

## Canning River Paddle 2013

It's quite something to stand on a river bank early in the morning and see a pristine river surface unbroken by water craft... Peaceful, quiet and encourages the paddler to take a deep cleansing breath and enjoy the moment.



So here I am at 8am on a Sunday morning, on the river bank between Shelly and Riverton Bridge, an excellent spot to unload your kayak and get yourself onto the water.

Within the next quarter of an hour my fellow paddlers turned up and with little fuss we got ourselves organised for the Canning River.

Following the briefing, pleasingly light on the danger front thanks to the fact that the majority of the water craft are fellow paddlers, just the odd tinny we set out. My fellow paddlers from SCC and one from Canning canoe club were all fairly well versed in the art of paddling at a reasonable pace while discussing world events, paddling technique and latest club news and within 20 minutes we found ourselves at Kent St Weir.



Here our first surprise of the day, thanks to a higher than normal tide, the water was flowing over the boards of the weir, upstream.... Well not something you see every day, so two of us, paddling in plastic kayaks of course took the easy route over the weir!

A short portage later for the others and we continued up stream. Our plan was to paddle upstream for an hour from our start point. In that time we enjoyed the sights of the Canning River as it meanders through the Canning regional park. Lots of bird life, the odd fish jumping and the only danger: that posed by the aeration pipe that in the odd place was floating just under the surface.



We made good headway up the river and hit the hour mark and retraced our steps back to the start point. Just after Kent St weir the second surprise, the appearance of a train alongside on the river bank. Running along this section of the river is the Castledare Miniature Railway, but for all of us on the river that morning this was the first time any of us had seen the train running while paddling. Continuing downstream after this point we took time to explore some of the

many channels that make up this part of the river, the odd one a dead end, but varied the way back to the route we took on the way up.

Then darting out from one of the channels we espied the Riverton Bridge and journey's end. So 2 hours after starting and 10.2 km later we found ourselves on the river bank sharing scones, coffee and apple and date bread while fending off the attentions of two very persistent swans... Oh and the last surprise of the day, a dolphin taking advantage of the higher tides and swimming upriver towards Riverton bridge.... What a way to finish.

