

Silent Key.

It is with regret that we begin this week, with news of a silent key.

Robert John "Bob" Brodie passed away on Tuesday the 28th of March 2017, aged 93 years.

Prior to retirement, Bob's last business was a well-known pet store in Port Macquarie. Amongst his retirement activities, Bob was a very keen DX chaser who was always adding to his DXCC endorsements. His station overlooking Lighthouse Beach at Tacking Point was the envy of many Amateurs. His HF beam could usually be seen pointed out over the Pacific Ocean. Bob was an active in the Oxley Region Amateur Radio Club and was a Life Member. He rarely missed a club event. He was also active in WICEN.

Bob was a very keen sailor and raced his yacht Jacana with the Port Macquarie Yacht Club almost every week until only a few years ago. His late wife Josie actively shared Bob's passion for yacht racing.

Bob kept active walking his own dog as well as raising and training Guide Dog pups.

His wife Josie predeceased Bob and in the last few years of his life, he lived with his daughter Jenny and her family at Tamban, a small rural area between Kempsey and Macksville. Sadly, with advancing ill health preventing him getting on air, Bob reluctantly let his long time call sign VK2EJK lapse a couple of years ago.

Bob is survived by his daughter Jenny and her family and by his brother Don. Bob's funeral will be held at 12 noon on Monday the 3rd of April in the chapel at Bernard Laverty's Funerals at 4 Glenmore Crescent in Macksville.

[pause 5 seconds]

Vale [va-LAY] Bob Brodie ex VK2EJK.

*Advised by Henry VK2ZHE
on behalf of the Oxley Region Amateur Radio Club.*

[Play Evening ID1]

In the news from Amateur Radio New South Wales for this week;

The change back to Eastern Standard Time occurred in the early hours of this morning. VK2WI News bulletins are at the same local times of 10am and 7.30pm but there may be some differences on HF propagation. Should you have difficulties with HF coverage, you can now stream bulletins in real time on the internet - go to arnsw.org.au/audio. Alternately - the Manly Warringah web S D R usually has good reception of the 160, 80, 40 and 20 transmissions from VK2WI.

If you use the VK2WI morse transmission on 3699 kHz on 80 metres, there has been some additional text added –this will give you some fresh material to copy. The transmissions are almost continuous but are off during the News bulletins, and from time to time during maintenance or when the station is used for other communications. It is hard to receive signals on bands where there is the morse and some beacons operating. The VK2RSY beacons on 10, 6 and 2 metres, along with the morse are off during broadcasts - but 70 and 23 remain on. Recently, we have found that power glitches may trip the power supplies of the beacon transmitters; so, should you note that a transmission is off air for a period of time or you would like to make a report - please email it to callbacks@arnsw.org.au.

Most ARNSW Membership badges requests from earlier this year, should now be delivered. Being in a large envelope, some are taking 5 or more days to reach their destination. For that reason a request slip was included for an email to be sent to the office when the envelope was received. More badge orders are in production, and are expected before the end of this month. There will be a further production run toward mid-year.

Weekly Solar and Geophysical Report

For the period of the 24th to the 30th of March.

First, the summary;

Dates across the columns are	24 th	25 th	26 th	27 th	28 th	29 th	30 th
10cm flux	72	74	77	83	84	83	86
Fredericksburg Index (Afr)	7	3	3	34	22	17	18 estimated
Australian Index (Aaus)	4	1	2	26	17	10	12 estimated
T index	22	20	12	25	-6	11	19

Solar flare activity was low on the 27th and 28th but very low at other times.

Geomagnetic activity observed for the Australian region, was quiet from the 24th to the 26th, then ranging from quiet to minor storm on the 27th and 28th, quiet to active on the 29th, then quiet to unsettled on the 30th.

F2 critical frequencies in the southern Australian region were near predicted monthly values from the 24th to the 26th. The 27th was mostly near predicted except for some depressions of up to 30% after local dawn. The 28th saw a big drop, with depressions of 35% during local day and 25% during local night. The 29th recovered slightly with depressions of 15% during local day and 20% during local night, and the 30th returned to near predicted monthly values during local day, but still some depressions of 15% at night.

Now, the forecast for the 31st of March to the 6th of April;

Solar flare activity should be very low to low, though activity might reach moderate levels at times. Geomagnetic activity will probably see active to minor storm conditions on the 31st, a chance of active on the 1st, then settling down to quiet to unsettled on other days.

Maximum Usable Frequencies may see minor to moderate depressions on the 31st and 1st of April, otherwise mostly near predicted monthly values.

Data courtesy of Space Weather Services.

Solar Flux Index update

Here are the updated Solar Flux Index (SFI) figures for this week.

Firstly, at the end of March, the figures are;

Minimum 70 Average 734 Maximum 86
Peak dates from the 1st to the 4th, and 28th to 31st

As we begin April, the prediction is...

Minimum 71 Average 77 Maximum 88
With peak dates between the 1st and 7th, and the 24th to the 28th.

And looking ahead to the prediction for May;

Minimum 71 Average 72 Maximum 73
With peak dates between the 1st and the 2nd, and the 13th to the 15th.

Update with thanks to Noel, VK2FUL.

[using daily data updates from :<http://www.swpc.noaa.gov/products/usaf-45-day-ap-and-f107cm-flux-forecast>]

[Play Evening ID2]

ARRL DX news

ROTUMA, 3D2. Tony, 3D2AG is active as 3D2AG/p until April 28. Activity is on 160 to 6 metres using CW, SSB, RTTY, JT65 and FSK441.

TIMOR-LESTE, 4W. Bimbo, YB3MM and Hen, YB3LZ will be active as 4W/YB3MM and 4W/YB3LZ, respectively, from Dili from April 3 to 5. Activity will be holiday style on the HF bands using mostly JT65 and possibly other modes as well.

EASTER ISLAND, CE0. Eliot, W1MJ will be active as CE0Y/W1MJ from April 2 to 4. Activity will be holiday style on 40, 30, 20 and 15 metres using CW with QRP power, and possibly PSK31 as well.

URUGUAY, CX. Members of Radiogrupo Sur are active as CV5A from Flores Island, IOTA SA-030, until April 2. Activity is on the HF bands.

PHILIPPINES, DU. Marc, ON5SM will be active as DU9/ON5SM from Mindanao, IOTA OC-130, from April 4 to May 24. Activity will be on 80 to 6 metres using SSB, SSTV and various digital modes.

LIECHTENSTEIN, HB0. Operators PE1FLO, PA2HGJ, PA3HK, PA3CNO, PE0MGB, PA2RDK AND PA3DFR will be active as HB0/home calls, until April 8. Activity will be on 160 to 10 metres, including 60 metres, using mainly CW with some SSB and digital modes.

SAUDI ARABIA, HZ. Ed, NI6S will be active as 7Z1ES from Riyadh from April 2017 to February 2019.

DJIBOUTI, J2. Dane, S53T is licensed as J28ND while on work assignment. His license is valid until 2019. Activity is in his spare time on the HF bands and 6 metres using SSB and RTTY. .

ST. LUCIA, J6. Will, K9HZ will be active as J68HZ until April 8. Activity will be on 160 to 6 metres using CW, SSB and RTTY.

GUAM, KH2. Santos, EA4AK and Tony, EA5BY are active as AH2P and KH2BY, respectively, until April 10. Activity is on 160 to 6 metres, including 60 metres, using CW, SSB and various digital modes. They may focus on the low bands.

WAKE ISLAND, KH9. Randy, WW6RG plans to be active as WW6RG/KH9 beginning March 31 while on work assignment. Activity may be on 40 and 20 metres using SSB and QRP power.

CZECH REPUBLIC, OK. Special event station OL75SILVERA is active until April 14 to commemorate Operation Silver A, a British/Czechoslovak military operation that took place in 1942.

PAPUA NEW GUINEA, P2. Haru, JA1XGI will be active as P29VXG from Rapopo, New Britain Island, IOTA OC-008, from April 6 to 12. Activity will be on 40, 20, 15 and 10 metres using CW, SSB and various digital modes.

ST. MAARTEN, PJ7. Jeff, VA3QSL will be active as PJ7/VA3QSL until April 8. Activity will be holiday style on 40 to 6 metres using CW, SSB and various digital modes.

ANTARCTICA. Alex, UA1OJL will be active as RI1ANO from Bellingshausen Base, King George Island, IOTA AN-010, from April 2017 to March 2018. He will be active in his spare time on the HF bands using CW, SSB and various digital modes.

MARSHALL ISLANDS, V7. Randy, WW6RG, plans to be active as V73/WW6RG from Kwajalein Atoll, IOTA OC-029, from April 4 to 6. Activity may be on 20 metres using SSB and QRP power.

CANADA, VE. Members of the Vimy Commemorative Station Society will be active as VE100VIMY/nn until April 9 to commemorate the Battle of Vimy Ridge at Vimy France in 1917. Activity will take place from each of Canada's 13 call areas. Activity will be around the clock.

CHAGOS ISLAND, VQ9. Jeremy, N1ZZZ will be active as VQ9ZZ and as VQ9ZZ/mm from Diego Garcia Island, IOTA AF-006, from April to June. Activity will be on 20 and 17 metres using SSB and various digital modes.

VANUATU, YJ. Chung, VA7YM will be active as YJ0YM from Port Vila, Efate Island, IOTA OC-035, from April 6 to 17. Activity will be on 80 to 6 metres using SSB, RTTY and PSK31.

THIS WEEKEND ON THE RADIO. North American SSB Sprint Contest, QRP 80-Meter CW Fox Hunt, NCCC RTTY Sprint, NCCC CW Sprint, 15-Meter SSTV Dash Contest, LZ Open 40-Meter Sprint CW Contest, PODXS 070 Club 20-meter PSK 31 Flavors Contest, Mississippi QSO Party, Missouri QSO Party, Florida State Parks on the Air, SP DX Contest, EA RTTY Contest and the RSGB RoLo 80-Meter SSB are all on this weekend.

The IQRP Quarterly Marathon runs from April 3 to 9.

The RSGB 80-meter Club CW Championship is scheduled for April 3.

The ARS Spartan CW Sprint is scheduled for April 4.

The CWops Mini-CWT CW Test, UKEICC 80-Meter SSB Contest and Phone Fray are all scheduled for April 5.

WICEN News

The BWRS Navshield, a major bush navigation event, is on June 24th and 25th, with WICEN setup the afternoon before. Its typically held within a few hours' drive of Sydney, with the location only disclosed publicly, closer to the event. The recce and radio survey is planned for Sunday the 23rd of April.

On the weekend of April 29 and 30, WICEN Northern Rivers will be providing communications assistance for the Tenterfield Endurance Riders Club 2017 event. The location is Girard State Forest, west of Drake.

The next Memory Walk and Jog, run by Alzheimer's Australia NSW, is the Sydney walk on May 7th, commencing at Leichhardt Oval #3, on the waterfront at Lilyfield. Then, May 13th is the Hunter event at the northern end of Lake Macquarie and the 4th of June is at Westport Park, Port Macquarie. These are short events, and are suitable for new members.

True Grit, promoted as a "military inspired obstacle challenge", is on June 10 and 11 in Lower Portland, north-west of Sydney.

Several training days are being planned, including a one-day first aid course in Sydney, to satisfy the requirements of PUA21312. Please let WICEN know what dates are suitable for you to attend.

Additionally, the Bushwalkers Wilderness Rescue Squad has resumed first aid training, for details check the website, bwrs.org.au.

The WICEN New South Wales website, at nsw.wicen.org.au - includes contact details, a web contact form, and membership information. WICEN members can log in on the site and then see meeting Agendas on the main page.

WICEN has a twitter account: @wicennsw. Facebook users will find the official WICEN NSW page, and an informal national WICEN group.

The WICEN Mid North Coast Region monthly meeting is held on the first Saturday of the month, at SES HQ Central Road, Port Macquarie, beginning at 1530 hours.

WICEN Northern Rivers Region will be holding their Annual General Meeting on Sunday, April 9th at 10am. The venue is the Summerland ARC at 412 Richmond Hill Road, Richmond Hill.

WICEN ACT is part of the Canberra Region Amateur Radio Club, supporting events in the ACT and Capital Country. Their website, which includes the coming year's WICEN events is crarc.ampr.org.

Events include the weekend of April 1st and 2nd is the Canberra Two Day Walk, Sunday May 7 is the Carriage Driving at Witwood, while the 26th to 28th are the BMSC - National Capital Rally. The weekend of June 10 and 11 this the SCSCC Bega Rally. June 17 is the BMSC Rallye des Femmes. Weekend Foundation Licence courses, and exams for all levels, are provided by the Club, the next being May 20 and 21. Their website, which includes the coming year's WICEN events is at: www.crarc.ampr.org.

WICEN Victoria holds a net every Tuesday at 2030 on or near 3.6 MHz. The Pajero Challenge is near Avoca is this weekend, Duncan's Run is April 1 in the Tarra Bulga State Forest in Gippsland, and the Sunraysia 600 on April 22 is at Keera Station near Lake Cullulleraine, south-west of Wentworth, NSW; or just 1000km west of Wollongong. Their website is: vic.wicen.org.au.

*Submitted by Julian VK2YJS
on behalf of the WICEN NSW State Management Committee.*

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Club News

We start this week with news from the Hunter Radio Group.

The next Monthly Meeting will be held on the 7th of April; a week earlier than usual, due to the second Friday of the month being Good Friday.

The location, as usual is the NBN T.V. Studios, Mosbri Crescent, Newcastle, starting at 8pm. After General Business, the lecture topic will be NBFM. There will be tea, coffee and a ragchew after the meeting.

*Rodney VK2CN
Secretary, Hunter Radio Group.*

Oxley Region Amateur Radio Club

The next meeting of the Club is Friday night gathering at 7pm on Friday the 21st of April.

The club's annual Field Day is on the weekend of the 10th and 11th of June, during the Queen's Birthday long weekend. It's at the Tacking Point Surf Life Saving Club Hall, Matthew Flinders Drive, Port Macquarie.

The next training courses and assessments for the Advanced, Standard and Foundation licences will run when sufficient candidates have registered; contact the club via PO Box 712 Port Macquarie NSW 2444 as soon as possible, to register your interest.

The club conducts two nets each week; the mid-week net starts at 7:30pm on Thursday nights, and the weekend net takes place from 9am on Sunday mornings. Both nets are on the VK2RPM 2 metre repeater, 146.7MHz. This repeater requires a 91.5Hz sub-audible tone for access.

Visitors are always made very welcome at monthly general meetings, at 2pm on the first Saturday of the month, as well as at Friday night gatherings, at 7pm on the third Friday of the month. The venue for all club meetings is the SES Building in Port Macquarie.

For more information about the Oxley Region Amateur Radio Club, visit the website at orarc.org. The March 2017 issue of "Oxtales" as well as past issues, are available on the website.

*Submitted by Henry VK2ZHE
for the Oxley Region Amateur Radio Club.*

Blue Mountains Amateur Radio Club

The Blue Mountains Amateur Radio Club meets on the first Friday evening of each month at 7.30pm. The clubrooms are at 4 Moore Street Glenbrook.

At this month's meeting, on Friday April 7th, the speakers will be Mr Ray Rawson and Mr Glen Miers, who will be talking about the history of the Clubhouse building, which was used for many years by the Scouting Association. Both speakers have a long association with the scouts and the clubhouse and have many interesting anecdotes to share.

The Club runs a standard/advanced upgrade class every Wednesday evening at 7pm. Foundation courses run on the second weekend of every even month, the next one is on next weekend, the 8th and 9th of April, at the clubrooms. Please arrive at 8.30am for a 9am start, the day should finish by about 5pm. Saturday will comprise training and on Sunday there will be revision followed by the theory and practical exams.

For more information email jivek@bigpond.com, or telephone 02 9606-7404.

*Advised by Irene van Ekris
Secretary, Blue Mountains Amateur Radio Club*

St George Amateur Radio Society

The next gathering of the Society is on Wednesday evening, the 5th of April.

Are crystal sets simple or complex? They were there at the beginning of radio-telephony and they're still alive and kicking strongly today. But there is a strangely hidden story about why they work at all. And it's not in the crystal!

Brian VK2GCE will take you through some of the ins and outs of this long-enduring design. There will be some simple construction ideas as well as some hints on improving performance. The chances are you have most of the components already to hand to make your own. Brian will bring some of the more difficult to find components to help you get started.

Bring along your own crystal set, and tell us about it: what worked for you, and what got in the way. Alternately, bring a photo and a circuit diagram in electronic form so we can see it in Technicolor on the big Cinerama screen - an image or two on a USB stick will be just fine.

As well as the presentation, there will be the usual free refreshments. All members, local amateurs and others interested are invited to attend.

The meeting rooms are at Donnelly Park, Kyle Parade, Connells Point - near South Hurstville.

The gathering starts at 7.30pm. The What Three Words address for the club is "torch bath frosted".

[\[http://map.what3words.com/torch.bath.frosted\]](http://map.what3words.com/torch.bath.frosted)

*Advised by Peter VK2EMU
For the St George Amateur Radio Society*

Hornsby and Districts Amateur Radio Club

The next meeting of the club will be on Tuesday the 11th April, at the Mount Colah Community Centre at 8:00pm. This will be the informal mid-monthly meeting, with a discussion on radio and general topics. The Centre is near the northern end of Pierre Close, opposite the eastern entrance to Mount Colah Railway Station. Additionally, two buses from Hornsby can be used: the 595 straight up the original Pacific Highway, or the 598 via the backstreets of Hornsby North to Cowan Road.

Note that there will be no general meeting later in the month, as this would fall on the 25th.

However, what will be happening in late April is International Marconi Day. IMD takes place on the UTC day of Saturday, April 22. This means that HADARC will be activating VK2IMD from 10:00 am Sydney time on the Saturday until 10:00 am on the Sunday, on a range of HF bands. The link to Marconi is that Fisk received the first official message from the UK to Australia, sent from North-West Wales by Marconi on behalf of PM Billy Hughes and his Minister for Navy, Cook.

The club runs three nets each week; Monday nights at 8pm on the VK2RNS 2 metre repeater. Its on 147.25MHz, No tone is required, but a 91.5Hz tone is sent. The Wednesday evening net is on 3608.5 kHz, also from 8pm; And Morning Tea with HADARC – is on or near 7104kHz from 9:00 am on Fridays.

The Club also has a dual mode FM - P25 repeater, located at Chatswood, on 438.350 MHz, with a -5.4 MHz offset, meaning users transmit on 432.950 MHz. A 91.5 HZ tone or NAC of 293 is required for access.

HADARC's website is at: www.hadarc.org.au. The club has a group on Facebook. which can be found by searching for VK2MA. The Club's twitter feed is @VK2MA. You can also see it on the web, at twitter.com/VK2MA.

Submitted by Julian VK2YJS.

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Summary of coming events;

April

St George ARS Meeting at Connells Point on the 5th
Waverley ARS Shack night, also on the 5th
Hunter Radio Group meeting on the 7th
Blue Mountains ARC meeting on the 7th
Blue Mountains ARC Foundation Weekend, 8th and 9th
WICEN Northern Rivers AGM on the 9th
Hunter Radio Group meeting on the 14th
Urunga Convention on the weekend of the 15th and 16th
Manly-Warringah lecture on the 19th
ANZAC day is the 25th
ARNSW AGM on the 29th

May

St George ARS Meeting at Connells Point on the 3rd
Blue Mountains ARC meeting on the 5th
ARNSW Foundation weekend, 13th and 14th
Manly-Warringah lecture on the 17th
St. George Foundation weekend, 20th and 21st
Manly-Warringah theme night – Microphones - ends the month, on the 31st

June

Blue Mountains ARC meeting on the 2nd
Port Macquarie Field Day, on the weekend of the 10th and 11th
Blue Mountains ARC foundation weekend, also on the 10th and 11th
Waverley ARS Foundation weekend is the 17th and 18th