

## **Silent Key.**

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

The Oxley Region ARC have advised of the passing of their friend and club member Graeme Greenwood, formerly VK2ZIS, in Sydney on the 4<sup>th</sup> of March 2019, after a long battle with Parkinson's Disease.

Graeme will be remembered by many in the broadcasting industry as a pioneer of commercial FM broadcasting. After his success in Sydney, Graham became a co-owner of AM Radio 2MC in Kempsey and expanded it to include FM broadcasting in Port Macquarie.

In Port Macquarie, Graeme lived in a unit high on the hill near the ocean, and was very active on air in digital modes and satellites. After Graeme retired, he moved to the shores of Watson Taylor's Lake, under the shadow of Middle Brother Mountain, where he enjoyed the digital modes and had room for HF antennas.

Graeme enjoyed sailing and keenly participated in races at Port Macquarie in his yacht the Jolly Green Giant; He was known as "Admiral". His email address was "Admiral". Graeme had sailed around the world in his earlier days and had lived on his yacht in Sydney before coming to Port Macquarie.

Graeme was a founding member of the Oxley Region Amateur Radio Club. He was present at the meeting in 1971 that founded the club and remained a member continuously for the next 48 years.

In later years, Graeme was afflicted with Parkinson's Disease, and moved to McMahons Point in Sydney to be closer to medical attention. He reluctantly relinquished his long held callsign VK2ZIS a few years ago when the progression of the disease robbed Graeme of the many things that he had enjoyed all his life.

Graeme will be sadly missed, not only by the Amateur Radio Community, but by the community as a whole. He had a very special place in the evolution of the broadcasting industry. Triple M Mid North Coast FM Radio personality Mark "Strawny" Strachan aired a special tribute to Graeme on Tuesday the 5<sup>th</sup> of March.

The funeral for Graeme will be held in Sydney on Monday the 11<sup>th</sup> of March 2019 at 12:00 noon in the Magnolia Chapel at Macquarie Park Cemetery and Crematorium on the corner Delhi and Plassey Roads at North Ryde.

Please pause with us, while we remember Graeme.

[pause 5 seconds]

Vale [va-LAY] Graeme Greenwood, formerly VK2ZIS.

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

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

Today at VK2WI Dural, and also at the Oxley Region ARC in Port Macquarie, was the 40 metre antenna building day.

[include report If available]

Next weekend sees the annual John Moyle field day. John was the editor of Radio & Hobbies Magazine, and the first Australian Amateur to be included and attend a W A R C in 1959. Your club or group score in this event will help the overall VK2 tally, this year up against some well-organized interstate activities in this event. Look at the WIA Contest site for details of the John Moyle event.

Last week here at VK2WI Dural, some grass turf was laid on the landscaped area between the buildings. Its looking good and can be walked on, but there is still no vehicle access permitted while the turf beds down.

The ARNSW office is continuing to catch up with the backlog in sending out membership renewal reminders. Fees remain unchanged; renewals can be made for either two years at \$20, or five years at \$50. If you are interested in joining, you can download a membership application form from the ARNSW web site [arnsw.org.au](http://arnsw.org.au).

Members can check when renewal is due, on your membership card, on the address label of the 2019 calendar post out, or enquire by email to [membership@arnsw.org.au](mailto:membership@arnsw.org.au).

We are still waiting on information from the AMC regarding the new licence assessment procedures. Until these are in place, we are not running Foundation courses and upgrade assessments. Those who have already signed up for ARNSW courses will be updated by email, and we will of course provide updates here on VK2WI News.

The next ARNSW Trash & Treasure is on the last Sunday of this month. Since there are 5 Sundays this month, the date is the 31<sup>st</sup> of March.

## US Licence examinations

As we reported on recent news bulletins, examinations for US Amateur Licences were run at the Wyong Field Day last month. Licences for the successful candidates have now been issued. Our congratulations to the following:

Rob AG5TM who aced the exams,  
David AG7SR,  
Doug KC3MZR,  
Gene KJ7ENU,  
Michael KJ7ENT,  
Glen KJ7ENS,  
David KN4SWA.

John KE8KGC's upgrade to Extra is also now official, meaning he can apply for a shorter "Vanity" callsign using his initials.

For more information on the next session, along with the benefits of the US licence and links to study material and application information, visit the Oz-VE website, at [veexams.com](http://veexams.com).

*Submitted by Julian AG6LE.*

# Weekly Solar and Geophysical Report

For the period of the 1<sup>st</sup> to the 7<sup>th</sup> of March.

First, the summary;

Dates across the columns are	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>	6 <sup>th</sup>	7 <sup>th</sup>
10cm flux	70	69	70	71	72	73	71
Fredericksburg Index (Afr)	18	9	6	7	4	7	7 estimated
Australian Index (Aaus)	18	10	3	5	1	7	6 estimated
T index	-15	-21	-23	-11	-18	-14	-12

Solar activity was very low all week.

Geomagnetic activity was at quiet to active levels on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>, quiet from the 3<sup>rd</sup> to the 5<sup>th</sup>, then quiet to unsettled on the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>.

F2 critical frequencies in the southern Australian region, saw some depressions below normal monthly values; 20% on the 1<sup>st</sup> and during local day on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 15% during local night of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>, 25% during local day on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 15% during the night of the 4<sup>th</sup>, 15% on the 5<sup>th</sup>, then 15% during local day on the 6<sup>th</sup> and again during the night of the 7<sup>th</sup>.

Now, the forecast for the 8<sup>th</sup> to the 14<sup>th</sup> of March;

Solar activity is expected to be low.

Geomagnetic activity is expected to be mostly quiet, with some unsettled conditions at times.

Maximum Usable Frequencies are expected to be between predicted to slightly depressed, due to continued low levels of solar ionising flux.

*Data courtesy of Space Weather Services.*

## Solar Flux Index update

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

Having finished February, the figures were;

Minimum of 70, Average of 71, and a Maximum of 72  
With peak dates between the 1<sup>st</sup> and the 2<sup>nd</sup>

So far for March, the prediction is a;

Minimum of 69, Average of 70, and a Maximum of 73  
With peak dates between the 5<sup>th</sup> and the 12<sup>th</sup>

And looking ahead to the prediction for April, we are expecting a;

Minimum of 70, Average of 70, and a Maximum of 70  
With this low level of solar flux, there is no peak predicted at the moment.

*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>]

## Space Weather Summary for February 2019

*Complied with data courtesy of Space Weather Services*

February again was a quiet month overall for space weather.

Solar Activity was generally very low, with no M-class, X-class or even C-class solar flares observed. A solar filament erupted twice, first on the 23<sup>rd</sup> then again on the 27<sup>th</sup> of February, with some resultant coronal mass ejections.

High-speed solar wind streams associated with coronal holes were observed on the 1<sup>st</sup> and on the 27<sup>th</sup> of February; they were mildly geoeffective, causing slight geomagnetic disturbance, but not enough to cause a Shortwave Fadeout.

A mild increase in geomagnetic activity was also observed on the 28<sup>th</sup>; likely due to the high-speed wind stream and possibly a very mild glancing blow from a coronal mass ejection, associated with the earlier solar filament eruption on the 23<sup>rd</sup>.

No significant ionospheric depressions were observed this month, depressions of maximum usable frequencies (MUFs) of as much as 20% below normal monthly values were observed at times, probably due to the continued low solar flux levels.

The ongoing low level of solar activity may give rise to the question; are we at solar minimum? The minimum that signalled the start of the current solar cycle - Cycle 24 - was December 2008. While a cycle is roughly 11 years on average, the current forecast has the next solar minimum occurring about the middle of the year.

The minimum is determined from data over a period of 12 months, so the calculation needs six extra months of sunspot data to see where the actual 'minimum' occurred. Also, there can sometimes be an extended minimum - as in 2008 - or when the smoothed sunspot number shows no definite trend. So it's hard to be certain until sometime after the minimum, and the start of solar cycle 25.

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## What use is an F-call?

Tonight, we continue with the series, written and produced by Onno VK6FLAB. Each episode looks at different aspects of the diverse hobby of Amateur Radio.

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**[Play File: E-FCAL038.wav]**

*Duration:2m23s*

*In: "What use is an F-call?"*

*Out: "I'm Onno vk6flab"*

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For more information about this series, including transcripts and useful resources for F-calls, Onno's website is; [vk6flab.com](http://vk6flab.com), or follow him on Twitter, @VK6FLAB.

## **ARRL DX news**

MAURITANIA; Johannes, PA5X is active as 5T5PA from Nouadhibou for the next 6 months. Activity is on 160 to 6 metres using SSB, RTTY and FT8.

LESOTHO; A group of operators are active as 7P8LB until March 16 from the Molengoane Lodge. Activity is on the HF bands using CW, SSB and FT8 with two to three stations active.

BARBADOS; Dick, G3RWL will be active as 8P6DR from March 13 to April 17. Activity will be holiday style on 80 to 10 metres using CW and some RTTY.

GHANA; A group of operators are active as 9G2DX until March 20. Activity is on the HF bands using CW, SSB and FT8. They plan to be active from three different WWFF locations.

BAHAMAS; Dom, M1KTA is active as C6AKT from Eleuthera, IOTA NA-001, until March 16. Activity is on 80, 40, 20, 15 and 10 metres using only CW. This includes an entry in the RSGB Commonwealth CW Contest.

JUAN FERNANDEZ ISLAND; A group of operators will be active as XR0ZRC from Robinson Crusoe Island, IOTA SA-005, until April 3. Activity will be on 160 to 10 metres using all modes, and with four stations active.

MADEIRA ISLAND; Rosel, DL3KWR and Hardy, DL3KWF are active as CT9/home calls until April 3. Activity is on the HF bands, including 60 metres, using CW and FT8.

ANGOLA; Gabriel, D2EB has been active on 40 and 30 metres using CW around 0400UTC and 2230UTC, respectively.

FRENCH POLYNESIA; Karel, OK2ZI is active as FO/OK2ZI from Tahiti, IOTA OC-046, until March 12. Activity is on 40 to 10 metres using CW, SSB, FT8 and other digital modes.

SUDAN; Arik, EK6DO is active as ST2/EK6DO from Khartoum while working here. He hopes to soon have the call sign ST2DO. Activity is on 40, 20, 15 and 10 metres using CW and SSB.

SOMALIA; Ali, EP3CQ works for the United Nations in African Union Mission to Somalia in Mogadishu, and is active as 6O1OO until March 24. Activity is limited to his spare time on 40 to 10 metres using SSB and FT8.

BELIZE; Iain, G4SGX is active as V31GX and is active on the low bands using CW. This includes an entry in the RSGB Commonwealth CW Contest.

VIETNAM; Jacek, SP5APW will be active as XV9JK from Phu Quy Island, IOTA AS-157, until March 16. Activity will be on 40, 30, 20 and 17 metres using SSB and FT8.

SERBIA; Members of the Amateur Radio Club Banjica in the capital of Belgrade are active as YU125VS during the month of March to celebrate the 125th anniversary of the founding of Vojvoda Stepa, a primary school in Belgrade.

CAYMAN ISLANDS; Colin, G4CWH is active as ZF2CA until March 11. Activity is on 160 to 10 metres using CW and SSB, including an entry in the RSGB Commonwealth CW Contest.

THIS WEEKEND ON THE RADIO. The Stew Perry Topband CW Challenge, North American RTTY Sprint, NCCC RTTY Sprint, QRP 80-Metre CW Fox Hunt, NCCC Sprint, YB DX RTTY Contest, SARL VHF/UHF Analogue Contest, RSGB Commonwealth CW Contest, SKCC Weekend CW Sprintathon, F9AA SSB Cup, South America 10 Metre Contest, AGCW QRP Contest, Oklahoma QSO Party, EA PSK63 Contest, TESLA Memorial HF CW Contest, QCWA QSO Party, Idaho QSO Party, UBA 2-Metre Spring Contest, Wisconsin QSO Party and WAB 3.5 MHz Phone/CW will certainly keep contesters busy this weekend.

The 4 States QRP Group Second Sunday Sprint is scheduled for March 11.

The CWops Mini-CWT Test, RSGB 80-Metre Club CW Championship, AWA John Rollins Memorial DX CW Contest, Phone Fray and 40-Metre QRP CW Fox Hunt are scheduled for March 13.

The Canadian National Parks on the Air, CNPOTA, event runs throughout 2019, with special stations active from Canada's parks and historic sites.

## WICEN News

WICEN NSW is once again supporting Dementia Australia's Memory Walk and Jog events. These are short events, typically packed up by noon, and ideal for new members. The upcoming events are;

In the hunter at Speers Point Park, Lake Macquarie on March the 31<sup>st</sup>;  
Western Sydney – at Tench Reserve, Penrith on April 7<sup>th</sup>;  
And Sydney - Leichhardt Oval #3, Lilyfield (over the "Bay Run") on May 19<sup>th</sup>.

True Grit is an obstacle course running event, scheduled for the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> of June, and the OCR World Championship 24 hour is on the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> of June. Both events are at Lower Portland, in outer NW Sydney.

The WICEN website is at [nsw.wicen.org.au](http://nsw.wicen.org.au) and includes a web contact form. Facebook users will find an official WICEN NSW page, and an informal national WICEN group.

WICEN Northern Rivers holds a weekly net on Tuesdays at 8pm, on the Lismore repeater VK2RSC on 146.8 MHz, requiring a 123 Hz tone. Listen for VK2WIR.

The WICEN Mid North Coast Region meets at 3:30pm on the first Saturday of the month, at SES HQ, Central Road, Port Macquarie. The region is also running an HF net on Thursday evenings from 7pm, on the band-plan's 80 metre WICEN frequency of 3.6MHz.

WICEN ACT is part of the Canberra Region Amateur Radio Club, supporting events in the ACT and Capital Country, and on the South Coast of NSW. The Canberra Two-Day walk is March 30 and 31, then Friday May 10<sup>th</sup> and Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> are the BMSC National Capital Rally. The SCSCC Bega Rally is on June 8 & 9. See the WICEN and Events pages on [www.crar.org.au](http://www.crar.org.au).

WICEN Victoria will be supporting Duncan's Run, an Ultra-Marathon on Saturday the 23<sup>rd</sup> of March. The Kenda Rally, a motorcycle endurance event, is on Sunday May 5<sup>th</sup> and the The Mallee Rally is on June the 8<sup>th</sup>. Due to extreme drought conditions affecting the property and track, the Sunraysia 400 has been cancelled. More information can be found on the website, [vic.wicen.org.au](http://vic.wicen.org.au).

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## Club News

We start this week, with news from the Oxley Region Amateur Radio Club.

The next meeting is the Club's Friday night gathering, at 7pm on the 15<sup>th</sup> of March, in the SES Building, Central Road, Port Macquarie.

The club conducted a 40 metre dipole antenna building and testing day at Port Macquarie, this afternoon, in conjunction with the ARNSW 40 metre dipole Buildathon at Dural. The event at Port Macquarie proved to be very popular with 18 antennas being constructed.

On Saturday and Sunday the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> of March, club station VK2BOR will participate in the John Moyle Memorial Field Day, from the club's Communications Caravan at Camden Haven Airfield.

Candidates for the Foundation, Standard and Advanced Licences should contact the club via PO Box 712 Port Macquarie NSW 2444 regarding training and assessments.

The club conducts two nets each week; the mid-week net starts at 7:30pm on Thursday nights, and the weekend net starts at 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 the club's monthly general meetings at 2pm on the first Saturday of each month, and at the Friday night gathering at 7pm on the evening of the third Friday of each month. The venue for all these 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 site contains a wealth of Amateur Radio items in addition to club information. The January 2019 edition of the Club's bimonthly newsletter, Oxtales, is now online, and past issues are available on the website as well. The March 2019 issue of Oxtales is in preparation and will be published soon. The club is also on Facebook; just search for ORARC.

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

## **Hunter Radio Group**

The Group holds meetings on the second Friday of each month, except for December and January. The next meeting will be on the 12<sup>th</sup> of April.

Meetings are held at the Adamstown Bowling Club, 504 Glebe Road, Adamstown, starting at 7:30pm.

The Hunter Radio Group conducts a Monday night broadcast starting at 7.30pm, on the Group's Repeaters, 146.900MHz on 2 metres, and 438.025MHz on 70cm. Callbacks are taken after the broadcast.

*Rodney, VK2CN*  
*Secretary, Hunter Radio Group*

## Central Coast Amateur Radio Club

The recent Club business meeting was followed by an analysis of the Field Day, and we'll report upon the results soon. There were some good points raised by attendees, but please be aware that it takes an enormous amount of effort to bring this annual event to you; as always, volunteers to help run the show, are always welcome.

Yesterday was a working bee; first at the Kariong clubrooms to spruce up the place, followed by a safari to the Mt. Somersby site to cut back the feral vegetation and to check the CCTV.

The next lecture will be by Mark VK2CCR on "Capacitors, inductors, and first order circuits", on Saturday 16th; he says that it will not be too technical, so all are invited to brush up their knowledge.

The John Moyle Memorial Field Day is on next weekend, and the Club is planning on operating portable from Mt Eliot (close to Gosford) following Saturday's lecture; again, all Club members are invited.

All Meetings of the Central Coast Amateur Radio Club are held at the clubrooms in Dandaloo St, Kariong, just past the fire station. Meetings start at 1pm, preceded by the famous sausage sizzle run by master chef Steve VK2SKC, from noon. The Club rooms are accessible by bus, with a stop just opposite Dandaloo St, serviced by the route 34 bus from Gosford railway station every hour. The Club rooms are usually open from 10.30am on Saturday, for general chit-chat and access to the Club workshop and library. The Club also conducts Foundation training on an as-required basis.

The Club relays VK2WI News broadcasts every Sunday morning and evening. Callbacks are taken after the morning news only, on the Somersby 6 and 2m repeaters VK2RAG on 53.725 and 146.725 MHz respectively; please note that both repeaters require the standard sub-audible tone of 91.5 Hz.

The Club also runs a mixed-mode repeater VK2RAG on 439.950 MHz, which is connected to the P25 network; a 91.5 Hz tone is required for analogue access, and is highly recommended for receiving.

There is a net held every Thursday on the 2m repeater VK2RAG on 146.725, starting at 8pm; all members are encouraged to join (especially if Club news for the ARNSW broadcast is involved). There is also an experimental HF net on 80m, but it is difficult to find a free frequency so it will be announced on the VHF net. Club news is happily accepted at “publicity@ccarc.org.au”, preferably by 12 noon on Friday. Listeners may “join” the net by email to “netmaster@ccarc.org.au” and their comments will be read out.

The Club also has a Facebook page: just look for “centralcoastarc”, so be sure to “like” it to receive further updates. There is also a Twitter account on @ccarclub [pronounced “At CC AR Club”], and a YouTube channel streaming world-wide via several modes which is proving to be quite popular, especially with interstate visitors.

Further information about the Central Coast Amateur Radio Club, can be found on the website, [www.ccarc.org.au](http://www.ccarc.org.au).

*Dave VK2KFU*

*Publicity Officer, Central Coast Amateur Radio Club*

## **Illawarra Amateur Radio Society**

The next meeting of the Society is coming up this Tuesday evening, the 12<sup>th</sup> of March. The general meeting starts at 7:30pm, directly following the Society's committee meeting, which starts at 6:30pm.

Meetings are at the Coniston Community Hall in 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 is a "Show and Tell" night, with members and visitors welcome to bring in projects or photos and videos, to proudly show to the gathered audience. Past "Show and Tells" have been very interesting, showing the diverse interests contained with Amateur radio.

Additionally, there will be final discussion and planning for the upcoming John Moyle Field Day, which is on next weekend, the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> of March. The Committee has located a fantastic noise-free site for the Club's station, so come along and join-in the challenge and comradery of the Field Day weekend.

At the end of formalities, will be the usual ragchew over a cup of tea or coffee with chocolate biscuits. Based past meeting nights, ragchewing will continue out in the carpark, long after the hall has been locked up.

The IARS now has two weekly Nets, with the addition of an 80m Net on Friday nights from 8:30pm local time on 3.630MHz, plus or minus for usage. The very popular Saturday morning chit-chat Net continues to grow, ably run by Steve VK2BGL. Listeners can join in by either using one of the Club's 2 metre repeaters - VK2RMP on 6850 or VK2RUW on 6675, while out-of-towners can call in on Echolink via VK2BGL-R.

The Society's 70cm DMR repeater continues to get a lot of use. It is located at the VK2RMP Maddens Plains site and is on 438.725MHz, with a 5MHz negative offset. On Slot 1 it is presently connected to World Wide Talk Group 91 and on Slot 2, it is connected to the Australian and NSW Talk Groups of 505 and 5052. All listeners in the Wollongong and Sydney region are invited to use the repeater.

To conclude, all listeners are invited to attend the next meeting of the Illawarra Amateur Radio Society at 7.30pm on Tuesday evening the 12<sup>th</sup> of March, at the Coniston Community Hall in Wollongong.

*Submitted by Rob VK2MT*

*Publicity Officer for the Illawarra Amateur Radio Society*

## Hornsby and Districts Amateur Radio Club

The next meeting of the Club will be the informal mid-monthly meeting this Tuesday the 12<sup>th</sup> of March, starting at 8pm. The meeting is at the Mt Colah Community Centre, near the northern end of Pierre Close, opposite the eastern entrance of Mt Colah Railway Station. The next general meeting is on the 26<sup>th</sup>.

The Club runs three nets each week. Monday's net starts at 8pm on the VK2RNS 2 metre repeater, 147.250MHz No tone is required, but a 91.5 Hz tone is sent. The 80 metre net is on Wednesday evenings on 3608.5 kHz, also from 8pm, and Morning Tea with HADARC is on or near 7106 kHz from 9am on Fridays.

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, and on twitter, @VK2MA.

*Submitted by Julian VK2YJS  
HADARC Publicity Officer.*

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## **Summary of coming events;**

### **March**

Illawarra ARS Meeting at Coniston on the 12<sup>th</sup>

HADARC mid-monthly meeting on the 12<sup>th</sup>

Oxley Region ARC Friday night gathering on the 15<sup>th</sup>

CCARC lecture day on the 16<sup>th</sup>

The John Moyle Field day is on the weekend of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>

HADARC Monthly General Meeting on the 26<sup>th</sup>

Westlakes ARC car boot sale, from 9am on the 30<sup>th</sup>

ARNSW Trash & Treasure and Radio Experimenters Group on the 31<sup>st</sup>

### **April**

Hunter Radio Group meeting on the 12<sup>th</sup>

ARNSW AGM on the 13<sup>th</sup>

Urunga Convention on the Easter weekend, 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>

### **May**

ARNSW Trash & Treasure and Radio Experimenters Group on the 26<sup>th</sup>