



Aire River estuary 2017

A group of Gadubanud were killed here in an infamous massacre in 1846. While surveyor George Smythe was working in the area, one of his party was murdered by Aborigines near Blanket Bay. Smythe hurried home and organised a punitive expedition, returning a month later with a number of Wada wurrung Native Police. Seven Gadubanud people were reportedly killed when they were found camping on the Aire River. Until recently this shocking incident has been seen as the end of the Gadubanud, but there is evidence that there were survivors, even though there may have been more people killed than the number reported.

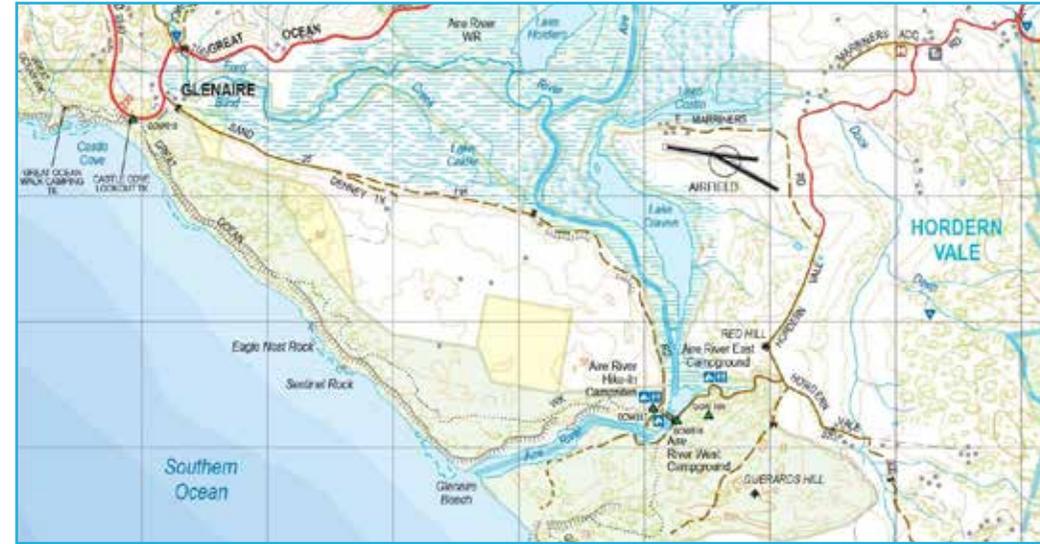
### Aire River to Castle Cove

The 4 km trip along the shore could only be attempted with a low tide and a calm sea. The first kilometre to Sentinel Rock is relatively easy, but to venture much further towards Castle Cove would involve difficult and tedious rock hopping among the maze of boulders that have fallen onto the shore. I have tried it from both ends but have never persisted all the way. Instead, take the Great Ocean Walk, which nears the shore towards Castle Cove.

Sentinel Rock is hardly grand enough to justify having its name on the map. It is a rock stack embedded among the mass of fallen material on the shore. You can just see it below the Great Ocean Walk. The lower rock strata behind the shore were formed from sediments deposited in a marine environment from about 38 million years ago. But they are rarely visible, being concealed by slumped material from higher up the slope. The highest rock strata here, up around the Great Ocean Walk, are much more recent, of calcarenite formed from wind-blown sand during the Pleistocene. As the Great Ocean Walk approaches Castle Cove, it drops closer to the shore below a massive cliff composed of this calcarenite.

### Castle Cove, Glenaire

Many travellers on the Great Ocean Road stop at the car park on the cliff top and see this beautiful spot from the viewing platform. Access to the beach from here is no longer encouraged because it is not a safe place to swim. But you will be able to find a track down from the car park or scramble the short distance down to the beach from the Great Ocean Walk.



Castle Cove. Dipping Eumeralla Formation more than 100 million years old. Photo 2017



Nearby, much younger sandstone, also dipping eastward. Photo 2017

Castle Cove is a geological site of State significance (165). At the western end of the beach, the layers of grey Eumeralla sandstones and mudstones are almost horizontal until they dip abruptly down below beach level. This dip is thought to be caused by the sub-surface 'Castle Cove Fault'. Further east behind the beach, still dipping steeply, are layers that were deposited on the sea floor over a period of about 30 million years from roughly 50 million years ago. This is a time when the sea was encroaching as Gondwana was breaking up and Australia was pulling away from Antarctica. Shell fossils can be seen in some of these layers.



Shell fossils from around 50 million years ago, Castle Cove Photo 2017