

Victoria's framework of historical themes...at a glance



01

Shaping Victoria's environment

... covers how Victoria's distinctive geology, landscapes, flora and fauna have evolved over millions of years. It traces the factors that have made Victoria's natural variety an important part of Australia's biodiversity, and includes Aboriginal people's traditions about how the land and its features were created.

- 1.1 Tracing climate and topographical change
- 1.2 Tracing the emergence of Victoria's plants and animals
- 1.3 Understanding scientifically diverse environments
- 1.4 Creation stories and defining country
- 1.5 Living with natural processes
- 1.6 Appreciating and protecting Victoria's natural wonders



02

Peopling Victoria's places and landscapes

... is a key theme for understanding the many ways in which people have arrived and settled in Victoria, and the successive waves of migration that have created a multicultural society expressed in the built fabric of our towns and cities. These have had an enormous influence on the state's, and also the nation's economic, social and political development.

- 2.1 Living as Victoria's original inhabitants
- 2.2 Exploring, surveying and mapping
- 2.3 Adapting to diverse environments
- 2.4 Arriving in a new land
- 2.5 Migrating and making a home
- 2.6 Maintaining distinctive cultures
- 2.7 Promoting settlement
- 2.8 Fighting for identity



03

Connecting Victorians by transport and communications

Early European routes often followed the pathways by which Aboriginal people moved through country over thousands of years. This theme traces the networks of routes and connections by which goods and people were moved and linked including an ambitious state-wide rail system and the impact of cars and road transport.

- 3.1 Establishing pathways
- 3.2 Travelling by water
- 3.3 Linking Victorians by rail
- 3.4 Linking Victorians by road in the 20th century
- 3.5 Travelling by tram
- 3.6 Linking Victorians by air
- 3.7 Establishing and maintaining communications



04

Transforming and managing the land

... is critical to understanding how occupation and use of the land, and exploitation of its natural resources, have changed Victoria and produced its varied cultural landscapes. Important aspects are the evidence of a continuing Aboriginal occupation across the state, and the European exploitation of grasslands, minerals and forests, a source of wealth reflected in Victoria's colonial and post-Federation heritage.

- 4.1 Living off the land
- 4.2 Living from the sea
- 4.3 Grazing and raising livestock
- 4.4 Farming
- 4.5 Gold mining
- 4.6 Exploiting other mineral, forest and water resources
- 4.7 Transforming the land and waterways



05

Building Victoria's industries and workforce

... embraces the development of Victoria's industrial and manufacturing base, and the development of service industries such as banking and finance. This has left a rich architectural and historical legacy, for example banks in every Victorian town and in Melbourne, and also the industrial complexes, large and small, throughout Victoria.

- 5.1 Processing raw materials
- 5.2 Developing a manufacturing capacity
- 5.3 Marketing and retailing
- 5.4 Exhibiting Victoria's innovation and products
- 5.5 Banking and finance
- 5.6 Entertaining and socialising
- 5.7 Catering for tourists
- 5.8 Working



06

Building towns, cities and the garden state

... covers the development of goldrush cities and agricultural service centres, as well as the emergence of Melbourne as a world leader in suburban development and the expression of this in the range and variety of Melbourne's suburbs. Victoria's areas of ethnic and cultural diversity, and the distinctive heritage of our country towns, are also important under this theme.

- 6.1 Establishing Melbourne Town, Port Phillip District
- 6.2 Creating Melbourne
- 6.3 Shaping the suburbs
- 6.4 Making regional centres
- 6.5 Living in country towns
- 6.6 Marking significant phases in development of Victoria's settlements, towns and cities
- 6.7 Making homes for Victorians
- 6.8 Living on the fringes



07

Governing Victorians

... covers the phases of government in Victoria's history, as well as the varied heritage associated with defence, law and order and local government. It features the role Victoria played as a centre for reform campaigns, including reform of Aboriginal policies in the 20th century.

- 7.1 Developing institutions of self-government and democracy
- 7.2 Struggling for political rights
- 7.3 Maintaining law and order
- 7.4 Defending Victoria and Australia
- 7.5 Protecting Victoria's heritage



08

Building community life

... highlights the role of churches, schools, hospitals and community halls in transferring old-world belief systems, ideals and institutions to the new colonial offshoot. This includes the range and influence of women's organisations, and Victoria's pioneering role in providing for women's secondary school education.

- 8.1 Maintaining spiritual life
- 8.2 Educating people
- 8.3 Providing health and welfare services
- 8.4 Forming community organisations
- 8.5 Preserving traditions and commemorating
- 8.6 Marking the phases of life



09

Shaping cultural and creative life

... covers the rich legacy of places and strong interconnecting creative culture, supported locally, which is highly valued by the community as part of its history and identity. Victoria's cultural life in its many facets: sport, arts, popular culture and science.

- 9.1 Participating in sport and recreation
- 9.2 Nurturing a vibrant arts scene
- 9.3 Achieving distinction in the arts
- 9.4 Creating popular culture
- 9.5 Advancing knowledge



Victoria's Framework of Historical Themes

Overview

Victoria's Framework of Historical Themes is a tool to assist in understanding the many complex layers of Victoria's history.

The Framework's themes are deliberately broad, but have been designed to help us understand what is distinctive about Victoria's history and heritage. The Framework will guide people working across cultural heritage in assessing, managing and interpreting places, objects and events.

There are nine main themes with sub-themes addressing natural, historical and Aboriginal cultural heritage. Using these themes encourages a holistic and strategic approach to heritage understanding and management.

The Framework includes a list of prompts and some examples for each sub-theme but this is not exhaustive and users will no doubt identify other examples particularly distinctive to their region.

The themes are not arranged in a hierarchy or chronological order. They are designed to be applied and interlinked regardless of place or period. They can be used flexibly for different periods, places and regions. This approach suggests a lively and dynamic history, giving a sense of ongoing activities over time rather than a static and vanished past.

The Framework was developed by Heritage Victoria, with the assistance of the Heritage Council of Victoria and the Aboriginal Heritage Council of Victoria and involved extensive consultation with other heritage professionals.



Use of the Framework

Victoria's Framework of Historical Themes is intended for use by heritage professionals, local government staff, teachers, managers of museum collections, interpreters and others interested in Victoria's natural and cultural heritage.

The Framework enables a broad dialogue about the distinctive environment, history and culture of Victoria. The themes are designed to focus this broad dialogue on the questions asked in developing the Framework:

- What are the major influences responsible for the development of Victoria's distinctive cultural heritage, and how are they demonstrated in our heritage sites and objects?
- What are the key elements of our culture that distinguish Victoria from other states and territories of Australia?

The Framework is intended to allow for local variations and the multi-layering of several themes in one place or object. The Framework's breadth and flexibility enables local themes to be linked to state, and (where relevant) national contexts.

The Framework document can be found at Heritage Victoria's website along with additional supporting material.

See www.heritage.vic.gov.au