



Deloraine: My Story

A story of growing up in Deloraine and the significance of the area by local Aboriginal man, Greg Murray.

'Deloraine: My Story'

"Deloraine to me was a great place to grow & learn as a kid. My brother and I would live on the banks of the river swimming, fishing, bike riding.

It is a small but friendly small town, close knit relying on farming and timber harvesting mostly at the time for employment and family survival, life in general was very tough.

Growing up in Deloraine as an Aboriginal kid had its ups and downs, but I have grown to be a strong, very proud Aboriginal man with extremely strong cultural ties to the "Great Western Tiers" Deloraine area.

The Concept of the "Bush Tucker Trail" was born by me because I believe that Deloraine & the community is a very underestimated little town for what it has/can offer as a tourist destination.

It is the "Gate Way" to the great Western Tiers", home to many sacred Aboriginal sites where my people lived and survived many generations ago.

I wanted to construct the BTT because I wanted to share my knowledge and "my stories" on how my ancestors lived and travelled along the banks of the Meander River, and how it was their life line for many reasons.

I wanted to share it not only with the local community but national and international visitors to the area so as they can see that 'Tasmanian Aborigines' do still exist, we are still here, and contrary to belief we weren't all wiped out years ago.

I also would like to share some insight as to how they travelled, what they ate, and how they utilised various flora " Bush Tucker" (plants) for nutritional & or medicinal purposes and aromatic's, educate others on how we were nomadic tribes traversing often extremely difficult terrain at times walking for days, at a time because of change in the seasons from "Bitter Cold" in the central plateau to the coast line to escape the freezing conditions.

An equally important part of the trail is also to get the local schools and students involved in the "Bush Tucker Trail" project by creating art & "Hand Stencils" on the pillars of the train bridge at Deloraine by the participating students, as done by my people in a semi traditional method using ground ochre and sprayed over the hand by a traditional means.

This would give them "ownership" of the area and the project where they would be more likely to protect something they have helped to create, and can share with their future generations much in the same way as we do today.

This is a method still practised today, as a way to educate our young, spraying ground ochre (only gathered by Aboriginal women) by mouth over the hand leaving a negative type picture on the surface that it was applied to.

This is done for many reasons: Education of the young, ownership for our tribes of our land, story- telling and ceremony.

This has been, in part, 'my story' and what Deloraine means to me as a local Aborigine, I sincerely hope that this is just the first step in 'Closing the Gap'.