

# NORTHCOTE TIME LINE

P. Michell, 2000, updated and full revised 2015.

Bold indicates significant event.

Population figures from Municipal Directory.

## **Geological**

Geology plays a major factor in the development of Northcote industry. The lava flows in made farming difficult. Particularly the western side of High St and near the Darebin Ck. Chifley Drive (Preson) area was almost unfarmable.

420 million years - The area covering most of Northcote and Preston is a small 'geological island' - mostly Upper Silurian. This is the vast clay deposits of the Northcote, Preston Brunswick triangle. To be used for brick and pottery making.

800,000 years - Volcanics at Alphington – Darebin Ck

22,000 – 7300 years – Last Ice Age. Sea levels 120m less. A 50m drop would have allowed passage to Tasmania. Within Northcote there are two 'intrusions' on this. Newer volcanics dating from Pleistocene and Pliocene. These would have come from the Western District Plains volcanoes.

These new lava plains can be up to 30m thick, buried the former Merri Creek, which was now forced to run atop. The lava flow ends at the Darebin Creek west side. It is this basalt, or bluestone, that becomes an important industry for crushed rock for roadways in the nineteenth and early century.

10,000-8000 years - Creation of Port Phillip Sunkland. (lake near the heads)

6000 years - seas stopped rising.

800-1000 years ago – Port Phillip Bay may have dried up. (Most midden sites well over 2000 years).

## **Aboriginal Activity – Kulim Nation / Woi wurrung**

At least 40,000 years. Lake Mungo Man & Woman ritual burial in southern NSW – charred bones and ochre covering. Social order and society. Rituals performed.

Witnessing the creation of Port Phillip Bay.

2000 years – Midden sites along Port Phillip Bay.

There would have been extensive aboriginal settlement within the land adjacent to the long meandering river (the channel) to the heads. Now all buried under sand and water.

In Northcote due to some 'recent' volcanics past Aboriginal occupation would have been buried in the former Merri Ck. Alongside with the various floodings that occurred. Darebin Ck was not buried but flooded also. However its had much more extractive industry (bluestone blasting and removal). Many quarries along the Darebin Ck in the past.

Activities witnessed by early settlers was Coroborees on top of Rukcers Hill. Large group meetings at along the Yarra at confluence of Merri Ck (Clifton Hill). William Thomas was Protector and worked with them in the 1850s. Dr McArthur (Arthurton Farm) offered land to assist Thomas in providing clothing and health services. Merv Lia (Preston Hsitrocial Society) has found many flints and tools at Mt Cooper (Bundoora) which would have been brought there by Aborigines. The stone is not local. Thus the site was either used for corroborees or other social uses.

Early settlers did have many connections with Kulin peoples generally friendly. Natives wanting flour, sugar, grog, tobacco, etc.

There seems to have been only one major altercation that's been reported around that time. Near the Merri Ck and St Georges Rd vicinity. There was an attack by settlers and aboirignals were injured. Little information has survived.

Kulin interacting with early settlers led to infections such as small-pox, venereal syphilis. Women were particularly suspetible to sexually transmitted diseases.

"The most consistent killer in early Melbourne, however, was diarrhoeal disease as the new settlers quickly set about befouling their immediate environment with human and domesticated animal waste. The ubiquitous Australian fly ensured that germs spread far and wide. Despite the healthful environment, infant mortality from gastro-enteritis and dysentery was to remain scandalously high throughout the 19th century. Melbourne's infant mortality rate would exceed that of London until the 1890s. 'Colonial fever' was soon a scourge but it would not be reliably diagnosed as typhoid until the 1870s. With overflowing cesspits, polluted rivers and creeks, open sewers in the city streets and casual use of pans, Smelbourne had a pervasive odour of human excrement. The growing typhoid death toll and the acceptance of germ theory by the 1890s finally impelled the sewerage of Melbourne after 1897.

<http://www.emelbourne.net.au/biogs/EM00473b.htm>

1901 census shows only 46 Kulim people living in Melbourne. Though many would have been domestic servants.

In 1933 The Arborignes Advancement League formed by William Cooper. It was given a site by Northcote council in early 1980s at Watt St in Thornbuy on site of

old Glen Iris brickworks. There is a number of Aboriginal community centres and hotels in Westgarth including Gladys Nicholls house.

Doug Nicholls and his wife Gladys settled in Northcote in 1947 at a cottage at Northcote Park. He was greensman there and played football with Northcote VFA club. He hosted international stars Winifred Atwell and Harry Belafonte. Doug and Gladys

“Few Kulin survived the new settlers. Their numbers plummeted by 90% in 20 years. William Thomas, Assistant Aboriginal Protector (later Guardian) from 1839, reported that the Boon wurrung and Woi wurrung, who numbered about 350 in 1835, and 233 by 1840, totalled only 28 in 1857 (17 Woi wurrung and 11 Boon wurrung).

“The Kulin frequented the Government Mission by the Yarra while there was food to be had, and enrolled their children in the Baptist (Aboriginal) School on the Merri Creek, where they were cared for while their parents travelled on Kulin business.

“By the 1960s one in five Aboriginal Victorians lived in Melbourne. While distinct regional identities still existed among Aborigines in the metropolis, Aboriginal balls at the Northcote Town Hall, community activities, and intermarriage, helped to modify regional identities and strengthen pan-Aboriginal feeling. In 1969 the word 'Koori(e)' emerged and was used especially by younger Aboriginal people. There was also a movement into the wider community, with 11% of married Aboriginal men and 27% of married Aboriginal women in the 1960s having non-Aboriginal partners.

“In the early 1970s, Aboriginal-run health, housing and legal services and other community bodies were formed in Melbourne. Aboriginal people drifted to the city in search of jobs, lured there by the growth of community organisations. In 1986 over 6000 people of indigenous descent lived in Melbourne, almost half the State total. By 1996 their numbers in Melbourne had climbed to almost 11 000, again almost half of their Victorian total; currently they total almost 15 000 in the Melbourne region. Melburnians of indigenous descent are scattered thinly throughout city and suburbs, except for modest concentrations in Fitzroy, Northcote and Preston. A larger concentration exists at nearby Healesville, a traditional place of the Kulin and a pleasant rural area with affordable housing. Such clusters create dozens of fiercely supported community groups as the government found to its cost when it attempted to close the Koorie-backed Northland Secondary College in 1992. After four years of court battles the community retained the right to government support for the school.  
<http://www.emelbourne.net.au/biogs/EM00029b.htm>

## 1600 – 1835 European Visits

Dutch, Spanish & French visits.

Almost all European accounts of Australia identify a land with smoke from fires visible from the sea.

- 1522 Portugese visit – Mahogany ship at Warnambool ????? fact ??? (subject to much debate – many sightings in 19 century)
- 1606 Dutch ‘visitors’ Willem Janszoon
- 1622 Tryall shipwreck in Western Australia (commonly known as Batavia incident). Captain abandons survivors who then eat / murder each other.
- 1623-6 Further Dutch visits
- 1642 Abel Tasman – claims Van Dieman’s Land for Dutch East India Co. Further explorations in 1644.
- 1688 William Dampier comes looking for Tryall wreck. First to report kangaroos.
- 1770 Cook’s Endeavour explorations.
- 1788 Settlement by convicts under Captain Arthur Phillip (11 ships 1530 people). Use of convicts as cheap labour to build infrastructure for new colony following the loss of the American colonies after the revolutionary war 1775-1783. Also concern over possible Baltic supply problems for ship building (timber and canvas).
- 1793 First free settlers

## 1835 - 1842/3

Melbourne (Australia Felix) is settled as a free city. Though some convicts used for construction in early years. First Northcote land sales. European Population nil. Aboriginal nil permanent, less than two hundred itinerant.

- 1835 June - John Batman (from Tasmania) signs treaty with Aborigines. Some say on the banks of the Merri Creek at the end of McLachlan Street near Rushall railway station. More than likely the Treaty was signed elsewhere.
- 1836 Ill fated settlement at Sorrento. Shortly after squatters were settling on various sites more hospitable around Melbourne.
- 1837/8 Robert Hoddle (and Russell) surveys land. High Street part of a North/South line for the grid in surveying Melbourne’s suburbs. Aboriginal names used where possible for creeks and rivers.
- 1839/40 Land boom! Government sales of land in Northcote area. (apart from Northcote Town, Westgarth) all blocks had access to water. Rathmines St boarder with Heidelberg. All but 2 purchasers were speculators and sold off within 5 years or so. Early purchaser include – William Rucker (German), Brodie, Urquhart. Exceptions – Job Smith & Micheal Pender.

- Early Residents – Grinrod, Dennis, settlers in Westgarth. Thomas Wills in Alphington. Farmers – Job Smith & Michael/William Pender in Thornbury.
- 1841 William Rucker (?) builds 'Rucker's Mansion', atop Northcote Hill. It is the most extensive country house in district. Later the building is known as 'Sunnyside' then 'The Alpines' and is altered. The ballroom of this building (a much later addition) still survives in Clarke Street. Original building demolished c1926 and Church of Epiphany built (1927).
- 1842 Dr Peter MacArthur builds a hut in Yarra Bend near the junction of Merri Creek. Thomas Wills finishes 'Lucerne' in Alphington after two years of construction. Rucker sells part of his land on Rucker's Hill to George James - known as James' Paddock. Later part of it became Town Hall precinct.
- 1842/3 **First Major Depression in Victoria.** William Rucker insolvent. His house (?) and land is sold to another group of speculators the repossessed.

## 1844 – 1863

Swift notes that land sales prior to 1850 difficult to obtain. (Though he was writing over 70 years later in 1926.)

William Thomas – protector of Aborigines. Ex Tasmania walked with the aborigines sometimes as far as Morning Peninsular.

1850s to 1880s – small farms, dairying, non-mechanised industry. Beginning of stores along High St.

'Moivers and Shakers' made their homes in Northcote generally on or near Ruckers Hill: Capt Clarke (later Sir Andrew 1824-1902) lived at bottom of Clarke St in 2 storey house on St Georges Rd crnr. (Was Surveyor-Gen and Chief Commissioner of Crown Lands, 1853-1858. Took over from Robert Huddle. Initiated Roads Boards, Railway planning, Science, Art & Technology. More land sold post 1853 than before.)

Maj Gen Sir Edward Macarthur [acting Governor of Victoria in 1856, returns to UK in 1860) lived on Athurton Rd at the Merri Ck. Swift describes his house – wooden house surrounded by a fine garden of fruit trees, grape vines.

Other significant residents 1850s – Wardrop House - Francis Ormond; Rev & Mrs Booth, Railton (nurseryman), Richard Tobin (school teacher & Father of Northcote), Nememiah Wimble (Secy to Lands Dept).

Significant later Northcote families –Plant (contractor), Twentyman (Architect), Dennis, Grinrod,

German settlers organised by William Westgarth. Many settled along Separation St on farms along southern side. Schwabasch, Gottlieb, Kuttig, Klingauf, Kawerau, Fritsche, Heiner. Dairying & market gardens  
Carters Arms Hotel – John Roberts. Rear brick pug mill.

Perry Bros orchard – Fairfield near old APM mills.

Kirk's Paddock ran from north of Westbourne Gve to Hawthorn Rd and was used for adjustment of horses for Kirk's Bazaar in Melbourne. THE place to get a horse / cart / conveyance at the time.

Kinsella, a farmer, arguably grows first tobacco in Victoria near site of Little Sisters of the Poor.

Population unknown. Likely to be low hundreds.

- 1844 Duffs Hotel opens (later Croxton Park).
- 1848 Melbourne Lunatic Asylum opened - (called Yarra Bend Asylum in 1851.)
- 1850 Victoria separates from New South Wales.  
Pilgrim Inn, later called Croxton Park Hotel opened in Thornbury.
- 1851 Victorian gold rush begins. Beginning of population explosion.
- 1852 Shade's Ironmongery established in a tent in High Street. Near the corner of Separation St. One of the first traders in the district.
- 1853/55 Township of Northcote in area of today's Westgarth gazetted. Land subdivided and sold for housing in this district during this period.
- 1853 Probably first house built - John Grinrod at 5 McLaclan St. Westgarth.  
Yan Yean pipe track - first water pipes laid along St George's Road. Brings fresh drinking water to Melbourne. Largest man made reservoir in the world - £750,000. Thus trams cannot travel in centre of road. Poor development for about eighty years along later St Georges Rd.  
Melbourne Hunt Club established.
- 1854 Competition between 'lower' and 'upper' Northcote (on the hill) when the Wesleyan church/school opened. Robert S. Bunn first teacher. Original Peacock Inn built (current one dates from 1897). First Post Office at Bastings new two storey Store in High St. (Now demolished). Shannon's Hotel (now Commercial Hotel) opened. Eventually centre of Northcote moves away from Westgarth village.
- 1857 First timber bridge crossing Merri Creek on High Street built. (Replaced with current structure, though 1/2 width, in 1875.)
- 1860 All Saints Church in High Street, Westgarth opened.
- 1861 German Cemetery established
- 1862 Bastings Post Office (from 1858) at his general store becomes the main post for Northcote, displacing Lower Northcote (Westgarth) importance. Other significant businesses included McIntosh General Store, Mitchells Butchers (cnr Mitchell & High Sts), and Oliver's Butchers.

## 1864 - 1882

Beginning of Northcote as a community. Some early industry but mostly farming and diariying. Hotels (pubs) are built but much more basic than they are now. Croxton Park Hotel becomes epicentre of races and vied with Flemington as a popular sporting venue. Opposite was the Hunt Club which would use Mill Park for tehri activities. During the 1860s the Acclimatisation Society of Victoria introduced rabbits and all sorts of birds etc to hunt and 'tansform' the landscape into that of England. The took over the Zoo's management and finally became absorbed by 1930s. Members include Thomas Embling and Edward Wlison (The Argus). It has been argued that the many towers on houses around Northcote were built by members and friend to look at the wildlife.

Population probably in the low hundreds. Increases to 2000 persons by 1883.

- 1864**        **Northcote becomes part of Epping Road District.** Bridge Hotel, High Street, near Merri Creek, commences business (now demolished).
- 1865        Twentyman House crrnr Waterloo Rd & Bastings St. With Askew notable archtiects. 'The Block' arcade, Melbourne Meat Market, etc.
- 1866        Last corroboree held on Ruckers Hill near St James church site. Carters Arms Hotel opened – owner J Roberts (Demolished late 1980's.) He sets up small brick business based on clay deposits behind hotel.
- 1869        First bicycle races: One at MCG, other at Croxton Park.
- 1870        Epping Road District expands to become Shire of Darebin. Gas supply for lighting.
- 1871        Northcote and Preston separate from Shire of Darebin to form Shire of Jika Jika.
- 1872        Northcote Patent Brick Company established by Groom Bros on land at rear of Carters Arms Hotel. A steam machinery operated brickworks that later will become the state's largest output. Site is south along Separation Street
- 1873        Inebriates Retreat on site of present Northcote High School in St George's Road opens. (Operates until 1893.)
- 1874        First government school - Northcote State School (No.1401) in Helen Street, opened. Richard Tobin was head teacher. [Wesleyan school closed.]
- 1875        Gas lines connected to businesses and some street lighting! This could only be done with a permanent bridge across Merri Creek at High Street.
- 1876        First bank - Commercial Bank in High Street (now demolished). Hence Commerical Hotel (now Northcote Social Club).
- 1879        Population of whole shire Jika Jika 1000; 5 hotels, Church of Engalnd , Wesleayn Church, Inebriate Rettreat, two bacon curing works. Fruit grown in district.

- Perry Bros Orchard in Alphington – from the 1850s. c1868 – 100,000 trees, 40mtons pears, 15 tons cherries, 20 tons plums. ‘Mountains’ of apples. (Coate Park).
- 1880's **Land sales Boom** - many farms broken up for residential building blocks.  
Completion of Rucker's Hill embankment to allow cable trams to travel.
- 1882 Northcote Brick Company incorporated in Separation Street taking over from Groom Bros. Latest technology of Hoffman kilns built copying Hoffman Patent Brick Co in Brunswick. Will become biggest brick producer in the state.

### 1883 – 1889

Northcote becomes a governable body. Period of ‘bubble’ speculative housing and business growth. Much of iconic two storey speculative High St buildings date from this period. Many old estates broken up for smaller housing blocks. Railway infrastructure built.  
Population around 2000 increases to 7600 within seven years.

- 1883 **Northcote separates from Shire of Jika Jika to form Borough of Northcote.** C H James builds and operates railway between Clifton Hill and Alphington – known as ‘nowhere to nowhere railway line’, as it didn’t connect to another railway. It services to James’ horsedrawn tram that ran up Station Street taking potential buyers to his mammoth land subdivision sales – Fairfield Park in 1884.
- 1884 Council establishes a free reading room for the public.  
Uses money from the demise of the Northcote Health League in 1883.
- 1885 Little Sisters of the Poor convent opened in St Georges Road on Brown’s Farm property.
- 1886 New Northcote Brick Co established next to Northcote Brick Co. This will morph into Brick & Pipe Industries the largest supplier in the state.  
First Austral Wheel Race (Bicycle Race).
- 1888 Leader Newspaper (under various titles over the years) begins publication.  
Town Hall foundation stone laid - first stage opened in 1889 with Post Office and Law Court completed in 1890. Design by G R Johnson - local resident and designer of Melbourne Exhibition Buildings.  
Northcote & Preston Tramway Co formed.  
Grandview Hotel in Fairfield erected.  
Heidelberg Railway line opens including Northcote’s stations. Linked to city via Inner Circle line via Carlton. Nil connection to Clifton Hill.



1889 Whittlesea Railway line opened on 8 October. Railway stations - Northcote, Middle Northcote, Croxton, Thornbury opened. Link to Melbourne via Fitzroy. Approx. 30 min journey to city by train! Rucker's Hill embankment built for cable tram.

## 1890 - 1913

Major Depression No 2. Economic collapse in Victoria. Building societies close and many banks cease trading. Later there is strong economic growth to WWI. Finally direct rail link to city rather extended journey through Carlton. Many pubs were remodelled/rebuilt during this period all over Melbourne. More council buildings constructed. The massive construction period leads to vast areas of housing / rental accommodation. This period is a big growth of population almost tripling by 1914 to some 20,000. Population around 7600.

- 1890 **Northcote proclaimed a Town by the Earl of Hopetoun, Governor General of Australia.**  
Cable tram begins service along High St. Cost 3d.  
Beginning of Second Major Depression.
- 1891/3 Opening and closing of the Outer Circle railway line section between Fairfield and Camberwell - loss of Fulham Grange railway station.
- 1892 Northcote Library opened in new Municipal Buildings.  
First telephone used in district at Town Hall.  
Fitzroy Race Course (1892 - 1931) in St Geroges Rd was run by the notorious John Wren from 1919. Ponies racing there could not race in other places. It was connected with Moonee Valley & Caulfield race courses all controlled by John Wren. Supposedly carrier pigeon carried race details to two storey houses in Clarke St then onto the Tote Hotel in Collingwood. (Thus all races were 'fixed' in result.)
- 1893 Banks closed due to **'Second' Depression.**  
Cable Tram Company in liquidation.  
Over 1/4 of all shops closed in Northcote.
- 1897 First screening of a motion picture in Northcote arranged by the Primitive Methodists.  
Peacock Hotel rebuilt. (Though exterior dates from the 1930s.)
- 1898 Westmorelands Pottery (later Northcote Tile & Pottery) founded in Clyde Street, Thornbury.
- 1901 Rechabite Hall opens opposite Northcote Town Hall.  
Princess Bridge to Collingwood rail line opens. Heidelberg now has direct connection to city cutting travel times significantly.
- 1902 Gaeity Theatre opens in High St.
- 1904 Northcote loop links by railway to Clifton Hill and thus shorter route (rather than via Zoo) to Melbourne.
- 1910 Local telephone exchange constructed.
- 1911 Library building built mostly from funds donated by Andrew Carnegie on the condition that use was free of entry and use.

- 1912 Northcote Picture Theatre opened - first Mayoral ball held there. Westgarth railway station opened, Northcote South station closed (opposite over Westgarth St).
- 1913 Town Hall part of Municipal Buildings opened

## 1914 - 1929

City status. Four years of war with large loss of Northcote men's lives and injuries. Alcoholism prevalent particularly with returned soldiers. Post war boom. Beginning of council introduced services – Infant Welfare Centre, Baths, Parks.

Population around 20,000.

- 1914 Northcote proclaimed a City** coinciding with introduction of electrification of City.
- World War 1 – July 1914 to Nov 1918**
- 1917 Sutton Tool & Gauge established.
- 1919 Establishment of paper manufacturers in Fairfield on the Yarra river.
- 1920 Australian Broom Company (ABC) established. W S Needlands takes over Tharrat Joinery & Timber business.
- 1921 Westgarth Picture Theatre opened in Westgarth. (For 15 years renamed Vahalla in 1980s.)  
First Infant Welfare Centre established. Others follow within decade.
- 1923 Northcote Baths in Fredeick St opens. Site of old Pimms quarry.
- 1925 Last patient transferred from Yarra Bend Asylum. 1926 Yarra Bend becomes a park.  
Regent Theatre opens in Thornbury.  
Northcote cable tram links directly with Clifton Hill (across Merri Ck) without need of changing trams.  
Overhead bridge constructed for railway to cross High St.
- 1926 Traffic Census (at Dundas St Junction) – 3560 vehicles inc 623 horse drawn.
- 1928 **History of Northcote** published by Northcote Council. The author is William George Swift the Town Clerk.  
Northcote High School opens in St Georges Rd. Students taken in 2 years earlier but lessons at other sites.
- 1929 Beginnining of Third Major downturn – Great Depression – lasted til 1939.**  
Talking pictures!  
Joe Fogg becomes bathskeeper at Northcote Baths. Will work there for 40 years.  
Many 'memories' of oral history date from around this time.  
The 'adventure' of the 'hard times'. Unerground mutton. Women interstingly became more pro-active. Men would be gone (or lost from WWI) and rooms would be rented out, work would be done at home to gain cash. Sadly lots of stories of destitute women are from this period too.

- 1930 (Later named) Chandler Hwy – using old outer circle railway bridge over Yarra river opens for road traffic. Linking Kew. V J (Victor) Bradley becomes City Engineer for 17 years. Many structures, alterations in Northcote designed by him. Builds up council fleet of vehicles and WWII engineering supplies. Bradley Empire.
- 1933 Northcote's Jubilee. Special publication issued **Northcote Jubilee Celebrations 1883-1933**. Death of Cr Oldis. Much grief.
- 1939 **World War II - September - September 1945**
- 1940 Cable Tram ceases service on October 26. Last cable tram in Melbourne. Double decker buses replace them. Road had to be excavated at railway bridge to allow room for buses to pass.
- 1942-5 Preston Town Hall used as Allied Command HQ / Signals Corp during WWII. Locals not aware.

## POST WWII – 1962

For over seven years austerity post war. Councils still impoverished. Property boom. Post war baby boom. Motor cars became available for the masses eg FJ Holden, Ford Prefect. Television signals decline in cinemas. Many close. Only Westgarth survives. People start working outside Northcote rather than locally. Transport is easier. Many now have cars or know someone who does. Alphington and Fairfield join Northcote. After austerity economy booms. However Australian goods are protected. Most things are 'Made in Australia' and expensive. Things 'have to last'. Robert Menzies is prime minister for over 18 years (1939-1941, 1949-1966). Population around 43,000.

- 1946 First set of traffic lights corner Westgarth & High Sts.
- 1947 Traffic Census (at Dundas St Junction) – 6543 vehicles including 72 horse drawn.
- 1954 Newly crowned Queen of Elizabeth II's motorcade passes Town Hall.
- 1955 Electric trams replace buses along High St.
- 1956 Olympics held in Melbourne coinciding with introduction of television and subsequent closures of local picture theatres. Westgarth alone survives by showing Greek films through the 1960s and 1970s.
- 1957 Traffic Census (at Dundas St Junction) – 16,133 vehicles including nil horse drawn.
- 1958 PANCH – Preston & Northcote Community Hospital opens after years of construction and fund raising. Funding had begun being raised in 1941. Building was erratic during the 1940s. Also in the early 1950s.
- 1959 New Northcote Brick Co renamed Brick Industries.

1960s            Modern industrialisation of Northcote.  
 Migrants – Italians and Greeks settle.  
 Nubrik bricks first appear. Manufactured at Brick Industries’  
 Burwood plant.

## **1962 – 1980**

Boom times. Migrants partiucatluy Italian and Greeks take up residence. Pizzas and souvlakis become part of our diet. With the migrants coffee becomes a popular drink. Coffee companies tend to be located in Northcote, Brunswick & Coburg. The café society become dominant. Many finding work in low paying industrial Nortcote and its vicinity. Many became shop keepsrs – milk bars, green grocers and of course cafes. Post war baby boomers mostly matriculate – reach year 12. LaTrobe University begins operation. Alphington and Fairfield vote to unite be part of Northcote. Many baby-boomers now teenagers. Soon own cars. Drive-ins popular for them. Gough Whitlam and his Labor government elected 5 Dec 1972. Beginning of a decline. Many shops along Northcote were looking shabby and neglected. Many would be closed for years. Northcote Brick Co shuts down. This was the period when youth found work realtively easy to get. Baby boomers move into older style houses and renovate.  
 Population 49,000.

**1962            Alphington and Fairfield become part of Northcote from Heidelberg Council. Increases size and population to 62,000.**

Northcote Brick Co is swallowed up by its once tiny neighbour – Brick Industries. The latter now one of the biggest brick companies due to acquisiitons..

c1964

Infill building next to Town Hall built.

1965

Final closure of outer circle railway, all services now via Clifton Hill. Only small section left – spur line to APM factory.

1967

LaTrobe University starts teaching.

1969

Old Northcote Baths close and McDonnel Park Swim Centre opens. Joe Fogg retires and awarded OBE in Jan 1970. Dies soon after.

1972

5 Dec. Whitlam Government elecgted. Displaces convervative government since the war. 1970s Decline of traditional industries such as footwear due to reduction in protection to TCF industries (textiles, clothing, footwear). Textiles and footwear tariff reductions seriously hurt Northcote as these industries were important – shoe and carpet manufacturing.

1977

Northcote Brickworks ceases operations. In 1979 chimneys and kilns levelled.

## 1981 - 1993

Multicultural Northcote More council services and outreach programs particularly for migrants. Library has more branches and moves main library to new Separation St building. Gentrification begins. Alphington and Fairfield are now places to live. Station St has a lively verve. High St still has a somewhat run down look with many shops seen better days. Aborigines Advancement League given old Glen Iris brickworks site in Thornbury. Population around 54,900.

- 1981 Opening of Northcote Plaza on the site of old brickworks.
- 1982 **Graeme Butler's 3 vol – Conservation Study of Northcote.**
- 1983 **The Northcote Side of the River** published by Council to commemorate 100 years.
- 1985 19 July - New Northcote Library opened in Separation St on old Council nursery.
- c1986 Carters Arms Hotel demolished.
- 1988 Glimpses of Our Past published by Northcote Historical & Conservation Society. Northcote as seen through the Leader Newspaper.

## 1994 – present

Northcote and Preston are co-joined to form City of Darebin. Revitalisation of Northcote as part of Darebin. Greening of council. Many new parks created over old industrial / waste sites. The young have displaced many of the older migrants. Town Hall renovated and modernised becomes a theatre centre. Northcote, Westgarth, Fairfield and Alphington and now the places to live in Melbourne with house prices escalating. Many old large building sites are either renovated or demolished to make way for high rise apartments. Cafes and music bars now dominate Ruckers Hill. Rise of imported Chinese goods and supermarket competition from stores like Aldi lowers cost of living. Population around 48,500.

- 1994 **22 June. City of Northcote merged with City of Preston to form City of Darebin.** Area to the south of Heidelberg Road is now part of the newly formed City of Yarra. Commissioners appointed to oversee the City. Over 50% of council staff leave over next two years. Administration moves to Preston Town Hall. Northcote Town Hall idle.
- 1996 Election of Council. Sacked by Kennett State Government again. Single Commissioner, Don Gillies, appointed to oversee developments.
- 1997 Council elections and new council installed.  
**Northcote Town Hall ceases to be used as Preston Town Hall now administrative base.**
- 1998 PANCH shuts and in 1989 Bell Centre begins construction.
- 1999 New municipal offices opened in Gower Street, Preston.

2000s	Gentrification begins. High rise apartments appear on High St. Slow decay on High St has finished. Many new cafes.
2000	Infill building demolished.
2001	<b>Darebin Heritage Review 2000 – 3 vols. Andrew Ward. Includes Preston buildings. Updates Butler's (1982) study.</b>
2002	Discovery of tunnel beside Merri Ck. (Likely linked to WWII munitions storage re Preston Town Hall's military usage.)
2004	Northcote Town Hall reopens after extensive renovations as Theatre Precinct. 1930s colour scheme including curtain.
2008	Acacia apartments built on Northcote Brick site.
c2012	Closure of APPM/ APM / Amcor factory. Site to be levelled and redeveloped.

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