VAAL DAM (26.881646 S; 28.115638 E)

Completed: 1938
Raised: 1953 and 1985

River: Vaal River.
Capacity: 2610 million m³

Type of dam: Concrete gravity.

Length of wall (top): 800 m
Length of dam (from dam wall to inflow): 60 km

Nearest town: Vereeniging.
Surface area: 32,000 ha

Water use: Domestic and industrial.
Capacity compared to the Gariesp Dam: 50%.

References, literature and photos:
References: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vaal_Dam;
Photos: DWA; Google Earth Panorama

The construction of Vaal Dam started during the depression in the early thirties and the dam was completed in 1938 with a wall height of 54.2 m and a capacity of 994 million cubic metres. It was built as a joint venture by Rand Water and the Department of Water Affairs. The dam was raised in the early fifties and in 1985 a height of to 63.4 m. The Lesotho Highlands Water Project feeds water into the system by gravity. The Sterkfontein Dam forms part of the Tugela-Vaal water transfer scheme. Water from the Sterkfontein Dam is released once the Vaal Dam drops to below 16%. The dam has its own island some 5 km long. The island was used as a secret meeting place by the apartheid government but now hosts the annual Round the Island Yacht race. On 4 May 1948 BOAC introduced Short Solent flying boats on the UK to South Africa. The small village of Denesville was used as a stop-over point by the old BOAC flying boats.