

**Welcome to Country presented by Aunty Patsy Cameron at the 21 November  
2022 Council Meeting**

Yah Pulingina, meena yah pulinginga neena melythina  
Lenneretter.

Hello. Greetings. I welcome you to the country of my ancestors who belonged to the land that is now known as part of the Dorset municipality.

It was many thousands of years ago, at the beginning of human history of Trouwerner (Tasmania), when the ancestors watched the first sunrise appear over the eastern horizon. My people have lived here for at least 1,500 generations.

During the last Ice-Age the First People were the most southerly living people on Earth. Humans had not yet reached the American continent and the African continent was higher in latitude than the southernmost peninsula of the Great Southern Continent we now call Australia and Tasmania.

When the last Ice-Age ended and the seas reached the present-day level, and created what we now call Bass Strait, the people of Trouwerner were the most isolated human beings on Earth for the next 10,000 years. During this long period of time my ancestors were isolated from the rest of humanity until a fleet of British ships dropped anchor in the Derwent River in 1803 and from that time their lifeworld changed forever.

Through my mother's line I am a direct descendant of Mannalargenna who belonged to the Pairreebeene/Trawlwoolway clan of Tebrakunna Country – the area known as Cape Portland and southwards to the foothills near Ringarooma.

Mannalargenna was born about 1775.

As a revered leader, formidable warrior and seer of his clan he walked proudly in his ancestor's footprints, sang songs and danced, hunted and told ancient stories about his connections to the land, sea and sky. Mannalargenna was a young man of about 23 when he saw the first European ships enter Bass Strait in 1798 and he probably wondered what this meant to his people.

The area around Bridport was an important camping place for the First people. They harvested the coastal rock platforms for sea food and collected swan eggs among the vast ti-tree swamps of the Great Forester River. The area around Waterhouse was a favourite hunting ground for emu and forester kangaroo. One of the largest traditional bark huts was found in the nearby Wonder Valley – it was twelve metres long and would have sheltered up to 40 people.

In the late 1800s and early 1900s Bridport was used as a place of trade for families from the Bass Strait islands who sailed their boats across to the coast on route to the Tamar River where they traded surplus vegetables, skins, salted birds, feathers and shell necklaces for materials and supplies they needed for their survival on their remote island homes.

My mother told me that when she was young my old grandfather Silas Mansell and his brothers would come to Bridport with the family during the tin mining season. This would have been during the late 1920s and 30s.

We now share this beautiful heart shaped island home and are intimately connected with the northeast region in many different ways. I have lived on my ancestral lands at Tomahawk for about 20 years now so I think I qualify as a local. In conclusion I am extremely privileged to extend this welcome to all of you and especially those of you who are new members of the Dorset Council. I wish you all well in your endeavours.

Wollighererprenener (goodbye).