

Oka Newsletter, Autumn 2012

Welcome to the Autumn 2012 edition of the Oka Owners Group Newsletter



Oka 148 in the Gawler Ranges,
South Australia

WHAT'S IN THIS EDITION?

You will have noticed a change to the format and editor of the newsletter, see the right sidebar for details.

In this edition of the newsletter we've included:

- An update on the events at the Oka Motor Company (below).
- The history of the Oka Group Newsletter (p2).

- Oka4WD website goes Mobile. View it on your smart phone. (p3)
- Travel Notes - Snake Bite (p4)
- Recent hot topics from the Forums (p5)
- Tech Notes - HF Radio (p6)
- How you can add to our store of knowledge and/or contribute to this newsletter (p2).

OKA FACTORY CLOSING AND MOVING TO MALAYSIA



For several years the Oka Motor Company has been struggling to maintain its development and production programs against a number of difficulties, external, internal and financial.

Regrettably, in late 2011, an announcement was made that the

Oka company would be closing its facilities in WA and possibly moving its manufacturing operations to Malaysia.

Good News on Spare Parts...

OKA Parts Australia - a new company based in O'Connor, WA will ensure the supply of XT and LT parts in the future.

Continued on Page 2

Thanks to Marj Parsons

Marj has been producing and distributing the Oka Owners Group Newsletter for longer than most of us can remember, certainly as far back 2002 as far and possibly earlier.



**OKA OWNERS GROUP
NEWSLETTER October 2002**

Logo drawn by Lloyd Parsons

She has produced more than 30 newsletters over that time to keep us informed of what's happening in the Oka world and you can read the history of how the newsletter got started on page 2.

But after so many years, Marj needed a rest so I offered to take over publication of the newsletter and maintain its circulation for as long as people want it.

It will be a tough act to follow, so on behalf of all Oka Group members, a big *Thank You Marj* for your years of service to the Oka community.

The Oka Owners Group website has built up a huge store of useful technical and travel information so in future newsletters I'll try to complement website info by including related topics of interest, rather than duplicate existing information.

Your constructive feedback and contributions would be welcome.

David Ribbens

OKA FUTURE (CONT.)

OKA Parts Australia has been nominated by Reymer Pty Ltd as the official channel for XT and LT parts support and will also carry out overhauls and rebuilds.

Allan Gorham - until recently Parts Manager at Reymer Pty Ltd will head up parts operations at the new company. OKA Parts Australia has purchased the entire stock of XT and LT parts from Reymer Pty Ltd and a number of unique jigs for assemblies fitted to these older models. The transaction also includes materials and drawings to enable OKA Parts Australia to produce parts to full OEM quality.

Contact Allan Gorham at OKA Parts Australia on 0400 736 117.

For NT owners (and there are around 20 of these) warranty and other new vehicle support functions are yet to be confirmed but Oka say "we will have a reciprocal agreement on common NT parts".

Follow [this Forum post](#).

OLD NEWSLETTERS?

You might think that an old newsletter could not contain anything relevant to your Oka today, but think consider this: when Marj and Lloyd were producing their first Oka Group newsletter in 2001, your Oka XT or LT was already 3 to 9 years old.

So [early newsletters](#) are well worth scanning though for possible answers to your current questions.

A HISTORY OF THE OKA GROUP NEWSLETTER

by Marj and Lloyd Parsons

We purchased our Oka in 2000. We had come across Okas while travelling in the preceding couple of years in the Kimberley region, and then at Alice Springs, and each time Lloyd immediately started salivating, and produced the ever-ready tape measure for checking wheel bases etc. We found one for sale in WA, bought it over the phone and had it delivered to Dubbo. It arrived at the depot with not a teaspoon of fuel in it, and the primer disconnected, with the air-con not working and in a generally pretty grotty condition.

The first thing Lloyd did was to dismantle the fuel pump and put a plate over the hole where it had fitted and introduce an electric fuel pump which is still working well. He then took the tray off and had the chassis sandblasted and then repainted it - it had been underground. We set off round Australia's coastline in 2000 and when passing through Perth called in at Oka to have it checked out, and saw Robin Wade on the way through Kalgoorlie.

In 2001 we contacted Oka to see if they could give us names of Oka Owners, as Lloyd thought a group could be handy. Of course the privacy laws meant that this couldn't happen, so we put together a letter that Angelica then sent out to Oka Owners when they ordered parts. This was about mid-2001. It took a good while to get any result, but once people learnt about the idea I think it mostly spread by word-of-mouth, and we have been putting out newsletters ever since. I think June 2001 may have been the first one. *[The Oka and kangaroo "logo" was drawn by Lloyd and used on all their newsletters].*

Like all Okas except those purchased new, it has been a continuing effort to keep ours in good repair. The things we have learned from other Oka Owners has been invaluable - and it still is.

Now that Oka have closed their Bibra Lake premises and moved offshore, I think the Oka Owners Group will be more important than ever. The Forum on the website is marvellous and you can get almost immediate assistance if needed. The membership list is also handy as it give contacts who are closest to you if you need to discuss a situation.

People who have been very active over the years are Robin Wade, Rowena Paterson, Michael Hession, John Hendriks and of course Hal with his website. We have met lots of other Oka Owners over the years and seen plenty of Okas. I don't think there are 2 that are exactly the same.

Thank you for taking over the newsletter. Yes, I think that after 10 years we deserve a break.

HOW TO CONTRIBUTE

Not all your travel or technical experiences can be published on the Oka website, but if you'd like to share yours with the Oka community, email them to me at dandjribbans@internode.on.net or, if you've written them up on a blog or other place, send me the link. Our postal address is PO Box 294, Greenwith, SA 5125.

Unless otherwise advised, I won't share any information you send to me except in this newsletter.

OKA4WD GOES MOBILE

If you have a Smartphone, you can access the Oka4wd website while on the road.

Go to <http://m.oka4wd.com/site/mobile#1323> on your phone you should see the website, but with a slightly different layout, more suited to a phone screen.

You can also use that link from your computer to see what the mobile layout looks like, but larger (see pic).

All the normal functions are available but there may be ads on the mobile version. As Hal says, "if you get a banner flashing at you above the site on your phone, saying you've won a free something, it's nothing to do with us and should be ignored!"

Note if you access the site using an iPad, you'll see the normal computer screen, not the smart phone layout. But it's possible that you may have to change to the mobile version using the link above to post messages from the iPad.

Apple's Technical Support number is 1300 321 456.



The Smartphone layout viewed on a computer screen

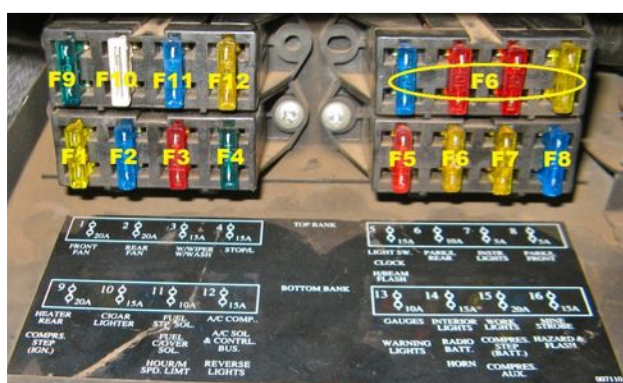
FORUM SNIPPETS - USEFUL TOPICS BURIED IN OTHER FORUM POSTS

Ipad Navigation

If you use an iPad as a navigation tool but don't have a 3G capability and therefore no GPS, James say that bluetooth GPS receivers work well for mapping on the iPad.

Fuses

In the [Fuel Cut Off Solenoid](#) topic, Rick has sleuthed out some changes to the XT fuse panel wiring and posted this photo showing the revised fuse numbering for later XT's.

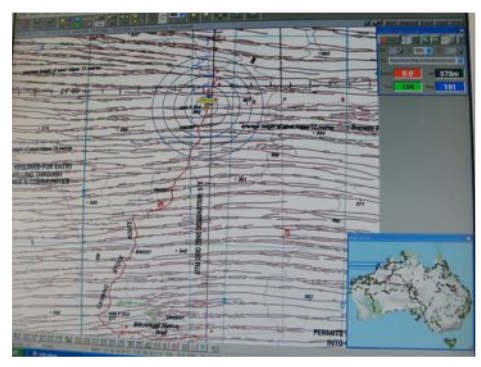


Mac Navigation

If you use a Mac like I do, and want to use the Oziexplorer moving map system, it works well using a virtual windows machine program such as Parallels or VM Fusion.

I use VirtualBox from Oracle/Sun Microsystems which seems pretty much as good as the other 2 but is free. You'll need an Intel Mac and an XP install disk or similar.

It runs in a normal Mac window (and in full screen) and doesn't affect other Mac applications.



Oziexplorer running on a Mac (amongst CSR sand dunes).

TRAVEL TOPICS - SNAKE BITE

There are 38 species of venomous land snakes in Australia. Of the world's 25 most venomous snakes (based on toxicity), 21 of them are found in Australia.

Despite this frightening statistic, snake bite is relatively uncommon in Australia, with an average of 1 serious bite per day needing antivenin treatment and around 2 deaths per year.

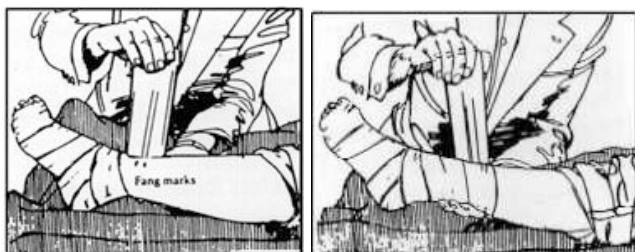
But in remote locations where Oka owners are likely to travel, and where they may well be days from medical care, snake bite could prove fatal. The majority of deaths occur in rural areas, mostly in Queensland, and these figures are not reducing over time.

Don't take the risk of not knowing what to do, or what the symptoms to look for, or not having adequate communications facilities.

Read and/or print these documents before leaving home:

[Treatment of Australian Snake Bites](#) (includes identification charts and symptoms to watch for)

[Pressure Immobilisation Bandaging \(PIB\)](#)



[Pressure Immobilisation Technique](#) and [How to do it Video](#) (Vital lifesaving information, do *not* apply a tourniquet)

[St Johns Snake Bite Treatment](#)

[First Aid Treatment from Venom Supplies](#)

[Snake Bite Treatment for Teenagers](#)

[Australian Venom Research Unit \(AVRU\) Snake Bite Treatment](#)

[Current Approach to Snake Bite Treatment](#)

[CSL Anti Venom Handbook](#) (also includes spider and marine stinger treatments)

[Queensland Ambulance CPR Chart](#)

[Facts about snake behaviour and safety](#)

TREATMENT

[Dead snakes can bite](#) (final para).

Their biting reflex remains intact for many hours after death, and their venom remains toxic for a very long time. Don't handle dead snakes.

[Should I take Antivenin with me?](#) The short answer to this is NO.

Antivenin itself is a dangerous drug requiring specialist intravenous application, and only *after* snake identification. In inexperienced hands antivenin is likely to cause more medical problems than snake bite itself.

The best response to snake bite threat is avoidance, or where a bite is suspected, pressure immobilisation bandaging, never a tourniquet, followed by immediate medical attention.

Quote from Chris Thompson from "Envenomation in Australia":

"In Australia there are about 3,000 snake bites per year, of which 200 to 500 receive antivenin; on average one or two will prove fatal. About half the deaths are due to bites from the brown snake; the rest mostly from tiger snake, taipan and death adder. Some deaths are sudden, however in fact it is uncommon to die within four hours of a snake bite."

We consider ourselves lucky if we see 4 or 5 snakes per trip, they are not that common, but we did come across a large King Brown snake in Well 46 on the CSR. A serious bite there would probably have been fatal due to the extreme location and the distance/time from medical facilities, but we knew about it in advance via the *Bush Telegraph* and were especially careful, see [this article](#).

If you have a morbid fascination with snakes, [this slideshow](#) presents the history of snake bite mortality in Australia in full detail. One of the key points highlighted is that *in* only a minority of cases was Pressure Immobilisation Bandaging treatment applied.

The conclusion is clear, in the case of actual or suspected snake bite, [apply PIB immediately](#) (not a tourniquet), and seek medical attention. It can buy time and maybe save a life.

Note, no bandaging is recommended for head and neck bites, and only firm continuous pressure to the affected area for trunk bites, but in both cases seek immediate medical attention.

David Ribbans

RECENT FORUM TOPICS

This is my selection of recent popular topics from the Ok4WD forums (roughly based on the number of views), but if you'd like other categories included or if you'd like a print out of any of these topics please let me know. If viewing this on your computer you can click the topic to go straight there.

Maintenance	On the road	Travel	External Oka related links
Dash switches Sizes and suppliers.	OKA Factory Update Discussion on the future of Oka in Australia.	Victorian High Country	Recovery and Maintenance Gear
Freewheeling Hub Problems Fixing AVM hubs.	Sand Mats - What do people use?	Canning 2012	Safety and Emergency Equipment
Fuel Cut Off Solenoid Fixing a failed solenoid	IPAD post How to post messages from an iPad.	Perth to Uluru return, 14 days	Trails and Tribulation with an Oka
Steering Column Removal How to do it.	V8 Engine Conversion Big discussion topic on big engines.	Canning 2012 - Stage 1 Birdsville to Mt Dare	148 David and Janet's XT
Handbrake shoes part no? Where to get replacements.	Fitting 305's to 7.5" rims? Is it safe/legal?	Survival Guide	196 Peter and Margaret's XT
Throttle cable How to get and fit a new one.	Some OKA questions from a newbie Compliance issues.	Canning 2012 - Stage 3 Canning SR South to North	260 Hal and Liz's LT
Gear box & transfer case Replacing a missing transfer box.	Weight over front axle Weights and axle strengths.		001 Ruedi and Susi's NT
Rear brake proportioning valve What they do and how to adjust them.	Baby capsule fitting Where to fit one.		External technical links
Starter motor failure mode How they can fail	LT fresh air / recirculating door How to access it.	stub axles 30 or 35 spline outer drive shafts?	Front Dana 60. All you could want to know about the Dana 60 axle.
Turbo damage Replacement turbo options.	Airbag Suspension How I fitted them.		Index.html BillaVista's HUGE collection of Technical and 4x4 related PDF files
Disc Rotor Parts and replacement info.	Want to make your Oka go better? Mods to the air filter housing to improve breathing.		The Brake Bible Theory and everything else you need to know about brakes and braking.
Rear Springs Problems with new ones.	Hi-Lift Jack and Exhaust Jack Which model and mods to use them.		The BillaVista 12 Volt DC Series - Part 2 - The Alternator Bible.

BENEFITS OF HF RADIO

HF Radio has been around since Marconi established transatlantic communications in 1901, and without his radios the Titanic tragedy almost exactly 100 years ago would have been even worse.

HF radio occupies the spectrum from 3 to 30 MHz and it's still very popular today and with good reason. HF signals can carry effectively over huge distances, from hundreds to thousands of km, and occasionally around the world.

It was the low cost and simplicity of HF radio that provided the backbone for *School of the Air* communications services for more than 50 years and it still does for the *Royal Flying Doctor Service*, and outback travellers emergency networks.

CB radios and mobile phones cannot provide the same outback communications capability, although CB's are useful in short range (eg for convoys and bushwalking) and the Telstra NextG service is very useful near towns and major highways.

RADIOS, ANCIENT AND MODERN

Modern radios can now provide a variety of communications services, such as email, SMS, telephone connections and GPS position reporting, but the original principles of an HF radio are still embodied in radios from

companies such as Codan and Barrett, with designs and technology that lead the world in HF communications.

If your radio doesn't have provision for GPS position reporting, or just for increased peace of mind, taking an EPIRB with you will ensure automatic initiation of search and rescue services should you ever find yourself in "grave and imminent danger".

New HF radios can cost up to \$3,500 but since the principles of operation have not changed in 50 years, even secondhand radios up to 30 years old are still a very viable alternative. They are simple and reliable, and with the addition of a Selcall microphone, they can replicate many of the features of more modern radios.

Current radios are microcomputer controlled with 100's of channels programmed into them and a plethora of features, but fundamentally they do the same job now, and with the same transmitter power and communications range, as a 1970's radio.

MAKING CONTACT

A satellite phone, just like a home phone or mobile, can generally only be used to call a single recipient, whereas a call made on an HF radio can be heard by almost anyone whose radio is tuned to that frequency. And since there are just a few well established contact

frequencies offered by various outback radio clubs (see table below), the chances are high that a call would be heard, probably by several listeners.

While this might not be considered very private, in an emergency situation, or if you need roadside advice, or to pass on a message to folks back home, this can be a blessing.

Few listeners would pass up a call for assistance or a request to relay a message or even just to chat with someone whose been traveling in a remote and lonely location for days.

FAMILIARITY IS THE KEY

Using an HF radio regularly is a good way of keeping in touch with other people who are out there doing much the same as you are, but importantly, it also confirms, that your radio is working and will be ready if or when you have an emergency.

And because it might be you that needs help, ensure that all other members of your group, especially the younger members, are familiar with operating the radio, including erecting and connecting the antenna, choosing the right channel and making a Selcall.

Making the first call can be a bit daunting but base operators are always happy to offer advice to people new to HF radio and it soon becomes second nature to them.

David Ribbans

OUTBACK HF RADIO CLUBS

[VKS737](#) 7 Channels, 14 Bases, some in RFDS bases.

[HF Radio Club](#) 9 Channels, 4 Bases

[HFOZ](#) 5 Channels, 3 Bases

[Bush Telegraph](#) 5 Channels, 4 Bases



RECENT OKA PICS



Marj and Lloyd Parsons published this photo of their Oka towing their Gyrocopter after they were recently stopped for a random rego and license check by the NSW RTA police. I suspect the gyro is what sparked their interest.

Marj was a bit concerned since she was driving on a normal car license, and the police emphasised that to drive a vehicle with a GVM of 4.5t or more, the driver legally requires a truck license.

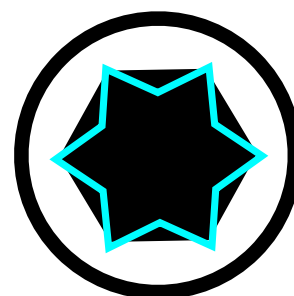
However, people with a car license *can* drive an Oka but only if accompanied by another driver with the appropriate license, which fortunately Lloyd has.

Their rego label was also out of date but since their Oka *was* registered and they were about to replace a cracked windscreen, they weren't pinged for it.

Although most states no longer require a rego sticker to be displayed at all, (police can quickly check electronically these days) apparently it's still an offence to display an expired sticker. But it's still wise to carry your current rego papers with you anyway but check with your local road traffic authority for their rules.

TECHNICAL TIP

To remove stubborn or rounded Allen head screws, especially if countersunk, hammer an equivalent or slightly larger sized Torx driver into the Allen socket to improve the grip, the sharp points cut their own shape.



If you need to reuse a damaged screw, cut a slot in the head first so that a flat bladed screwdriver can be used for later removal.

Calendar

June 1st 2012

We are heading west up the centre of WA, covering the David Carnegie Road, Eagle Highway, part of the CSR (Well 22 to 33) and the Kidson Track out to 80 Mile Beach

HOW WAS THIS NEWSLETTER PRODUCED?

I used the a newsletter layout from the *Pages* program on an iMac to write the newsletter, and published it in PDF format since this is the format most likely to be readable on most peoples' computers. However if you'd like it in Microsoft Word or Text only, or even WordStar if you can remember that far back, just let me know, dandjribbans@internode.on.net.

(Actually I lied, I can't do WordStar)

DISCLAIMER

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