstorm. In 1884 the Yarra rose to 36 feet deep at Dight's Falls, the flats of Collingwood, Richmond and Prahran, looked like a giant lake.

1840s (early)

Richmond Hill and Docker's Hill – were seen as the most fashionable places to live. Very soon private schools were established in the area.

1842

The name 'Richmond' was official recognised - previously referred to as part of the Parish of Jika Jika.

1842

One of the first industries to set up in the area was candle making. Gilbert Marshall set up his business making candles on the corner of Abinger & Church Streets.

A brick field was established in Richmond Terrace (Brick Street). Brick-making and quarrying continued into the early 20th century. The area had many outcrops of bluestone, which led to extensive quarrying and brick clay diggings.

The first punt across the Yarra was at end of Bridge Road near the present Hawthorn Bridge, started by Dr. Palmer. (Bridge Road originally called Government Road and later Richmond Road)

First Hotel in Richmond - The Richmond Hotel (later called The Fire Brigade Hotel) on the corner of Abinger & Church Streets opposite Marshall's Candles. The publican offered free transport to and from Melbourne. Race meetings were held on a large allotment opposite.

1843

Further industries developed including wine vaults, near Marshall's candle making

1844

The Yarra flooded once again.

1847

Melbourne Directory showed 16 manufacturers in Richmond –including bootmakers, carpenters and brickmakers.

1840s -1850s

Industry prospered as a result of population increases through the 1850s (a product of the gold rush). Rising meat consumption was leaving a sizeable by-product - skins. This resulted in a boom in the skin and leather industries

1840s (late)

Development continued rapidly including fellmongers, wool-scourers and tanners.

1850

Richmond Bridge built - near the site of the present Hawthorn Bridge at the end of Bridge.Road.

1851

Discovery of gold in regional areas caused a subsequent exodus of people to the goldfields.

Richmond workers could earn 20-30 shillings per day and rent a 2-room timber cottage for 30-40 shillings per week.

St Stephens Church of England, Church Street was opened

1852

A stockade at Richmond built near the banks of the Yarra at the end of Bridge road to the left of the bridge.

1850s

Industrial growth continued around the Yarra as the river provided a fresh water supply for industry. At this stage there was little industrial growth in Carlton and Fitzroy.

1853

First Victorian Amusement Park established at the Cremorne Gardens by James Ellis.

1854

Population of Richmond approximately 12,000

8 fellmongers, tanneries and wool-scourers were processing 5,000 sheep skins per week

1850 s mid

Manufacturing industries grew in Richmond. These included piano construction, coach building, forging, factory and house building. The retail sector boomed as city business proprietors realized that rents were cheaper in Richmond and surrounding suburbs.

1855 April 23

Richmond was declared a municipal district. (municipality 1855-1863).

1855

The stockade at Richmond was abandoned as others were built at Castlemaine and Beechworth.

A bridge built across the Yarra to the south

William Westgarth a merchant and a resident of Richmond, brought many German artisans and skilled labor is to Richmond to help meet the need for labor.

Only 36 Aboriginals remained in the Yarra Yarra tribe.

1856

The first council meeting was held at the Star and Garter Hotel, (the Australia hotel) now the Paddington coat company on the corner of Bridge Road and east side of Waltham Street.

George Seth Coppin bought and improved the Cremorne gardens – twelve acres of amusement park, two theaters, a trapeze, dance hall, zoo and two hotels. Until 1858, the only access was by foot or boat. The gondola Steamboat company was formed especially for the Cremorne gardens running half hourly from 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM between the city and the gardens.

1857

Richmond established their first rate books

1858 January 2

The first balloon ascent in the Australian colonies occurred at the Cremorne Gardens. The balloon was partially inflated at the Melbourne Gasometer in the city, and a further boost of gas was given from Coppin's own gasometer at the gardens.

1858 (late)

The first Richmond railway line and station were opened. – Coppin persuaded the Melbourne and Hobson's Bay Railway Company to run their line from Punt Road (East Melbourne) to Cremorne gardens .

1859

Yarraville in the northeast of Richmond became known as Yarraberg.

1861 May 19

Helen Mitchell (Dame Nellie Melba) born at Doonside , Burnley Street, Richmond.

1862 March

Richmond's first free public library was established.

1863

Richmond declared a borough 1863-1872

George Coppin spent over £100,000 on the Cremorne gardens, but sold for £14,000. as a lunatic asylum. The Rosella preserving company was built on the site, this may have been earlier known as the Cremorne preserving company.

1864

Richmond is again hit by further flooding of the Yarra.

1867

St Ignatius Roman Catholic Church opens up in Church street.

1869

Richmond Town Hall was built.

1870

The first traveling shop- a hot pie and potato traveling shop, drawn by a horse, was the first of its kind to appear in Richmond.

1872

Richmond planned a town (1872-1882)

1880 July 17

The first telephone service installed at Richmond-a private service from James Henty's offices in Collins Street to his home Richmond hill. Henty had the telephone wires strung from trees, through the Treasury and Fitzroy gardens, then along Bridge road to his residence.

1882

Richmond declared a city (1882-1994) then merged as the city of Yarra

1884

The first Victorian Horse Trams – one of the routes ran through Richmond to Hawthorn Bridge.

1885

A railway overpass built over Swan Street, replacing the railway gates.

1885 November

The first Victorian Cable Car ran from Hawthorn Bridge, Richmond to Spencer Street Melbourne.

1994

The councils of Richmond, Collingwood, Fitzroy and Alphington are amalgamated to form the City of Yarra.

2003

Victoria Gardens Shopping complex opens on the site of Vickers Ruwalt and formally Coles Nursery.

2003

Closure of Mayall Tannery in River Street. – the last of the tanneries operating in Richmond.

2004

Redevelopment of the Richmond Library

2004

The City of Richmond, Burnley and Cremorne are now designated as the Melba Ward of the City of Yarra. Two councillors preside of over the issues related to this area.