

Australia 2010

OKA Rally at Glen Mervyn Dam or

11 1/2 OKAs and Angelika

Leg details

Date April 21 - April 26, 2010

Leg Perth - Australind - Collie - Glen Mervyn Dam - Perth

PDF



Leg map (click to enlarge in separate window)



We leave Perth on Wednesday, April 21, 2010, fully packed with all of the food for ANZAC day long-weekend and of course for Ruedi's memorable 60th birthday party that is planned for Sunday!

The weather is not very promising ... drizzle accompanying us all the way through **Australind** and up to **Collie**.

It is already late afternoon when we arrive at **Glen Mervyn Dam**.

We check out the possible sites for the OKA rally and decide to settle on the flattest area near the boat ramp (there is a toilet there too, so no digging is required. Great!)



Soon we are all wrapped up in rain jackets busily setting up OKA signs so people can find us. Then we drive down to the water's edge and settle down for the night.



On Thursday morning we finish setting up camp.

Shortly after lunch an OKA drives into the camp.

As we only know some of the people coming we eagerly get out to greet the new arrival.

But they are not coming for the rally, they don't even know about it!

It is John from OKA 428 and he has only had his OKA for 2 weeks and it not (yet) involved in the OKA community.

But he promises to be back on Sunday with his wife.

Just a few minutes after he leaves the next OKA drives into the camp.

It is Rowena Paterson with her XT 067.

She picks her spot and Ruedi digs the wholes in the sand so the OKA stands a bit more level.

(We had decided that we would dig the holes as we had also chosen the site ... and it is a bit crooked but it is the most level spot close to the toilets!)

Next to arrive is Hal, with Elisabeth and Jack.

Setting up their equipment takes a bit longer than Rowena's but it is mighty convenient that he brings a large gazebo, the weather is deteriorating and it looks as if we might get some rain.



Hal has also brought some of his newest "toys", one of them being a fuel cell.

Ruedi (and later on many other OKA owners) is wrapped and studies the prospectus very carefully.

He even measures the battery compartment to see if one would fit and it does, so we better start saving.

On Friday morning there is still light rain falling so we stay in bed a bit longer.



But then the weather clears up and it is time to get the boat into the water.

Jack and Elisabeth don't mind the cold water and soon Daddy Hal is taking them for a spin.



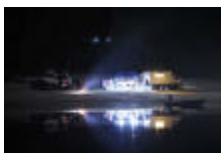
During the day Beverly and Richard House in their XT 080 arrive.

In the evening we al gather under Hal's gazebo and enjoy the light of his new LED lamps.

We are impressed with the amount of light these LED strips generate and how little electricity they use.

Now we are really reaching a quality of LED light where normal lights don't have any advantage anymore.

We decide to get one of them and leave our fluorescent tube in the shed.



Hal walks around the lake and takes this great photo. Thanks for it.

Even though Hal and the kids make a fire the temperature drops quickly and it gets rather unpleasant so we all go to bed quite early.

On Saturday morning Hal's wife Liza joins us ... and brings some more blankets (Bev and Richard House measured 2.8°C as lowest temperature over night).

Soon the OKAs start rolling into camp and it gets hectic for Ruedi with his "job" of digging the holes.

Of course a lot of OKA-ing happens

Must of the group don't know each other so it is quite interesting to meet know OKA owners and have a closer look at their OKAs and its interior.

Angelika from OKA and her partner David arrive.



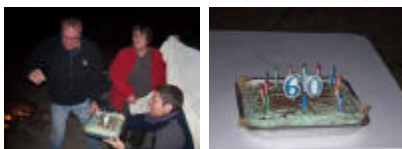
We had reserved the only flat "caravan site" in the area for them as they are not (yet) used to "out bush camping".



After diner we all get together at the camp fire.

Thanks to Robert Williamson we have a lot of firewood and can afford a large fire to keep us all warm.

Today is Ruedi's 60. birthday. Cherry Williamson brings a surprise cake for Ruedi.



The wind keeps blowing out the candles so a blanket is held up as wind stopper and Ruedi gets his chance of blowing out his candles!

Later on the instruments come out Cherry plays a Swiss song ("Es Buurebüebli mag i nid") on her flute and then of course "Happy Birthday".

Then it is Ruedi's turn to play on the guitar.

Shame Rowena did not bring her didgeridoo!

Even though David keeps placing warm coals under the chairs of the ladies by 9:30 PM it just gets too cold and we all go to bed.



On Sunday morning we wake up to 0.4 °C!!!!

During the morning John and Nell Blencowe from XT 428 come for a visit.

While John is busy OKA-ing Nell has a look at the various campers and is surprised to hear that the OKA is also a "ladies truck" and driven by many of the OKA owner's wives and partners.

John and Nell become the newest members of the OKA owners club.

Welcome!

Angelika's partner David is busy talking to the OKA owners and we get the impression that he would not mind owning an OKA himself



... so we "alter" his Pajero a bit.

But as we run away from the car Beverly House slips and strains her ankle.

(We later find out that she has actually broken the fibula at the ankle and had to be operated.)

We wish Beverly all the best and a speedy recovery!

Shirley and Robert Burrows arrive in a 2WD.

Their XT 009 is parked in South Australia but being WA members they don't want to miss out on the rally.

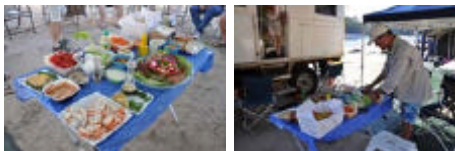
We all agree that they should be counted as well ... but only half!

In the afternoon the party starts.

Shirley and Robert Burrows get their 2WD to fetch Beverly and bring her down to the group.



Her foot is still very sore but she manages a brave smile.



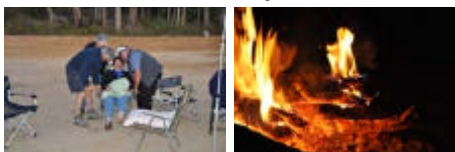
All the goodies are placed on the table and we enjoy a great selection of "nibbles": Crayfish, various antipastos, egg and bacon pie, great red wine, dips, chips Thanks again to all the members and their contributions making this such a great party!



As most of us don't know each other Ruedi distributes name tags making everybody's life a bit easier



Then Jo-Anne gets up and tells us that she has checked out every OKA and also how level they are standing by placing her iPhone on the bull bars and using the level app on it. The winners are David and Pauline Gray with XT 137!



Then it is time to move down to the fire for dinner. Beverly is carried down in her chair. Luckily the suggestion of Dave to dip her into the lake is not followed The spaghetti dinner is followed by vanilla custard, chocolate mud cake, Swiss chocolate, marshmallows, Swiss biscuits ... too much anyway but we all have a good time. Kim Blyteh would have loved to stay on but as he came without Helen he leaves after dinner. Well, guess next time he will bring Helen along so they can stay! The weather deteriorates and we can watch a great night sky with a moon with a large circle around it being crossed by clouds, absolutely amazing. Then at 9:30 PM some light rain sets in and quickly the party disperses in no time.



On Monday morning the first ones start packing up. Quickly Hal gets Susi out onto the lake for a last group photo It was a great weekend and already some plans are being made to have another rally in September or October. We know that some WA OKA owners that were tied up for this weekend will come too, so we might get close to the 26 Victoria holds as record! Here the list of the OKAs that were at Glen Mervyn Dam:



Hal and Liza Harvey (with Elizabeth & Jack) LT 260



Rowena Paterson XT 067



Richard and Beverly House XT 080



David and Pauline Gray XT 137



Terry and Debbie Morris XT 090



Robert and Cherry Williamson XT 248



Kim Blythe (without Helen!!) XT 155



Rob Thomas (with Richard) XT 162



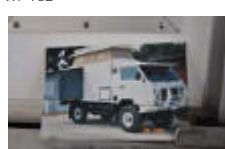
Alan Bajada and Jo-Anne Allchin XT 159



Ruedi and Susi Schoensleben NT 001

sorry, no picture, they left too quickly

John and Nell Blencowe LT 428



Shirley and Robert Burrows XT 009 (in SA)

And the "want to be an OKA"



David and Angelika

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