

My Place Website – Timeline Overview
1840s

| Decade Years | Decade Summary | Decade Key Event | Decade Snapshot |
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| <p>1840s</p> | <p>As colonisation expanded throughout the 1840s, and the British took ownership and control of the land without discussion or debate, Indigenous peoples continued to fight back to save their land and to survive. During the decade, many massacres took place across the country, the majority of which were unrecorded and the actual numbers of Indigenous people killed were never reported. In Van Diemen's Land, Port Phillip District, South Australia, New South Wales and Moreton Bay (later known as Queensland) conflict and violence peaked and without the use of guns, the Indigenous population suffered severely. This conflict is known as the 'Frontier Wars' when some Aboriginal groups united to fight against a common enemy to save their land. Prior to European colonisation Australia's Indigenous peoples had lived for thousands of years as a hunter-gatherer economy based on the varying environments across the country, which are also recognised as spiritual landscapes. There were territory boundaries that, although they were not written down, were clearly understood by all groups and passed on from one generation to the next. The rivers, mountain ranges and other landforms provided borders that were respected.</p> <p>During the 1840s, transportation of convicts to the east coast of Australia ended. This signified a change in status from a penal colony to a free society. The colonists wanted greater control over the political decision-making in local affairs, and as an example of this new found authority, Australia's first political election was conducted to vote in the mayor of Adelaide. The city had become Australia's first municipality having acquired a population of more than 2,000 people. South Australia also became a Crown colony during the 1840s, thus losing its semi-independent status.</p> | <p>History and Politics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Colonial politics • The Frontier Wars • Economic depression <p>Society and Culture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caroline Chisholm • Religion • Childhood • An artist's view <p>Science and Technology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The perils of the sea • Explorers • Inventions | <p>March</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Melbourne Hospital, the first public hospital opened and was renamed a century later, The Royal Melbourne Hospital. <p>April</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An expedition headed by Ludwig Leichhardt (1813-1848) set out from the Darling Downs to cross the continent of Australia travelling through its centre, but he and his expedition died en route, never to be found. • The first detachment of Native Police was transferred from New South Wales to Queensland under the command of Lieutenant Frederick Walker. <p>July</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One hundred and twenty Chinese migrants arrived from Amoy under an indenture system to work as shepherds in New South Wales. <p>August</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Cape Otway Lighthouse in Victoria was lit for the first time. • The Native Police Force in Queensland (sometimes called the Native Mounted Police) was formed. <p>December</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • John Roe (1797-1878) and Augustus |

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| | <p>The Port Phillip District (Victoria) grew rapidly and by the end of the 1840s it had more sheep (6 million) than population (about 70,000 people). During the decade its inhabitants increasingly wanted independence from New South Wales (NSW) and sent petitions to the British Government seeking permission to separate.</p> <p>In the early 1840s groups known as 'overlanders' began driving thousands of cattle and sheep overland from one colony to another. Drivers risked attack from the Aboriginal clans whose land they were traversing and sometimes occupying. The squatters (land owners/occupiers) challenged new regulations imposed by Governor George Gipps (1791–1847), surrounding the land issue and formed their own Mutual Protection Society.</p> <p>The exploration and renaming of the continent and its natural features continued during the 1840s gradually pushing out the boundaries of the known area of each colony. Most explorers were officially sponsored by the government and some were funded by private investors. During an expedition a map was drawn on which the leader of the expedition noted rivers, mountains, grass plains, deserts and Aboriginal communities encountered. Finding the locations of water systems, and arable lands for future settlement and farming was the primary motivation behind these explorations. But the government also wanted to control the leasing of land and to open up communication routes between colonies for trade. Exploration proved to be dangerous and some explorers such as Ludwig Leichhardt (1813–1848) and Edmund Kennedy (1818–1848) perished.</p> | | <p>Charles Gregory (1819-1905) explored the north-eastern areas of Western Australia.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• German and Hungarian refugees arrived in the colony having fled political upheaval in Europe. They were known as the 'forty-eighters' as they supported the 1848 revolutions. |
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