

Shame! Shame ! Shame! The History the British Hide!

*They came, they took, they plundered
And without thought pillaged and hunted!*

Marty Ogle



On Tuesday 14th January 2020, one of Tasmania's and Australia's most important historical events took place at a very small but very significant venue south of Hobart. A 'Truth Telling' workshop was held at the Fanny Cochrane - Smith Church at Nicholls Rivulet in front of hundreds of concerned participants. They heard from local Aboriginals about neglected historical occurrences that have been squashed and been a part of the systematic censorship by historians influenced by the British invaders.

Fanny Cochrane-Smith after whom the church was named, was a strong Aboriginal woman, who was born under the British tyranny on Flinders Island where many stolen generation Aboriginal people lived and died. She was one of the 46 survivors who returned to Tasmania's mainland to live her remaining years around the Oyster Bay area and her inspirational influence continues to be seen and felt amongst her offspring and other Aboriginal people.

The Truth Telling workshop, coordinated by SETAC (South East Tasmanian Corporation) was an extremely important historical event with strong statements of reconciliation from the Tasmanian Governor, Her Excellency Kate Warner AC, the Premier Will Hodgeman, the Huon Valley Mayor Bec Enders and community representatives from the RSL, CWA, faith groups and Reconciliation Tasmania. All pledged to do much more in the education, reconciliation and acknowledgement of what has occurred in the last 240 years in Tasmania.

A telling feature of the workshop was when descendants of Fanny Cochrane-Smith plus other Aboriginal young people asked searching questions of a panel made up of Scott Batchelor, 85 year old Graeme Cowan, Deb Hocking, Alison Overeen, Aunty Shirley, Tracey and Rodney Dillon and the Rev John Middleton.

All the panel answered the children's questions from the heart. We heard how various members of the panel had discovered their connection to their aboriginality and how many of them have suffered horrifically from racism, rape, being stolen from their families and suffering abuse in its many ugly and life changing forms.

Rodney Dillon quietly spoke about his negative and positive journey - trying to find a way to come to grips with

- how the British attempted to destroy and deny his Aboriginal culture.
- The Black War and the genocide that took place
- The lies and the unspoken truths
- Finding a way forward.

All the members of the panel expressed how they have had to suppress traumas and how this continues to impact them in their current lives. Deb Hocking reinforced the need to 'UNLEARN' the lies and misinformation that were taught and the need for an active acknowledgement of Aboriginal history. The passionate panel spoke about how members of their families and themselves had been mistreated and that the threads of yesteryear are still disconnecting Aboriginals with family and friends turning to alcohol, drugs and crime.

As an observer, I was deeply saddened to hear of what was inflicted on the First Tasmanians and how it still deeply impacts on the

Tasmanian Aboriginal community. There is a strong need to have 'active' acknowledgement of the disgusting atrocities that were perpetrated on the First Tasmanians and their descendants over the past 240 years - they need this so they may move on and be able to continue to share their amazing talents, skills, dreams and uniqueness. At the workshop a number of Christians representing various faiths, read letters from their leaders, sincerely apologising for where they had 'gotten it wrong' in the past and offered to work with Tasmanian Aboriginals so as they can positively move forward in the future. Also the written words from the Governor (The Queens representative) were powerfully apologetic as was the statement from Will Hodgman.



The United Nations in its [Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide](#) , Article II describes the following

In the present Convention, genocide means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such:

- a. Killing members of the group;
- b. Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;
- c. Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;
- d. Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group;

- e. Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.*

The British actively participated in all five of the above areas and it has and continues to mentally scar descendants of the First Tasmanians. There is a need for the British to actively acknowledge that when they arrived in Tasmania, as well as stealing land and destroying wildlife that had been a part of the Tasmanian landscape, they committed genocide.

The First Tasmanians have been a part of the tapestry of this land for over 80,000 years. However the Western influence and destruction has only taken just over 200 years to displace, to write a lie filled history and tried to eradicate a truly beautiful race of people who had taken care of themselves and a land to which they are closely spiritually connected.

As my beautiful mum Marie often said 'It is never too late to say sorry!' As long as you truly mean it, sincerely apologise and if necessary offer retribution. We must do more than just say sorry.

* <https://www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/genocide.shtml>

Marty Ogle, a white 'fella', a teacher and an author who was deeply influenced by the wise words from Aunty Ida West.