

The Orb → Living Cultures → Ochre → A Coastal Source → Discovery

Video Transcript

Sharnie Everett

00:00:02

Ochre is a natural source.

00:00:04

It's a natural mineral, and we find it in the earth.

00:00:07

So, generally, we dig for it.

00:00:09

And you can find it both coastal or inland.

00:00:16

The site that we're at today is classified as a coastal site.

00:00:16

You still generally have to dig for it and find it but it's more obvious.

Interviewer

00:00:23

What are you looking for?

Sharnie Everett

00:00:26

Well, you just look for the colour or the indicator, which is kind of ...

00:00:29

the indicator is not just colour, but does it have that plasticity, is it clay-like, as opposed to just rock.

00:00:37

You've got a lot of ironstone in this area too, which is what all this rock is here.

00:00:37

That's not ochre.

00:00:43

We can't grind that down and turn it into an ochre.

00:00:46

But then you get these little veins of this source that runs through, and it's typically with ironstone as well in coastal areas, or sandstone.

00:00:58

But it's not either of those types of sources.

00:01:00

It's a different source altogether.

00:01:02

I guess it just comes with time and knowing what ochre looks like.

00:01:06

And taking the opportunity to explore, have a dig.

00:01:10

I'm using a blade today but traditionally our women would use a digging stick.

00:01:15

And once you find a nice source then, you know, you don't forget where it is.



Aboriginal Education

Department of Education Tasmania

knowledge | learning | empowerment



The Orb → Living Cultures → Ochre → A Coastal Source → Collection

Video Transcript

Sharnie Everett

00:00:01

Traditionally, the women collected it.

00:00:03

So it was the women's responsibility to go out and locate the sources, - which makes sense.

00:00:08

The women did a lot of the collecting of the bush tucker and the re-sources off the land.

00:00:13

The men hunted.

00:00:15

But the women would bring it back and give it to the men.

00:00:16

Everyone in the community would use the ochre.

00:00:19

So this is a raw source.

00:00:19

It's still very much like clay.

00:00:19

You need to dry it out.

00:00:23

Once you dry it out, then you can grind it down into that powder, mix it with kangaroo or wallaby blood and fat, add some water, and it turns it into a paint.

00:00:33

Depending on colour and, you know, availability, would depend on the use.

00:00:33

But certainly you need ochre for ceremony.

00:00:40

And, you know, there're some really lovely practical uses with ochre.

00:00:40



Aboriginal Education

Department of Education Tasmania

knowledge | learning | empowerment

State of Tasmania (Department of Education)
Published 28/5/2019





The Orb → Living Cultures → Ochre → A Coastal Source → Respecting the Land

Video Transcript

Sharnie Everett

00:00:01

Given that ochre comes from the earth, to actually place it on your skin is like showing respect to the land itself.

00:00:10

And it's why when you see Aboriginal people when they come to gatherings, even in contemporary society today, there's usually always ochre involved.

00:00:18

It's a physical way of showing their respect to the land.



Aboriginal Education

Department of Education Tasmania

knowledge | learning | empowerment



Video Transcript

Sharnie Everett

00:00:01

Traditionally, our women would have what we call the *ballawinne* stones, the grinding stones.

00:00:04

And the *ballawinne* set has a base stone and a top stone.

00:00:09

The traditional ones the women left in the bush and they're still there today.

00:00:13

And they're massive.

00:00:13

The base stone is as big as a dinner plate, so it's not something you carry around with you.

00:00:20

You just leave it in that particular place and when you need it you go back to it.

00:00:23

Okay, so what I've got here is one that I do carry around with me, which is a miniature version.

00:00:28

This is my base stone here and I've got my top stone.

00:00:32

And what we do from there is we take our dried ochre, you place it central, in the middle.

00:00:37

Take your top stone.

00:00:37

And it's a matter of compression, not hammering.

00:00:42

Okay, so it's a grinding kind of motion, which is to push and twist.

00:00:51

And what you do is you pull it back into the middle and you basically just continue that process until you've broken it down into a very fine powder.

00:01:14

Okay, so it's at this point that you would take your powder and you would mix it with that traditional kangaroo blood and fat and water.

00:01:22

But in general, today, unless it's for ceremony, we're usually just mixing it with water.

00:01:28

Just need a few drops to mix it, and you've actually got a pretty nice paint.



Aboriginal Education

Department of Education Tasmania

knowledge | learning | empowerment



The Orb → Living Cultures → Ochre → A Coastal Source → Practical Use

Video Transcript

Sharnie Everett

00:00:00

Once it's on the skin and it dries, particularly when it's mixed traditionally, it dries quite hard and becomes an insulator.

00:00:07

So it keeps you warm.

00:00:07

So, from a practical sense, if you've got it all over your body it's a protection.

00:00:13

So it stops you from getting sunburned, it stops you from getting eaten alive by mosquitoes or leeches and it has some really nice lasting effects on your skin, it can actually be a nice moisturiser as well.

00:00:26

So, some really lovely practical qualities to ochre.



Aboriginal Education

Department of Education Tasmania

knowledge | learning | empowerment

The Orb → Living Cultures → Ochre → A Coastal Source → Contemporary Use

Video Transcript

Sharnie Everett

00:00:00

Nowadays, we still use it in dance and during ceremony.

00:00:05

But a lot of our artists in the community nowadays also use it in contemporary art.

00:00:10

So you'll, you know, you'll be able to see paintings that are created with ochre.

00:00:12

So there's that kind of sense.

00:00:18

And a lot of Aboriginal people, you know, they...

00:00:18

just to have it on your skin is showing that respect to Country.

00:00:27

So that's an important and significant use of it still today.



Aboriginal Education

Department of Education Tasmania

knowledge | learning | empowerment

The Orb → Living Cultures → Ochre → A Coastal Source → Traditional Use

Video Transcript

Sharnie Everett

00:00:01

Men would ochre up their spears.

00:00:04

Particularly if you've got the red, the *ballawinne* is said to be more magical and more spiritual.

00:00:09

So, if you place the red ochre on your spear, it's going to make your spear more magical.

00:00:15

So you're more likely to have a spear that works.

00:00:18

You know?

00:00:20

So, you definitely would use it for the decoration of objects but also for, you know, the passing on of cultural stories.

00:00:29

So there'd be ...

00:00:29

there's images that are created in ochre in our cave sites.

00:00:35

And one of the most common, or more commonly known images is the hand stencil.

00:00:41

So the hand stencils in Tasmania's caves, Aboriginal people would take their mix, their paint, wander off into the cave, take a big mouthful of your mix, fill your mouth up, place your hand on the cave wall and then blow or spit the ochre across the cave wall.

00:01:03

And when you remove your hand, it leaves the outlines and the stencil of your hand's there.

00:01:07

And there's a very common kind of image found in the deeper caves in Tasmania, and are highly regarded as something very spiritual and very, you know, beautiful.



Aboriginal Education

Department of Education Tasmania

knowledge | learning | empowerment

State of Tasmania (Department of Education)
Published 28/5/2019



The Orb → Living Cultures → Ochre → A Coastal Source → A Trace

Video Transcript

Sharnie Everett

00:00:00

Some of those hand stencils have been dated.

00:00:03

To do that they need to take a sample of them and take it away, and they do some scientific work on the DNA of the blood that's in the mix.

00:00:11

They also analyse the rock.

00:00:12

A lot of these paintings are in karst, which is a particular type of geology in Tasmania, and it builds up over time.

00:00:20

So, where the hand stencil has been placed on that cave wall, the karst continues to build up over the top of the stencil and you can see through it.

00:00:30

But that gives you a date, because they can understand how long it takes for that karst to build up.

00:00:35

A couple of the hand stencils in Tassie were dated to around 11,000 years old.

00:00:42

It was at that point, though, that the community said, look, we believe our culture and our people have been here forever.

00:00:49

We don't particularly place a lot of emphasis on timeframes or dates.

00:00:56

And the fact that to get dates from some of these significant sites you have to damage them.

00:01:02

We no longer allow that.

00:01:05

It's enough for us as Aboriginal people to understand that these are ancient sites and that they're, you know, to be respected.

00:01:11

And the significance, spiritually to us, is the important bit, not the age.



Aboriginal Education

Department of Education Tasmania

knowledge | learning | empowerment

State of Tasmania (Department of Education)
Published 28/5/2019



The Orb → Living Cultures → Ochre → A Coastal Source → Management

Video Transcript

Sharnie Everett

00:00:00

This is a very small quarry site, or a very small mine of the ochre, so we don't encourage other people to come here and take any of it.

00:00:08

And we only really share it with other community members.

00:00:10

The traditional way of life is you only take what you need.

00:00:13

If you come along and take the whole lot, then there's nothing left for the next person or the next opportunity when you need it.

00:00:19

So, you wouldn't be taking big boulders of this stuff away.

00:00:22

You'd just be taking small amounts.

00:00:22

And a small amount like this dried and crushed and mixed with those traditional mix, you're going to have a huge amount of paint.



Aboriginal Education

Department of Education Tasmania

knowledge | learning | empowerment

The Orb → Living Cultures → Ochre → A Coastal Source → Lost Art

Video Transcript

Sharnie Everett

00:00:01

In the early 1800s, people came across our huts and there were bark paintings inside the huts, paintings that were done from ochre, that depicted animals.

00:00:11

And those are images that are depicted in different sites across Tasmania.

00:00:16

They're just not as common as the hand stencils.



Aboriginal Education

Department of Education Tasmania

knowledge | learning | empowerment

The Orb → Living Cultures → Ochre → A Coastal Source → Origin

Video Transcript

Sharnie Everett

00:00:02

The dreamtime story tells us that it came about at the beginning of time, at the beginning of when things were being created, and that the one ochre source was at the base of the Cradle Mountain, and they traded with it.

00:00:13

So they knew how valuable it was and how important it was.

00:00:16

But it was through, it was through the trading and the use of it as a trading commodity that other tribes desired it and that's how it kind of got spread.

00:00:27

So yeah, it's something that we've always used.



Aboriginal Education

Department of Education Tasmania

knowledge | learning | empowerment

The Orb → Living Cultures → Ochre → A Coastal Source → Value

Video Transcript

Sharnie Everett

00:00:01

Value is always determined by, you know, the beholder really, isn't it?

00:00:09

The value I place on this might be very different to what someone who's after a stone tool or after a shell necklace might place on it.

00:00:16

So, what I can say is that, as a cultural resource, it's highly valued.



Aboriginal Education

Department of Education Tasmania

knowledge | learning | empowerment



The Orb → Living Cultures → Ochre → A Coastal Source → Continuing Culture

Video Transcript

Interviewer

00:00:03

Do you have a site that's a favourite site of yours?

Sharnie Everett

00:00:06

Yeah, I do.

00:00:06

But that's on the North West Coast.

00:00:11

That's because that's a source that I've located in my generation from, you know, so I feel like I found that source.

00:00:16

And it's a very vibrant and beautiful red.

00:00:21

It's in Big River Country, you know, so it all kind of ties into the traditional story too.

00:00:28

So, yeah, it's quite a beautiful source for me.

00:00:28

And that site, I've only taken other community women with me to there.

00:00:37

You know, it's an important aspect of continuing the traditional practice of going out and locating ochre.

00:00:42

And when you have those opportunities, whether it's by yourself or with other community members, other community women, to go out and find a source of ochre, particularly the red, it helps with that cultural kind of pride, I guess, and understanding in yourself that you've been a part of the continuation of our culture.

00:01:01

Thousands of generations of women have done exactly what we did on that day and what we continue to do.

00:01:06

And, you know, sharing the ochre in our community and with our people.



Aboriginal Education

Department of Education Tasmania

knowledge | learning | empowerment

State of Tasmania (Department of Education)
Published 28/5/2019



Video Transcript

Craig Everett

00:00:08

My name's Craig Maxwell Everett.

00:00:10

I'm a Tasmanian Aboriginal man and we're actually on the North East Coast.

00:00:13

Which is known as Eddystone Point but known as *larapuna* in our Aboriginal language.

00:00:20

I'm a descendent from *mannalargenna*, who was actually the last-standing chief on Tasmania.

00:00:24

And this was our tribal area.

00:00:26

And we come down here today to actually do a little bit of education on dance and ochre and that.

00:00:34

Wanted to really be down here, obviously because this is my home Country and also my boys'.

00:00:41

Dance is something relatively new to Tasmania because we've been re-viving our culture for the last 70 years, or even longer, but really getting back into it in the last 20 or 30 years.

00:00:54

My boys are very, very lucky especially being brought up with dance since the age of two.

00:00:58

As soon as they start to ochre up, they just have the real drive and passion and they just have that real excitement.

00:01:03

And they're very energetic boys as they are, but then they go to another level, sort of thing, when they get painted up.

00:01:11

It's just that pride, and they really love who they are as a person as well.

00:01:17

Having that identity as a young person is very, very important, I think, because it just grows and grows as an adult.

00:01:24 I didn't actually get that identity until I was in my late 20s, and to see how strong my boys are at such a young age is very, very important to me.

00:01:35 And not only that, it lets everyone else know that not only are Tasmania Aborigines here but, more important, we practise our culture.

00:01:43 And we're getting stronger and stronger with our culture.

00:01:50 I was very lucky, actually.

00:01:51 I was ...

00:01:51 well, in one situation I was very unlucky because I was living on the streets and that, but I actually had an Aboriginal man take me in and his name was Steve Compton.

00:02:03 He actually took me out and taught me a lot about the bush and everything over here and how to read animals, and he actually showed me dance and gave me another way of living.

00:02:14 And the more that I started understanding about our old people, the more I wanted to learn.

00:02:20 Because Aboriginal people, it's all about respect, honour and love.

00:02:22 And you had to do that to yourself first before you could anyone else.

00:02:29 Once you have that sort of understanding, the drive for it is just really, really good and I think it makes you a lot better person.

00:02:37 I think I'm a better person than what I was before anyway.

00:02:39 So, I'm very proud of where I'm at.



Video Transcript

Craig Everett

00:00:02

Well, obviously, there are certain things in our culture that we can't talk about with non-indigenous people because that's classified as either men's business or women's business.

00:00:14

We also have sacred sites, which non indigenous people can't be taken there or they can't be talked about.

00:00:23

But I think what can be shared is shared, because it gives a better understanding of us as a traditional people.

00:00:26

We are still trying to learn the old ways and we actually are still passing them on to our youth.

00:00:37

Which is making us stronger.

00:00:41

Especially here in Tasmania because it was taken away from us and written in textbooks that we didn't exist.

00:00:52

pama, paya, luwa I actually had a teacher tell me in Grade four that I wasn't Tasmanian Aboriginal and I actually said to her, yes, I am, my grandfather told me.

00:01:04

My grandfather had never lied to me.

00:01:06

And the teacher actually got a book and put it out on the table in front of me and turned to the page and actually showed me where it said Tasmania Aborigines do not exist.

unnamed

00:01:14

luwa

Craig Everett

00:01:23

Like I said, my grandfather never lied to me and I knew he was telling the truth, but when a teacher tells you and shows you that it's written in the books that you don't exist, so you start to question a lot of things.

00:01:38

In saying that, nowadays I actually get paid as a Tasmanian Aborigine to go around and educate schools.

00:01:43

So, to see how far we've come in my time, to me, only means the further we go along the stronger we get.

00:01:49

And like I say, to share these sort of things with non-indigenous people gives them a better understanding on who we are as Aboriginal people and as cultural people.

00:02:01

It's that closing the gap thing, I think, of having that understanding that we are here together and we can do this together, and that's what's important, I think.



Aboriginal Education

Department of Education Tasmania

knowledge | learning | empowerment



Video Transcript

Craig Everett

00:00:03

I'm actually still learning a lot about my culture, and certain things I don't have full understanding of, but it's not so much the performance - but it's connection.

00:00:11

And it's connecting with the earth and connecting with whatever place you are in.

00:00:19

And because the ochre comes from the earth, when you put that on, even the boys, like, they get a real little bit lightened.

00:00:25

As soon as I put ochre on, I actually feel fit and healthy and I'll actually muck around a little bit myself.

00:00:34

I've actually had an auntie go gather the ochre for me, so we've actually got to grind the ochre up first before we can even start to use it.

00:00:44

Once we grind the ochre up, we'll mix water with it, and then once we mix that with it, we'll actually paint ourselves up.

00:00:55

The first dance, will be a cleansing dance and we actually do the cleansing dance to get rid of all the bad energy or negative spirits that are around the area that we're doing it in.

00:01:10

And the second dance we'll do a welcome dance.

00:01:13

And that's to welcome the good spirits and good energy straight back in to replace any bad energy that's gone.

00:01:19

So that way that bad energy can't come back.

00:01:29

The third dance we'll actually do an animal dance, and that'll be an emu and a kangaroo dance, because we traditionally had emus in Tasmania.

00:01:46

Like I said, I'm still learning a lot about our culture and that, especially here in Tasmania.

It's just that connection, I think, to the earth, and that's just another important step that hopefully I'll have an understanding of before I get to move on to the next place.



Aboriginal Education

Department of Education Tasmania

knowledge | learning | empowerment



The Orb → Living Cultures → Ochre → Inland Journey → Australia Hill

Video Transcript

Patsy Cameron

00:00:04

We're at Poimena, which was a bustling little town during the tin mining days at the top of the Blue Tier and we're about to head up Australia Hill.

00:00:13

And when we reach near the top I'm just going to talk about ochre and the ancestors and how they were using ochre, and how we use it in the present day.

00:00:29

I think it's really important to highlight how the highlands and the mountains are really significant to Tasmanian Aboriginal people in the distant past and today.

00:00:34

And it is a very special place that I'm going to take you to because we have conducted a ceremony on Australia Hill and it is extremely significant.

00:00:49

We can always talk about the sea and go to the coast.

00:00:53

I just want to remind people how the mountains are very significant to us.



Aboriginal Education

Department of Education Tasmania

knowledge | learning | empowerment

The Orb → Living Cultures → Ochre → Inland Journey → This is Ochre

Video Transcript

Patsy Cameron

00:00:02

I've got a little possum skin that I use to wrap up my grinding stones when I'm carting them around.

00:00:07

So it's a Tasmanian possum and it's really quite special.

00:00:11

So, I've got two different grinding stones here.

00:00:13

There's a flat slab and this one is called a *ballawine* stone or a *polelerwine* in my grandfather's language.

00:00:22

Polelerwine is red ochre.

00:00:23

So it's a red ochre stone.

00:00:25

It was collected from *toolumbunner* which is an ochre site over in the northwest near the Mersey River.

00:00:31

And it was actually made by the women.

00:00:31

So the women created this stone.

00:00:31

It's dolerite.

00:00:37

It's very heavy.

00:00:37

And the story goes that when the women collected these cobbles out of the Mersey River it was powerful and the movement of the rocks caused the river to flood.

00:00:50

And so I'm very lucky to have this to use for teaching purposes and to use when we come to special places like this.

00:01:00

I'll just go through some of the ochre that I've brought with me.

00:01:03

And this is collected in the northeast.

00:01:05

We've got vast ochre layers in the northeast, it's mostly clay-based.

00:01:09 Many different colours.

00:01:09 So this is a lovely purply colour.

00:01:14 There's a yellow.

00:01:16 I don't use it a lot but I like to show the different colours.

00:01:19 And the yellow, it's got a bit of grit in it.

00:01:22 So it's a different texture.

00:01:30 There's a white.

00:01:33 The white is usually used for mortuary.

00:01:35 The old people would grind it up and put it on their face.

00:01:38 When they were crying for somebody who had died.

00:01:43 So I leave that as mortuary practice.

00:01:45 But the different colours here are used for ceremony, coming on country.

00:01:50 Using it in a symbolic sense to honour country, to honour our ancestors.

00:01:54 And it prepares us for going into special places.

00:01:59 Telling stories.

00:01:59 It's just a special symbolic material and to Aboriginal families it's to actually say.

00:02:06 We are unique.

00:02:06 We have a unique story.

00:02:09 This is a unique practice.

00:02:10 Gathering ochre is very significant and special.

00:02:14 And we must pass that knowledge on.



Aboriginal Education

Department of Education Tasmania

knowledge | learning | empowerment

State of Tasmania (Department of Education)
Published 28/5/2019



The Orb → Living Cultures → Ochre → Inland Journey → Grinding

Video Transcript

Patsy Cameron

00:00:01

I think it's a matter of preference as to what you like to do.

00:00:01

What I might do is just grind some of it up so you can see the different colours.

00:00:10

And this sound of the banging on the rocks Robinson recalls on Swan Island, sounding like a bootmaker making his boots.

00:00:21

Every morning they would be grinding ochre and preparing ochre for dance and to paint their bodies with.

00:00:28

So, it doesn't take much to get the powder form from the solid.

00:00:28

It's just a couple of movements with the grinding stone on the slab and you get that lovely powder.

00:00:42

If I get some of the red, and perhaps some of this.

00:00:52

It's actually that grinding is just making a connection to the land and to your ancestors, and doing something that your proud of.



Aboriginal Education

Department of Education Tasmania

knowledge | learning | empowerment

The Orb → Living Cultures → Ochre → Inland Journey → Mixing

Video Transcript

Patsy Cameron

00:00:04

It's really quite lovely to do this.

00:00:09

You can imagine that this is something that the women and the men would have done all those many thousands of years.

00:00:16

There are hand stencils that are painted in the south-western caves.

00:00:18

That's very, very ancient, that is the red, and you can see that lovely colour there.

00:00:24

Look at that.

00:00:28

Hidden deep in caves means they're really sacred and significant.

00:00:28

So I'm using a muttonfish shell to collect this lot in.

00:00:37

To mix this up for my ancestral grandfather I would need to go and probably kill an emu or a kangaroo and cook him and get the marrow out of his bones, the long bones, smash the long bones open and get all that lovely marrow out, and mix it to a greasy paint.

00:00:52

Or get a porcupine or an echidna and get the oil out of his body.

00:00:52

Or mutton bird oil.

00:00:58

So it was greasy paint that was produced back then.

00:01:02

But for my little exercise today, I'm just going to go to the waterhole.

00:01:08

So, imagine that's grease from a kangaroo or an emu.

00:01:15

So it's a beautiful colour.

00:01:18

So, usually I do the crescent moon and the two stars, closest to the moon are her children.

00:01:27

It's truly a beautiful material.



Aboriginal Education

Department of Education Tasmania

knowledge | learning | empowerment

State of Tasmania (Department of Education)
Published 28/5/2019



The Orb → Living Cultures → Ochre → Inland Journey → A Unique Practice

Video Transcript

Patsy Cameron

00:00:02

It's really difficult for me to tell you about the significance of the red.

00:00:04

I might start by telling you that red ochre is really significant to women and so we think of the earth as mother and the red ochre as being part of her veins.

00:00:18

So it's usual that women collect ochre and give it to the men if they want to use it for whatever purpose.

00:00:21

Well, dance and what have you.

00:00:24

You'll see our men paint themselves with ochre.

00:00:31

But that doesn't always follow.

00:00:33

Some men do go and collect ochre.

00:00:35

That's their choice.

00:00:35

But I like to think that I would follow the old practice and collect ochre and give it to our men.



Aboriginal Education

Department of Education Tasmania

knowledge | learning | empowerment

The Orb → Living Cultures → Ochre → Inland Journey → toolumbunner

Video Transcript

Patsy Cameron

00:00:01

mannalargenna, my ancestral grandfather, when he went with Robinson.

00:00:05

He just said he loved the red.

00:00:05

He wanted to see *toolumbunner*.

00:00:10

Which is an amazing place where they gathered red ochre.

00:00:13

He wanted to see where that fine quality red ochre comes from.

00:00:22

And it is absolutely amazing.

00:00:22

It is blood red.

00:00:26

For days, they were preparing skins to wrap their ochre in when they got it from *toolumbunner* to carry it out.

00:00:29

And so they were preparing skins, just like this possum skin, and wallaby and kangaroo skins to roll their ochre up.

00:00:43

And one of the women went into a hole to get ochre out and she got stuck, and they had to pull her out by the feet.

00:00:49

And that was quite interesting.

00:00:49

If you could imagine that, you know, she was so keen to get her hands to the furthest away, the best ochre.

00:01:01

mannalargenna's story tells us that red was special.

00:01:01

And he was, you know, really passionate about it.

00:01:08

It was his favourite type of ochre.

00:01:12

But didn't explain the absolute why.

00:01:15

But we know that it was favoured.



Aboriginal Education

Department of Education Tasmania

knowledge | learning | empowerment

State of Tasmania (Department of Education)
Published 28/5/2019



The Orb → Living Cultures → Ochre → Inland Journey → Identity

Video Transcript

Patsy Cameron

00:00:02

I like to talk about our uniqueness as Tasmanian Aboriginal people.

00:00:06

Whenever we bring non aboriginal people with us and we use ochre - they always find it quite a beautiful experience.

00:00:16

And they feel special.

00:00:16

So, it's something that's special and unique to us.

00:00:21

I had some ladies visit from Japan.

00:00:25

They were older ladies, in their 70s and 80s, and when I did the crescent moon on their hand, and I remember one of them, this beautiful lady stopped, and she just looked at it.

00:00:39

And she was absolutely mesmerised because she'd taken part in a very unique ceremony.

00:00:46

And she felt that.

00:00:46

And whilst I was going to move on to the next lady, the next lady went, no.

00:00:53

And I had to just wait until this lady was just ...

00:00:53

came out of that little trance, if you'd like to call it that.

00:00:59

So, culture and tradition is just something we can express our pride in our culture and our identity and our stories.

00:01:10

It's very special.



Aboriginal Education

Department of Education Tasmania

knowledge | learning | empowerment

State of Tasmania (Department of Education)
Published 28/5/2019



The Orb → Living Cultures → Ochre → Unbroken Relationship → Connection to Place

Video Transcript

Sharnie Everett

00:00:01

Do you want to just talk a little bit about your connection to Murrayfield and the things that you've done over the time here, and why you feel it's an important place?

Rodney Dillon

00:00:09

Well, I suppose when the place came up for sale, and mum and a bloke called Dali Cross, they always talked about Bruny and what it meant to their families, you know, about their grandmothers it would have been came over here with *truganinni* and she taught them how to hunt.

00:00:23

And one of the kids must have been a bit of a vegetarian or something, and they were sitting for probably a couple of hours waiting for the swans to come in, and anyway the kid didn't want the swan to be killed, so the kid jumped up and sung out boo and frightened it away.

00:00:36

She called that kid blabbermouth and said I'd never take her hunting ever again because she waited so long to catch that swan and she couldn't catch it.

00:00:44

Yes, so I suppose there's a bit of history of that relationship that *truganinni* knew that when Fanny's kids were going to need culture in this area and understand it, that she was trying to teach them a bit about how to hunt here and gather.

00:00:55

So, I suppose, there's a bit of that.

00:01:00

But sometimes your heart belongs in a place, doesn't it?

Sharnie Everett

00:01:03

Yeah.

Rodney Dillon

00:01:04

I suppose it's a bit like what comes out of it.

00:01:04

You know, I come here after going away on trips and that because you feel pretty disturbed when they go away on trips.

00:01:08 And to be able to come home and come here, it's like, like it's really calm.
00:01:12 And it's really peaceful.
00:01:12 And it's sort of, you know there's one place you go and you feel like you belong?.

Sharnie Everett
00:01:19 Yeah, a real connection.

Rodney Dillon
00:01:21 Yeah.

00:01:21 Yeah, and I suppose there's a bit of that.

00:01:23 And it's a part of many people's families.

00:01:26 And you come down and see families fishing and gathering, you know, and it just makes you feel proud, like, what you do.

00:01:29 And I suppose that's the feeling I have of the place, the never-ending relationship, I suppose it's called.

00:01:34 And you just keep coming back here.

00:01:39 I'd come back here every day.

00:01:39 I don't camp here but I, yeah, I come here a lot.

00:01:39 And travel.

00:01:47 And, you know, it's because of the relationship that has with our ...

00:01:47 it's part of ...

00:01:47 like yesterday I had a dive and got some fish for some kids.

00:01:55 But this is probably just as much part ...

00:02:01 like, they're all things that our people have done, and lived and done and we're still living it and still doing it.

Sharnie Everett
00:02:07 Yeah and like for me this is ...

00:02:07 the ochre source here is a real connection.

00:02:07 Like, I'm not so much in the water, although I like to dive and stuff like that, but I'm just as connected at sites like this with the ochre.

Rodney Dillon

00:02:24

00:02:24

Yeah, the sites ...

this and Missionary Bay, I think, if you go down there and think about - what happened there and how this land, you know, went out of our hands for 200 years and then it came back.

00:02:38

You know, it's sort of like a poker game or something.

00:02:38

I don't know.

Sharnie Everett

00:02:41

Yeah, there's a rollercoaster of a journey, really, for the community, isn't it?

Rodney Dillon

00:02:45

Yeah, and how you ...

Sharnie Everett

00:02:47

00:02:47

Particularly in that area.

No one ...

00:02:47

there's a burial and, you know, the suffering that occurred.

Rodney Dillon

00:02:54

00:02:54

Yeah, there's ...

yeah, and, you know, they was big boss then, they had control of everything.

00:02:57

You know, everyone's life was on the end of a gun.

Sharnie Everett

00:03:00

Exactly.

Rodney Dillon

00:03:01

00:03:01

00:03:01

00:03:12

And I suppose now it's not.

And to stop and understand the significance of what this ...

how our people had so much value to the ochre and how it lived by ...

it was almost like a currency.

Sharnie Everett

00:03:22

Yeah, a commodity and, you know, a real connection to the Country and the earth itself.

Rodney Dillon

00:03:29

It's a stamp.

Sharnie Everett

00:03:30

And to have it on your skin is not just to show respect to and understanding your country, but it's just kind of showing respect to that story of our people too.

Rodney Dillon

00:03:38

You know you go to some places and you say, well, our families could have been here and could have been there.

00:03:42

But you walk around here and, you know, there's all the old oysters.

00:03:46

And this quarry.

00:03:46

And it's a place where you can say our ancestors were here doing this, - you know.

Sharnie Everett

00:03:52

Yeah, right in this very location.

00:03:52

Where we are right now there's a guarantee we're doing the same thing, talking and sharing stories and feeling the ochre.

Rodney Dillon

00:04:00

And, you know, in a strange way, that's the only way that white people can understand if we're dealing with ochre, because they can see it.

00:04:09

But if we start dealing with a spiritual story or something like that, they can't see it.

Sharnie Everett

00:04:15

You're right.

00:04:15

It's a difficult concept for non-aboriginal people to understand, your spiritual connection to country.

00:04:21

Do you guys use the ochre much here?

Rodney Dillon

00:04:23

No, I come and play with it.

00:04:23

I don't even take one piece home for some strange reason.

00:04:27

We come here and show the kids and we put some on the kids here one day and had a bit of a game down here on the shore.

00:04:30

But to be able to come here and just sort of pick it up.

00:04:33

And the yellow in it.

00:04:33

And the red.

Sharnie Everett

Yeah, there's some nice yellow through here.

00:04:35

Rodney Dillon

Yeah.

00:04:38

Sharnie Everett

There's some white on the property.

00:04:39

00:04:39

Bobby was telling me there's some white on your mum's property too.

Rodney Dillon

Yeah, there's big ...

00:04:43

00:04:43

the whitening hole, yeah.

00:04:43

I could take you to that.

Sharnie Everett

Yeah, that'll be awesome.

00:04:47

00:04:47

Probably not today but sometime ...

Rodney Dillon

No, no.

00:04:51

00:04:51

Yeah, no, the whitening hole.

00:04:51

Yep.

00:04:51

And it's real white too.

00:04:51

But the only trouble is, when you put it on it stings.

Sharnie Everett

Serious?

00:04:59

Rodney Dillon

Yeah, it's got a bit of bite to it, like, it's like it's got chilli or something.

00:05:00

00:05:05

It burns you.

00:05:05

And I don't know what's in it.

Sharnie Everett

00:05:10

Wondering.

Rodney Dillon

00:05:11

Yeah.

00:05:11

Whether we're supposed to use it or not.

00:05:11

But, you know, like come here and pluck a piece of this, like people would have done probably 300 years ago and had a talk here on a day with the sun out.

Sharnie Everett

00:05:24

Yeah.

00:05:24

No, certainly it's a nice source.

00:05:24

It's a nice colour.

Rodney Dillon

00:05:29

Yeah.

Sharnie Everett

00:05:30

I mean, you've got the other colours around too for ceremony and dance and that.

00:05:34

You'd need it.

Rodney Dillon

00:05:34

But people would have had different colours for different reasons, so they would have traded with it.

Sharnie Everett

00:05:39

Yep.

Rodney Dillon

00:05:40

I wonder what you would have got for it?

Sharnie Everett

00:05:43

I guess it depends on the value of the other commodities, doesn't it, what else you want.

Rodney Dillon

00:05:47

Yeah.

Sharnie Everett

00:05:48

00:05:48

And who else wants this.

Value's in the beholder, isn't it?

Rodney Dillon

00:05:52

Yeah.



Aboriginal Education

Department of Education Tasmania

knowledge | learning | empowerment