

## **39<sup>th</sup> Annual GPA Swim-In and Military Vehicle Gathering at Corowa** **12-18<sup>th</sup> March 2018**

KVE knew that this could be a record breaking year with a theme such as “Year of the Land Rover “. We were aware that the jeep owners were going to also come out in force as there has not been one year that the Land Rover numbers have exceeded the jeeps. The theme vehicles this year exceeded the jeeps and now let us look at what might happen in 2021 when we have Year of the Jeep! With the number of Land Rovers being sold by Australian Frontline Machinery through Graysonline there could be another battle particularly with the increased use of social media and other clubs which have helped promote our event.

It is always difficult to predict the numbers of participants that are likely to pre-register for each of our events. Between 20<sup>th</sup> January and the end of February there were 200 people just in those few weeks. We had to organise for the plaques to be done 6 weeks prior and we were only able to get 320 done which also includes plaques for the appreciation awards. Fortunately we were able to get 350 hats made and this just covered the pre-registrations received up until 28<sup>th</sup> February. We appreciate all those who did pre-register and there was only 5% who didn't pre-register this year. For those who are unable to attend we are able to do the following about your participant packs:

1. Give it to a person who can collect it on your behalf
2. Transfer your money to the following year or ...
3. Offer a refund when we know prior to the event so we can issue your pack to another participant.

Richard Farrant drove our Land Rover with Troy as a passenger part way as Troy had a work injury 3 weeks prior and has been unable to drive. (Definitely a candidate for the Hard Luck Award.) Upon our arrival in Corowa on Friday 9<sup>th</sup> March there were a few vehicles around town and we enjoyed a meal at the Newmarket Hotel which is one of our favourite eating venues. The hot rods were arriving in town for the weekend which occurs every second year.

John Oldenmenger arrived on Saturday with the Radar Van site office and with a group of helpful participants the shade and office were set up prior to the end of the day. We went to the main street and watched the Hot Rods at night. The street was closed for the event and they used the same traffic management organisation we used for our parade.

On Monday there was an ongoing roll up of vehicles and by the end of the day there was a record of 86 vehicles. It was looking like a good week was in order.

We had a huge influx of people who have never attended the Swim-In before and I hope they all had a great time and will return again. Just remember you don't have to bring a vehicle to pre-register and we encourage people with any military vehicle to register. We went to my favourite Italian restaurant on Monday evening for a delicious meal. It was great to see Kristian from Everyman with us again. He is doing up a Jeep so one day he might be able to come along with the jeep.

Many thanks to the large number of people who helped at the site office and special thanks to those who did a few shifts. You are guaranteed to meet many people. We decided to have 4 people on each shift due to trying to streamline the process and if interested in helping next year touch base with me anytime



from now until March 2019. We set up sheets for people to put their names on for attending meal functions and for the trips to the schools at Lowesdale and Wangaratta. This made it easier to determine numbers and we would like to thank all who indicated their attendance. Brian Healey offered to do a Daily newspaper after there hadn't been any response from KVE members. He did a great job and was very impressed at some trip reports given to him from Don Campbell, a VMVC member. We are seeking another person who may be able to do this job in 2019.

Throughout the week our event was promoted a number of times by local television stations and newspapers. The Wangaratta Chronicle came along to Wangaratta, the Border Mail came over on Friday afternoon and the local Corowa Free Press had a few reports leading up to the event and did an excellent coverage during the event.

The activities started on Wednesday. There was a pre-booked trip to Bandiana Army Museum led by Mick Morrissey and the numbers attending were higher than in past years. The group met up outside Uncle Toby's at Wahgunyah and only people who had contacted Mick by the Friday before Corowa could attend. Money was collected and then they proceeded in convoy. I went ahead of the group to meet up with Prime 7. After a visit from the Military Police who were not aware of the arrival of the vehicles we they were given approval to film away from the base. Many thanks to Mick for organising this and the VMVC for putting on a BBQ for lunch. We then headed out to see Bill Toole and arrived back at Corowa in the middle of the afternoon.

Meanwhile Neville Smith led approximately 15 military vehicles and some people in their modern vehicles, out to the Lowesdale School and the group then went back to Neville Smith's for a BBQ lunch and enabled people to see his collection of vehicle and collectables.

On the Thursday I watched as a large group of vehicles headed over the bridge to the Wahgunyah Primary School. Many thanks to those people who took their vehicle to one of the schools. The children always look forward to this.



In the afternoon there was a visit to Max's Motor Museum. Apparently there was a communication error at the Museum as Neville had been in contact with them prior to let them know the participants would be visiting. Each evening Nick Stuart lit up the sky with his 150cm Searchlight this time, it was its first appearance at Corowa. Nick towed the light and the 3 phase generator was hired in Corowa. It was the first time he has run it in this configuration as he did not want to overload the gene so ran it at about half power. In spite of this the shaft of light was observed from Shepparton in Victoria, 60 miles away !

Friday ended up being a very busy day. We had a KVE breakfast at Ball Park and then there were 2 trips. One was to get as many Land Rovers as possible to go out to Lowesdale/Buraja for a photoshoot. The plan was for a 10am departure from Rovers Park (opposite the entrance to Ball Park). A group of Land Rovers had stayed at Blighty overnight and they were to meet us at the photoshoot at 10:30. As part of a successful convoy people were given details of the CB channel to be used so there would be no dramas with people getting lost. Approx. 65 Land Rovers ended up at the photoshoot and with an elevated building the vehicles were organised into lines with the Gun Buggies at the front, followed by the other Series and Perenties at the rear. 6x6 Land Rovers and 101's were put to the left and right side. This event went really well and participants were advised that if they wanted to head to Wangaratta there would be a convoy which went well.

The vehicles not attending the photoshoot headed off just prior to 10am to Wangaratta and went up through the main street of Corowa and across the new bridge to avoid issues associated with the traffic lights on the old bridge. It is important for people to be on time and leave with the group. In the future a CB channel will be nominated and map will be given out those in the convoy.

Upon arriving at Wangaratta participants were given an opportunity to go on a guided tour through the facility. KVE were given permission to hold a sausage sizzle and Kristian from Everyman was with us to provide the drinks. I arrived around midday and Doug Hamilton had already done one demonstration with a 1941 PT-22 Ryan trainer. After taking our group around the facility he then put up another, a 1941 Harvard AT6 trainer, then the 1943 P-40 Kittyhawk fighter.

It was great to hear all the positive reports about the visit. It was a few years ago that we did a tour so to be given this opportunity again I really appreciated Keith Webb's suggestion and Doug enabling the visit to occur.

I had to get back to Corowa prior to a 4pm meeting with the Border Mail and made it back just in time. Thanks to Trevor Vuillerman for the ride in the LARC-5. Trevor gave a number of people rides over the week and he ended up being awarded a prize at the end of the week.

On Friday night we were fortunate to be able to go to the Footy Club opposite Ball Park Caravan Park for a meal, parade briefing, talk by Doug Draeger regarding his 2020 trip and Hugh Davis was the guest speaker. Hugh gave a talk about when he went to Europe a couple of years ago visiting military vehicle dealers and sales, travelling around countries inc. Belgium, France Netherlands, Germany, Switzerland and Italy. Along with the issues involved in buying and shipping vehicles from there to Australia.

The Saturday is always the biggest day. We started off at Bangerang Park registering the late arrivals in and it was exciting as we wanted to achieve higher results than 2010 which was the largest attendance of vehicles with Year of the Jeep. The number then was 266. To reach 270 was a great result and to also have more Land Rovers in attendance than jeeps was also a milestone. 111 Land Rovers were registered in and 87 jeeps including 3 GPA's.



The vehicles were organised into groups and this year the larger vehicles were mustered in the loading dock area. John Oldenmenger had looked at the number and types of vehicles prior to the event and while at the event and determined where each would be mustering. At 8:50 we left Bangerang Park to go out near the showgrounds to take photos. The waving and tooting was great and showed enthusiasm. This year the Land Rovers were lined up in their own area and the front row had special vehicles and then others were lined up according to Series. It was amazing to see the number of Perenties and most would have been purchased from AFM through the Grays auctions. We had Alex Doyle from AFM, John Leask and Alan Brooks from Grays. They set up a great display and had handouts for participants alongside the vehicle line up.



The other vehicles were positioned in another area and we used 2 cherry pickers from Corowa Tree Care to take photos of the groups of vehicles. The swap meet was in full swing with many bargains to be found. There were a similar number of stalls to last year and a large assortment of items. The Rotary Club did a roaring trade with their BBQ and were very happy at the end of the day with the amount of food and drinks sold. The lady selling the donuts also did really well. I am sure she will be back next year. The secret seemed to be that she used lemonade in her recipe.



We organised a KVE photo at the front of the vehicle display and ended up with lots of our members present for this. I am sure there were a number of bargains to be found.



The lagoon and the river was the place to be on Saturday afternoon with the amphibious activities including floating No.5 trailers, GPA's and the LARC-5. Many thanks to those who provided rides throughout the week.

Saturday night was the presentation evening. Many thanks for the submissions in the Jerrican. This always helps us make a fair decision on who should be receiving the awards. One thing that has occurred quite regularly is that Peter Kunz junior is nominated from the Breakdown or Hard Luck award.

Awards:

1. **Mal Mackay Award:** Trevor Vuillerman with the LARC-5 was always approachable to take people on rides in the LARC. It is good to see he is cautious with the waterways regulations and has all the appropriate safety gear on board.
2. **Longest Distance travelled:** went to Garry Schluter from WA. He must now have done this at least 7 times. Well Done Garry.
3. **Hard Luck award:** Troy Creamer who was unable to drive his own vehicle as he injured his arm prior to Corowa and due to surgery was not able to drive his Land Rover to Corowa. Richard Farrant was eager to drive it all the way down to Corowa from Sydney and back.
4. **Breakdown award** went to Bob Schutt with his Ford C11ADF utility. During the parade he broke down with fuel problems and had to get his vehicle back to Ball Park.
5. **Best Theme Vehicle:** Lachlan Matthews in his 1998 Land Rover 110 SRV. This vehicle led the parade.
6. **People's Choice:** Tony Elliott for his 1941 Ford F60L Blitz
7. **Encouragement Award:** Sam King, a Corowa resident who has been restoring a Land Rover Series 2A and just got it finished during the week.

Prior to the event we organise appreciation plaques this year they were sponsored by the Australian Armour and Artillery Museum and Corowa RSL. Plaques went to the following:

Jan McKenna (Swapmeet)  
Andrew and Sonia Palmer (Ball Park)  
Corowa Free Press  
Federation Council  
Corowa RSL  
Corowa Football Club  
Corowa Show Society  
Mick Morrissey

Corowa Racecourse and Showground Trust  
Hugh Davis  
Corowa Police Station  
Bindaree Motel and Caravan Park  
John Gordon  
Doug Hamilton – Classic Air Adventures  
Neville Smith

Doug Draeger gave a talk to people about the 2020 Back to the Track trip and by the end of the night all spaces had been paid for. Those now wanting to go will be put on a list and if people change their mind may end up with an opportunity of a lifetime. After the presentations we sat and enjoyed the company of some of the participants at the BBQ area. We kept the noise down and ended up going to bed slightly earlier than last year.

On Sunday we had our KVE meeting at Bindaree and there was lots of discussion on the event plus looking at the event in the future. Office bearers are now: President – Richard Farrant, Vice President – Harvey Black, Treasurer: John Gordon, Governance Officer: John Gordon, Secretary and Public Relations: Jan Thompson. Other committee members include: Neville Smith, Kel Baxter, Sam King, Brian Healey and Anne Dignam.

Many thanks to those participants who sent messages of thanks. A number of people have already pre-registered for 2019. The program of events during the week is looking quite interesting so far.

We packed up the radar van in the afternoon and many thanks to Clark Ross and Tim Hughes who were always around when we needed help throughout the event.

We are now preparing for the 40<sup>th</sup> event in March 2019. Get your entry forms in ASAP and we will make sure you are on our database to receive the newsletters that are produced in June, October and January. We are looking for stories from participants so if you would like to contribute to this please send an email to [kve.editor@btinternet.com](mailto:kve.editor@btinternet.com)

Theme for 2019 (40<sup>th</sup> Annual Swim-In): Year of the Amphibian and Year of the Prototype

Regards,

Jan Thompson-Creamer

### Vehicle list for 2018:

With the Corowa event and the numbers being as large as they are we would never be able to determine how many were in attendance particularly as people stay in other locations. We find our system of registering in each vehicle and giving them a number works well as at the end of the event we can give total numbers of each type of vehicle and for the photoshoot this helps enable a plan to be written at the last minute. Many thanks to those who understand this and after the event if you want a list and total numbers attending just make contact with us.

2018 Corowa Swim-In - Vehicle totals					
Land Rover 110 4x4	57	Willys MB jeep	47	Ford GPA amphibian	3
Land Rover Perentie 6x6	10	Ford GPW jeep	36	LARC V amphibian	1
Land Rover Series 1	2	Willys M38	1	DUKW amphibian	1
Land Rover Series 2	4	VW Kubelwagen Type 82	2	Ford C11ADF	1
Land Rover Series 2A	25	Volkswagen 82E car	1	Mack R 6x6 dump truck	1
Land Rover Series 3	7	OKA LT	1	Mack R 6x6 cargo truck	1
Land Rover FC101	6	Chevrolet C8AX	1	Mercedes 911 fire truck	1
Yamaha XT600 m/cycle	5	Chevrolet C60L Blitz	1	Chevrolet Blitz	2
Harley Davidson WLA outfit	1	Chevrolet truck	1	Ford Blitz	1
GMC CCKW	1	Dodge WC16	1	Pinzgauer 712	3
Studebaker US6	3	Dodge WC52 Wpns. Carr.	3	Haflinger AP700	1
International S-line	1	Dodge WC	1	Ford F60L Blitz	1
International F2 dump truck	1	Dodge Carryall	1	Leyland Moke	1
International Mk5 6x6	2	Dodge WC51	1	Toyota Troopy	1
International 510A76A	1	Dodge WC57 Comd. Car	2	Toyota HJ47	2
International Mk3	1	White M3A1 scout car	1	BSA WM20 m/cycle	1
International Mk4	1	LP2A Carrier	2	BSA B40 m/cycle	1
MB Unimog UL1700L	1	Mowag GW truck	1	Ford F150 ambulance	1
AM General M151A2	1	Berna 2DM truck	1	Austin Champ	2
AM General M1038	1	Saurer M6 truck	1	Brockhouse Corgi m/cycle	1
Ferret Scout Car	3	Military bicycles	3		
<b>Total of Land Rovers:</b>	<b>111</b>				
<b>Total of Jeeps, inc M38 + GPA:</b>	<b>87</b>				
<b>All other vehicles:</b>	<b>72</b>				
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>270</b>				