

Fish Camp to Kyalite

Day Three Tuesday 4 February 2003

The curse of Kevin's swag zip cut through the early morning.

The Boat Crew left camp (Barratta Station Reserve) about 9.00 a.m. and shortly after took a scenic tour for about three kilometers up a backwater. Not lost – just geographically embarrassed.

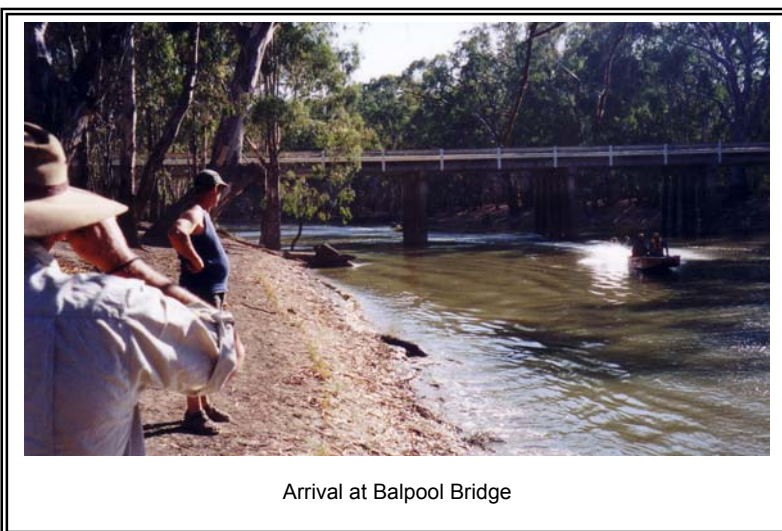


Early morning at Barratta

Graham and Keith jumped a log and immediately hit a second log. Keith's arms were caught under the log, snapping it and injuring his arms. He was lucky not to break his arm(s).

The Support Crew rendezvoused with the Boat Crew at Balpool Bridge and met Mira Peterman and his wife testing the water for the Department of Water Resources. While some readings were elevated, he declared the overall condition of the water to be acceptable. Fine for boating.

Back on the water, Fred and Cameron were scooting along when they saw a pelican come in to land, crash and flip on its back. As they sped by it was last seen flapping its wings and kicking its legs in the air.



Arrival at Balpool Bridge

At Woomoora Pump, the Support Crew walked into the riverbank to refuel the boats and change crew. While waiting, they saw a pair of Wedge-tail Eagles hunting. The presence of the eagles alarmed a large flock of Little Corellas. The 'sentry' bird dare not fail to warn the flock – the others kill errant sentries.

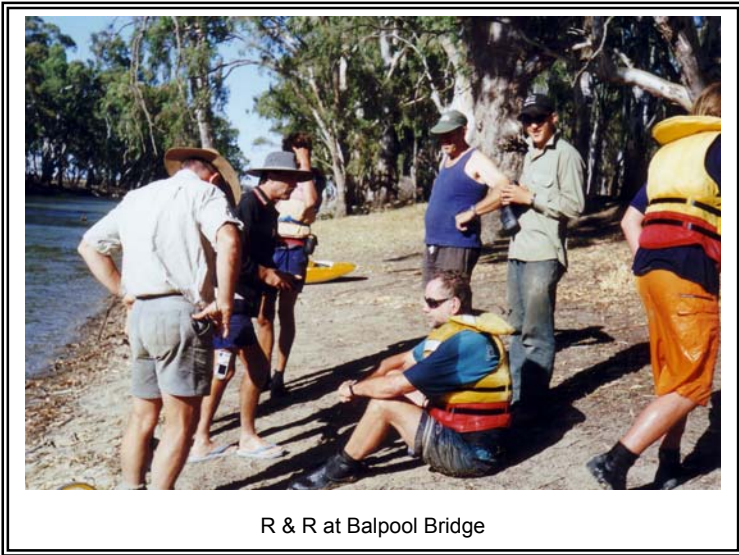
Moulamein

Situated at the junction of the Edward River and Billabong Creek, Moulamein is the oldest town in the Riverina.

It was officially proclaimed in 1851, but may well have been "founded" before that time. At this time Moulamein was said to be the "chief city" of the vast Riverina district and was considered more important than Albury. It had two stores and a public house, and the population was given as "one or two white ladies and 300 black gins."

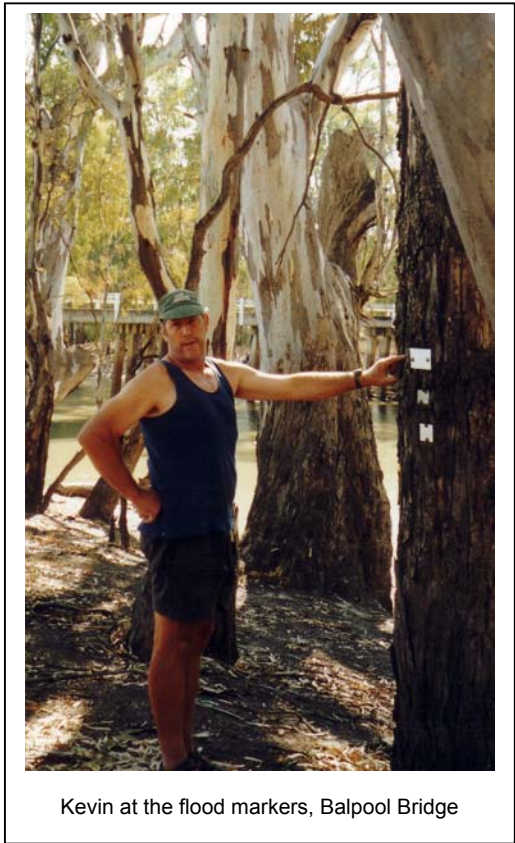
Moulamein ('meeting of the waters') was a crossroad and port where the paddle steamers plying the Edward River could exchange cargo in the days when the river system was the most effective means of transport.

Today Moulamein has a population of 500 and is more closely associated with Victoria than NSW. Grazing, wheat cultivation and, in particular, rice growing are the economic mainstays. The town's rice receival depot is an enormous complex with 25 bins storing up to 44 000 tonnes of rice at a time.

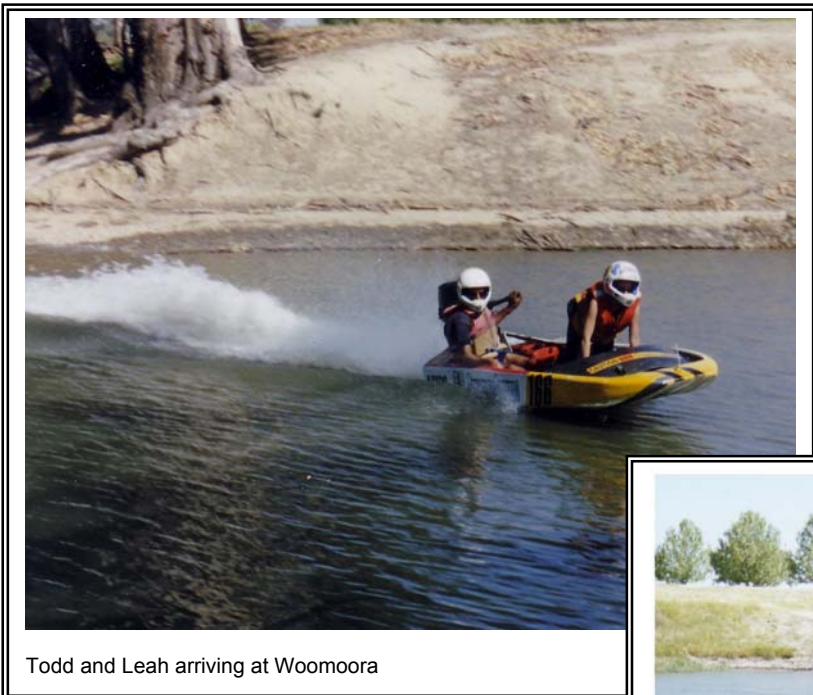


R & R at Balpool Bridge

Keith decided to recuperate from his argument with the tree branch and changed places in Boat 148 with Kim. Just before the boats were ready, an employee of the Station arrived and berated Kim for not getting permission to enter the property. In an interesting observation of the group dynamic, everyone's diary entries for that day stated, "Kim got busted for trespassing and then we continued on".



Kevin at the flood markers, Balpool Bridge



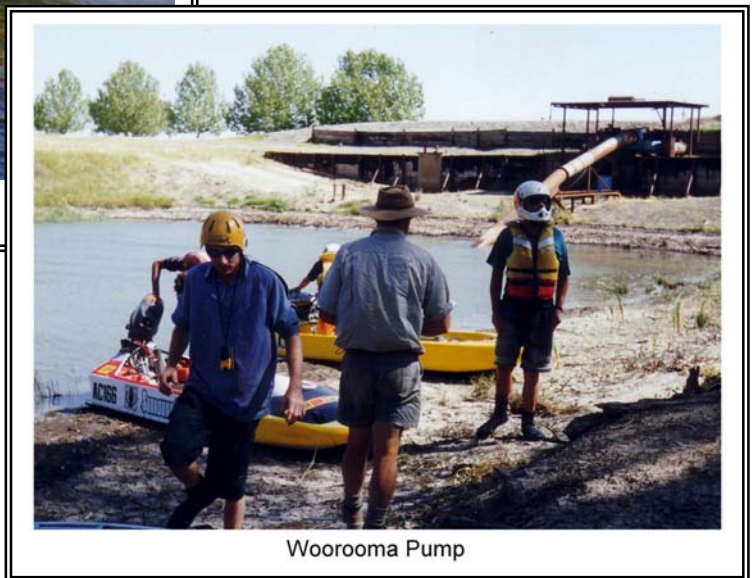
Todd and Leah arriving at Woomoora

It was a great run to Moulamein. Lots of logs with a couple of jumps. Todd got a photo of Graham and Kim tackling a big jump. Kim hurt his wrist on landing – he had forgotten what a big jump was like.

The Support Crew had difficulties getting across the bridge at Moulamein. A crane had to be moved, causing a 45 minute wait but eventually they crossed and found a

spot below the bridge where they could prepare lunch and refuel the boats.

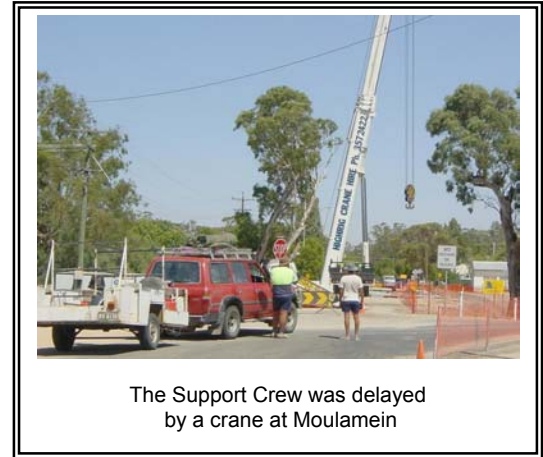
On leaving the lunch site Cameron was distracted while putting on his gloves and a half meter bow wave catapulted him into the drink.



Woomoora Pump



Aquila audax sometimes confused with *Pelecanus conspicillatus*



The Support Crew was delayed by a crane at Moulamein

Leah continued in 166 with Todd and later during the afternoon made her first log jump.

The Support Crew was busy getting fuel, drinks and ice after lunch. Ian got closer to his bank manager after having to pay \$85 for a slab of Bundy and Cola for Todd and \$20 for a dozen mid strength!! Strewth!!

It was necessary to re-confirm pre-expedition refuelling procedures at the fuel stop downstream from Moulamein after a number of lapses by various people could have had disastrous results. Fortunately, the only result was anxiety.

Kyalite

Kyalite is a small town of a few dozen people on the banks of the Wakool River 58 kilometers west of Moulamein. The Kyalite Hotel was established in 1858 and has been faithfully restored.

Kyalite is the aboriginal name for the Edward River in that area.



Leah and Todd

Leah made herself popular with Ian by slamming one of the Camp Kitchen trailer doors on his finger. Tell Ian that bad things come in threes and you would get no argument.

It was very hot (38°C +) and difficult to get people moving but eventually the downriver push re-started.



Coming in to refuel between Moulamein and Kyalite



Between Moulamein and Kyalite

For the rest of the afternoon the river flowed through State Forest.

The Kyalite road came close to some of the many bends and the Support Crew were able regularly check on the Boat Crew.

Numerous shortcuts through the lower reaches of the

Edward before it flowed into the Wakool caused Fred some confusion but, as the Boat Crew made it to Kyalite, he obviously found the correct route.



Todd and Leah



Running repairs at the Kyalite overnight stop



Kim bowls to a packed on side field



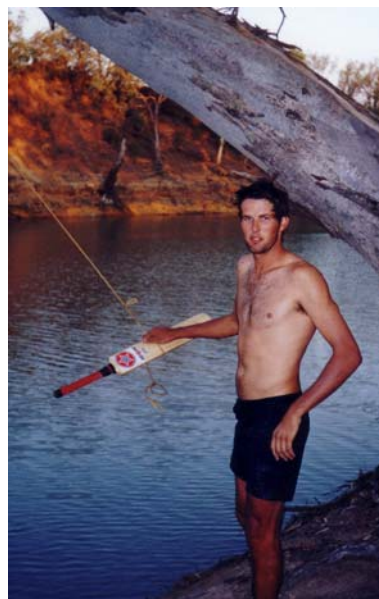
Into the river and you're out



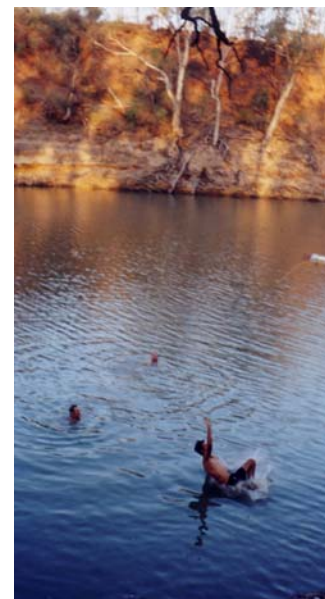
Todd with swing



Todd set up the rope swing



Cricketer with swing



Having fun

No obvious campsite immediately presented itself at Kyalite but after a bit of scouting around and, after Barb's suggestion to move away from the main road, a suitable spot was found, complete with a boat ramp of sorts and a flat area that would be ideal for a cricket pitch.

The camp was set up and the Test Match commenced. A suitcase did duty as the stumps. Cam fielded at silly mid on, well protected with helmet and lifejacket. A ball hit into the river was out. Everyone had a bat and a bowl.

With the Test Match concluded it was time to cool off. Todd made a rope swing. He was persuaded to check the water for snags before he dived off the swing.

The gourmands and the gourmets appreciated the meal.