

## **Silent Key.**

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

Gregory Robert James, formerly VK2SM of Wyoming on the Central Coast passed away on the 27th of March at the age of 69. Greg was probably better known under his earlier call sign of VK2GRJ.

Greg had lived at many locations throughout the country and had been involved with many groups and projects including with the National WIA and he was also a member of ARNSW. Greg had been in ill health for some time. He was 69. He was privately cremated on the 30<sup>th</sup> March. At Greg's request - there was no Funeral or Memorial Service.

Please pause while we remember Greg ex VK2SM.

[pause 5 seconds]

Vale [va-LAY] Greg James.

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**[Play Evening ID1]**

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

Coming up over the Easter weekend, is the famous Urunga Convention held on the mid north coast. The Convention has been an annual event since the late 1940's. There is an article on page 48 of the April issue of Amateur Radio Magazine, which includes email and telephone contact details.

Members of ARNSW are reminded that the Annual General Meeting will be held at VK2WI Dural on Saturday morning, the 29<sup>th</sup> of April. In the next few days Members will be receiving either by email or post, the annual reports and financial statement for the year 2016.

If you are planning on attending, please remember to bring your name badge or membership card to assist with registrations. After the meeting there will be a BBQ lunch for those staying on, as well as an opportunity to browse the Trash & Treasure store.

A brief historical note – we have been reminded by Peter VK2EMU that, 11 years ago, ARNSW sold the Wigram Street property; the last activity in the building was the Tuesday evening Home Brew and Experimenters Group meeting. This function was subsequently transferred to alternate locations but due to declining attendances, physical meetings are now held bi-monthly after with Trash and Treasure days.

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# Weekly Solar and Geophysical Report

For the period of the 31<sup>st</sup> of March to the 6<sup>th</sup> of April.  
First, the summary;

Dates across the columns are	31 <sup>st</sup>	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>	6 <sup>th</sup>
10cm flux	91	101	112	108	94	85	76
Fredericksburg Index (Afr)	21	15	6	4	17	10	8 estimated
Australian Index (Aaus)	17	12	4	3	12	7	4 estimated
T index	20	17	11	9	30	16	13

Solar flare activity was low on the 31<sup>st</sup>, but April started out Moderate on the 1<sup>st</sup>, with an M4.4 flare at 2148UT. The 2<sup>nd</sup> saw high activity, with M5.3 at 0803UT, an M2.3 at 1301UT, an M2.1 at 1838UT, and an M5.7 at 2033UT.n The 3<sup>rd</sup> continued with an M1.2 at 0105UT, and an M5.8 at 1429UT. Solar activity then returned to low levels for the rest of the week.

Geomagnetic activity observed for the Australian region, was quiet to minor storm levels on the 31<sup>st</sup>, quiet to active on the 1<sup>st</sup>, quiet on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>, again quiet to active on the 4<sup>th</sup>, then quiet to unsettled on the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>.

F2 critical frequencies in the southern Australian region, started out depressed 15% during local day on the 31<sup>st</sup>, though near predicted at night. The 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> saw depressions of about 15%, but then recovered to near predicted monthly values for the rest of the week.

Now, the forecast for the 7<sup>th</sup> to the 13<sup>th</sup> of April;

Solar flare activity may be moderate early in the week.

Geomagnetic activity will possibly see active conditions on the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>, but quiet to unsettled on other days.

Maximum Usable Frequencies should remain 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 were;

Minimum 70      Average 74      Maximum 86  
Peak dates from the 1<sup>st</sup> to the 4<sup>th</sup>, and 28<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup>

Now the prediction for the rest of April ...

Minimum 71      Average 82      Maximum 112  
With peak dates between the 1<sup>st</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>, and the 25<sup>th</sup> to the 30<sup>th</sup>.

And looking ahead to the prediction for May;

Minimum 75      Average 86      Maximum 105  
With peak dates between the 1<sup>st</sup> and the 4<sup>th</sup>, and the 18<sup>th</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup>.

*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> ]

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## **ARRL DX news**

MAURITANIA, 5T. Jean, 5T0JL will be active using special call sign 5T3MM from April 12 to 18. This includes being active in the upcoming CQ Manchester Mineira DX contest.

FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY, DA. Special event station DM150HSM celebrates the 150th anniversary of the University of Applied Sciences at Mittweida and is active until the end of June. Activity is on the HF bands using mostly SSB, and some CW and PSK.

PHILIPPINES, DU. Members of the Ham Radio Communications Group will be active using special call sign DX75BDM from the Capas National Shrine, IOTA OC-042, until April 10 to commemorate the Bataan Death March.

BALEARIC ISLANDS, EA6. Jean-Marc, F5SGI will be active as EA6/F5SGI from Minorca Island, IOTA EU-004, until April 15. Activity will be on the HF bands using CW.

FRANCE, F. Members of the Charente DX Group will be active as TM2H from Houat Island, IOTA EU-048, until April 14. Activity will be on all HF bands using CW, SSB and RTTY.

SAINT MARTIN, FS. Paul, W7NZJ is active as FS/W7NZJ until April 16. Activity is on 40 to 10 metres using CW and various digital modes.

DJIBOUTI, J2. Dane, S53T is active as J28ND, and staying until the end of 2019.

GUINEA-BISSAU, J5. Josep, EA3BT and Nuria, EA3WL are active as J5B and J5W, respectively, from Rubane Island, IOTA AF-020, until April 15. Activity is on 40 to 6 metres, and possibly 80 metres, using CW, SSB and RTTY.

JAPAN, JA. Take, JI3DST is active as JI3DST/4 from Nakano Island, IOTA AS-041, until April 11. He will be active as JS6RRR/4 in the Japan International DX contest.

HAWAII, KH6. Nobu, JA0JHQ is active as AH0CO/KH6 from Oahu, IOTA OC-019, until April 9. This includes an entry in the Japan International DX contest.

GREENLAND, OX. Roger, SM7RYR is active as OX/SM7RYR from Kangerlussuaq, IOTA NA-018, until April 10. Activity is on 20, 17 and 15 metres.

PAPUA NEW GUINEA, P2. Haru, JA1XGI is active as P29VXG from New Britain Island, IOTA OC-008, until April 12. Activity is on the HF bands using mostly JT65.

SEYCHELLES, S7. A group of operators are active as S79Z from Mahe Island, IOTA AF-024, until April 18. Activity is on 160 to 10 metres.

EAST KIRIBATI[kir-uh-BAS], T32. Ken, KH6QJ will be active as T32AZ from Christmas Island, IOTA OC-024, from April 11 to 18. Activity will be on 80, 40, 20, 15 and 10 metres.

ASIATIC RUSSIA, UA0. Aleksandr, RA3AV, Yuri, UA0KBG and Victor, UA3AKO are active as R71RRC from Arakamchechen Island, IOTA AS-071, until April 17. Activity is on 40, 30, 20 and 17 metres using CW and SSB with two stations active.

TURKS AND CAICOS ISLANDS, VP5. James, K3NK will be active as VP5/K3NK from Providenciales Island, IOTA NA-002, from April 11 to 18. Activity will be on 80 to 10 metres using CW, SSB and possibly various digital modes.

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

THIS WEEKEND ON THE RADIO. Sees the Japan International CW DX Contest, NCCC RTTY Sprint, NCCC CW Sprint, SKCC Weekend CW Sprintathon, OK/OM SSB DX Contest, QRP ARCI Spring QSO CW Party, New Mexico QSO Party, Texas State Parks on the Air, Georgia QSO Party, Yuri Gagarin International CW DX Contest, International Vintage Contest HF and the Hungarian Straight Key 80-Meter CW Contest.

The 4 States QRP Group Second Sunday Sprint is scheduled for April 10. The RSGB 80-Meter Club SSB Championship, CWops Mini-CWT Test, Phone Fray and NAQCC CW Sprint are scheduled for April 12.

## WICEN News

WICEN was activated last Saturday, April 1, in support of the response to the floods in northern New South Wales. Two members attended the State Emergency Services Headquarters, to provide liaison between the SES and the Volunteer Rescue Association squads, assisting in the response.

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 23<sup>rd</sup> 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 7<sup>th</sup>, commencing at Leichhardt Oval #3, on the waterfront at Lilyfield. Then, May 13<sup>th</sup> is the Hunter event at the northern end of Lake Macquarie and the 4<sup>th</sup> 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.

The Bushwalkers Wilderness Rescue Squad also has first aid training available; for details check the website, [bwrs.org.au](http://bwrs.org.au).

The WICEN New South Wales website, at [nsw.wicen.org.au](http://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 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](http://crarc.ampr.org).

Events include, Carriage Driving at Witwood on Sunday May 7, 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 Their website, which includes the coming year's WICEN events is at: [www.crarc.ampr.org](http://www.crarc.ampr.org).

WICEN Victoria holds a net every Tuesday at 2030 on or near 3.6 MHz. Coming events include 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](http://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 Illawarra Amateur Radio Society. The next meeting of the Society is this Tuesday evening the 11th of April. The general meeting starts at 7:30pm, directly following the Committee Meeting which starts at 6:30pm.

Meetings are held at the Coniston Community Hall, Bridge Street Coniston, which is just a little south of the CBD of Wollongong. The hall is located right next door to the Coniston Railway Station, so access to meetings by train is very easy.

The next meeting will have a presentation from John VK2AAL on WSPR (pronounced whisper). WSPR stands for Weak Signal Propagation Reporter and uses low power Frequency Shift Keying transmissions to send the callsign, location and power output of the transmitting station. Stations receiving these transmissions can then upload the received report to indicate open propagation paths. John will be showing a video, plus bringing along equipment to show what is needed to set-up and run WSPR.

After John's presentation, raffle tickets will be available for purchase for the chance to win a full-featured soldering/desoldering rework station, followed by the usual ragchew over a hot cuppa' and biscuits.

An update about the VK2RUW Knights Hill repeater on 146.675MHz – the repeater has recently been off the air for upgrades. The repeater, duplexer, power supply, antennas and feedlines have now all been installed and the repeater will be returned to air shortly, hopefully by the time of this broadcast. The entire installation took considerable time and co-ordination to meet the meet the professional installation requirements of the site owners.

ARNSW News bulletins are presently relayed through VK2RMP at Maddens Plains, on 6 metres on 53.650MHz and on 2 metres, on 146.850MHz. Both of these repeaters service Wollongong and much of Sydney.

The Society is presently trialling a Yaesu Fusion C4FM repeater on 438.725MHz at VK2RMP Maddens Plains. This repeater operates with the usual 5MHz negative offset, and a 123Hz CTCSS tone is necessary for FM users. The repeater is operating in Auto Mode, so analogue FM signals are retransmitted in FM, and digital C4FM signals retransmitted in C4FM. Any

users of this new digital mode are invited to make use of this UHF repeater on 438.725.

Additionally, if you're interested in having a bit of a chinwag on Saturday mornings, Steve VK2BGL runs a very popular net on the VK2RMP 2 metre repeater starting at 9.30am local. As this repeater is connected to Echolink, the Net gets call-ins from all over Australia as well as many different other countries. So put the time of 9.30am in your diary & call-in next Saturday morning on the 146.850 repeater or on Echolink via VK2BGL-R.

To conclude, for a great evening of entertainment, fun and information, come along to the Illawarra Amateur Radio Society's next meeting at 7:30pm on April the 11th at the Coniston Community Hall in Wollongong.

*Submitted by Rob VK2MT  
Publicity Officer for the Illawarra Amateur Radio Society*

## Oxley Region Amateur Radio Club

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

The club's annual Field Day is on the weekend of the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> 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](http://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.*

## Ted Powell memorial DX challenge

The first 3-month period of the Ted Powell Memorial DX Challenge for 2017 has now closed. Entries can be submitted until the 14<sup>th</sup> of April.

The objective of the challenge is to work the most wanted DXCC entities based on their ranking in Clublog's "Most Wanted" list, which is published on the contest website.

All Australian amateurs are eligible to enter and entering is easy. You don't need to be a serious DX'er; If you've worked any DX during January - March, head over to [vk2au.org](http://vk2au.org) and submit an entry. The website is tidy and easy to understand, scroll down to the "Entry Submission" section where you will find a number of simple ways to submit your entry.

This is a fun and relaxed challenge where you work DX in your own time over a 3 month period. It's easy, and submitting an entry only takes a few minutes.

This is a relatively new contest, run by the Fisher's Ghost Amateur Radio Club, and they'd love to get an entry from you. The website again is... [vk2au.org](http://vk2au.org).

*Submitted by Peter VK2PR  
on behalf of the Fisher's Ghost Amateur Radio Club.*

## Manly-Warringah Radio Society

The Manly-Warringah Radio Society's YouTube channel has been updated, with last month's lecture by Geoff VK2AVR. The subject is the club's WebSDR system. Just go to YouTube and search for the club callsign VK2MB.

The next lecture, on Wednesday the 19th of April, will be on "The Outernet". More details next week, assuming we can work out just what the "Outernet" is... or maybe you'll just have to come along to find out.

The club's next Foundation Revision and Assessments Day is on Saturday the 29th of April. If you're in the Sydney area and you're ready to take your first step into this great hobby, this is a great opportunity! Just email Mark Plowman at this address: [vk2mp@wia.org.au](mailto:vk2mp@wia.org.au). That's Victor Kilo 2 Mike Papa at [wia.org.au](http://wia.org.au).

Finally, a reminder that the club's new Web-accessible Software Defined Radio is now operational. Any time, from anywhere, you can tune your computer or mobile device into any of five HF bands and hear what signals are audible in Sydney. This project has been generously sponsored by Amateur Radio New South Wales, and is proving to be very popular. Just go to the club web site, [www.mwrs.org.au](http://www.mwrs.org.au), and click on the WebSDR link in the top menu.

[Or you can use the direct link, <http://websdr.mwrs.org.au:8901> ]

The Manly-Warringah Radio Society meets every Wednesday evening at the 1st Terrey Hills Guides Hall, Beltana Avenue, Terrey Hills. Doors open at 7.30p.m. for an 8p.m. start, and visitors are always welcome. If you need directions, call in on the club's two metre repeater on 146.875 MHz, or visit the club's web site at [www.mwrs.org.au](http://www.mwrs.org.au) for more information.

*73 Richard VK2SKY  
MWRS Publicity Officer*

## Hornsby and Districts Amateur Radio Club

The next meeting is this 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 10am Sydney time on the Saturday until 10am 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, Joseph Cook, from his house in Wahroonga. There will also be dozens of other IMD stations on air in that 24 hour period. For more information visit [GB4IMD.co.uk](http://GB4IMD.co.uk), or search for GB4IMD on Facebook.

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](http://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](https://twitter.com/VK2MA).

*Submitted by Julian VK2YJS.*

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## **Summary of coming events;**

### **April**

WICEN Northern Rivers AGM on the 9<sup>th</sup>  
Illawarra Amateur Radio Society meeting on the 11<sup>th</sup>  
HADARC Mid-monthly meeting on the 11<sup>th</sup>  
Hunter Radio Group meeting on the 14<sup>th</sup>  
Urunga Convention on the weekend of the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>  
Manly-Warringah lecture night – ‘the outernet’ – on the 19<sup>th</sup>  
International Marconi Day is on the 22<sup>nd</sup>  
ANZAC day is the 25<sup>th</sup>  
Manly-Warringah Foundation Revision and Assessments Day, on the 29<sup>th</sup>  
ARNSW AGM on the 29<sup>th</sup>

### **May**

St George ARS Meeting at Connells Point on the 3<sup>rd</sup>  
Blue Mountains ARC meeting on the 5<sup>th</sup>  
Illawarra ARS meeting on the 9<sup>th</sup>  
ARNSW Foundation weekend, 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>  
Manly-Warringah lecture on the 17<sup>th</sup>  
St. George Foundation weekend, 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>  
Manly-Warringah theme night – Microphones - ends the month, on the 31<sup>st</sup>

### **June**

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