

Silent Key.

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

The Oxley Region Amateur Radio Club have advised of the passing of their friend and esteemed Life member, James Kenneth (Jim) Daniel VK2FJKD at Port Macquarie, on Sunday the 8th of March. He was 91 years old.

Jim was born in Dungog on the 1st of December 1928. His parents were farmers but Jim had an interest in Science and Engineering. He moved to Harrington where he met and married his wife Irene. While there, he obtained a job with the Department of Main Roads (DMR). He spent a lot of time on the Oxley Highway, leading to a move to Port Macquarie.

Jim spent the last 50 years as a very active member of the Port Macquarie Astronomical Society. He inspired members of the society and visitors to the Observatory, with his infectious enthusiasm and encyclopaedic knowledge, giving countless talks to attentive groups of visitors over the years. He also had an observatory at his home, and took many photographs. He was particularly proud of his excellent photos of the transit of Venus; a key event in the astronomical calendar.

After a 40 year career with the DMR, Jim enjoyed 30 years of very active retirement. While the Astronomical Society Observatory was like a second home, he had many other interests as well, including radio. Jim obtained his Amateur Radio Licence through the Oxley Region Amateur Radio Club and was licenced as VK2FJKD. He was proud of his Life Membership of the club.

A funeral for Jim was held in the Chapel at the Innes Gardens Crematorium in Port Macquarie on Thursday the 12th of March 2020.

Please pause with us, while we remember Jim.

[pause 5 seconds]

Vale[va-LAY] James Kenneth (Jim) Daniel VK2FJKD.

*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;

In the past week, the former VK2RWI repeater tower has been taken down, dismantled and removed from site. While some more site works are underway, the 23cm VK2RWI repeater, 23cm VK2RSY beacon, and the VKE580 news relay on 5425kHz, are temporarily off the air.

Remember that next weekend is the annual John Moyle Contest.

The next edition of ALL ACCESS is due for release in this coming week.

This weekend saw the first ARNSW Foundation weekend for the year, with a large number of candidates. Enquiries about training and education at ARNSW can be directed to the education team, via email to; education@arnsw.org.au.

Tonight's news bulletin is being relayed via EchoLink, on the "HAM" conference server. Our thanks to John VK3HJQ, and the Australian and New Zealand EchoLink team; for making the service available to VK2WI News.

ARNSW membership renewals

As many members would already be aware, ARNSW was saddened at the untimely passing some 18 months ago, of our fellow member and membership officer, Norm VK2TOP. This also left a gap in our membership records and processing of renewals. Since then, we have undertaken to setup a membership database system. This required going back to original records in some cases, to check memberships and payment information was being correctly recorded. Thanks to the hard work of our treasurer Ray VK2ASE, and secretary Eric VK2VE, the database is now operational.

During the past week, over 300 renewals were posted out in the past week; so many members should see these arriving soon. These renewals cover all outstanding memberships and those due in the next two months.

The mailing labels on the letters show your renewal date at the end of the first line; however, the printing formatted them Month-first; so the first number is the month and the second is the day, which is normally the first day of the month.

Payment options include cash in person, cheque, money order, credit card or direct deposit. The details are all on the form, which may be mailed or emailed in to the office. If you use direct deposit, please make sure that you indicate your name, callsign or membership number on the transaction details, and also send an email to office@arnsw.org.au with the same information, the amount paid and the receipt number; so that we know who belongs to which payment in our account.

Urunga Radio Convention

Returning over this Easter weekend, on the 11th and 12th of April, is the Urunga Radio Convention.

The Convention is one of the most challenging fox hunting events in Australia and attracts fierce competition from all over. If you are a new fox-hunter, or a devotee with years of experience, this weekend is made for you.

The weekend begins at 9am Saturday, with activities at the Pensioners Hall, Bowra Street Urunga.

The Convention Dinner is 6pm Saturday night, Followed by a Night Fox Hunt; registration for that is 7:30pm.

Sunday kicks off with the Urunga Scrambles are at 8am, and activities continue until the presentation of awards at 3pm.

The Convention has a limited supply of sniffers to lend to first time fox-hunters.

Other activities include our superb technical quiz and general quiz, guessing competitions, raffles and lucky door prizes. Trading tables are also available.

Urunga is one of the remaining original villages left on the north coast of NSW and is the ideal relaxed holiday weekend for families and fox-hunters without the holiday crowds. It is where two rivers meet the sea and offers plenty of outdoor activities.

The Convention hall is accessible and has a relaxing lounge room and accessible amenities.

For more information you can Contact Ken VK2DGT, Terry VK2TEZ, and Merv VK2DMS.

*Advised by Gloria Savins
For the Urunga Radio Convention.*

Weekly Solar and Geophysical Report

For the period of the 6th to the 12th of March.

First, the summary;

Dates across the columns are	6 th	7 th	8 th	9 th	10 th	11 th	12 th
10cm flux	70	70	70	71	71	71	70
Fredericksburg Index (Afr)	4	5	3	5	3	0	6 estimated
Australian Index (Aaus)	4	3	3	4	2	2	5 estimated
T index	-1	-3	+3	+1	+2	+3	-1

Solar activity was very low all week. Geomagnetic activity was quiet from the 6th to the 11th. Geomagnetic activity was at quiet to unsettled levels on the 12th; and the SWS magnetometer data showed a weak impulse of 7 nanoTesla, at 1331UTC.

F2 critical frequencies in the southern Australian region, remained mostly near predicted monthly values, with some enhanced periods; 20% after local dawn on the 6th and 30% after local dawn on the 7th; 15% during local night on the 8th; 20% after local dawn on the 9th and 10th; 15% during local night on the 11th; and on the 12th, enhancement of 15% during local night and 20% after local dawn.

Now, the forecast for the 13th to the 19th of March;

Solar activity is expected to be very low.

Geomagnetic activity is expected to be mostly quiet, but unsettled conditions are possible at times.

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.

For February, we had a;

Minimum of 70, Average of 71, and a Maximum of 74
With peak dates from the 1st to the 4th.

So far for March, we expect a;

Minimum of 69, Average of 70, and a Maximum of 72
With peak dates from the 10th to the 12th, and the 22nd to the 23rd

And looking ahead to April, we are expecting a;

Minimum of 70, Average of 71, and a Maximum of 72
With peak dates from the 6th to the 19th.

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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What use is an F-call?

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

[Play File: E-FCAL093.wav]

Duration: 1m20s

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

Out: "I'm Onno VK6FLAB"

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

ARRL DX news

MAURITIUS; Nigel G3TXF is active as 3B8XF until March 28. This includes an entry in the RSGB Commonwealth contest.

MALDIVES; Noel F6BGC is active as 8Q7NC from Veligandu Island, IOTA AS-013, until March 21. Activity is on 80 to 10 metres using CW, SSB and various digital modes.

GHANA; Alan, G3XAQ is active as 9G5XA from Accra. Activity is on 160 to 10 metres using CW. This includes an entry in the RSGB Commonwealth contest.

BAHRAIN; Special event station A91GP is active until March 22 to celebrate the 2020 Bahrain Grand Prix.

EASTER ISLAND; Mike, VE7ACN will be active as CE0Y/VE7ACN from March 19 to 30. Activity will be on 80 to 10 metres, and possibly 160 metres if conditions permit, using mainly CW.

PHILIPPINES; Lenny, N7MOT is active as DU6/N7MOT from Panay Island, IOTA OC-129. Activity is on 80 to 6 metres using SSB and FT8. He is generally active on 80 and 40 metres around 1200 to 1600UTC, and 20 metres between 2300 and 0300UTC.

SPAIN; Special event station EH3DWN will be active until March 21 to mark World Down Syndrome Day on March 21.

NORTHERN IRELAND; Special event calls GB0SPD, GB2SPD and GB4SPD will be active from March 16 to 18 during the St. Patrick's Day On The Air operating event.

LITHUANIA; Special event stations LY11LY and LY30LY are active during March to celebrate Lithuania's independence.

CURACAO; Andreas, DK5ON will be active as PJ2/DK5ON until March 31. Activity will be on 80 to 6 metres, including 60 metres, using CW, SSB, RTTY, FT8 and FT4. This includes entries in the upcoming Russian DX and CQ World Wide WPX contests.

ST. PETER AND ST. PAUL ROCKS; PQ0S is active until March 16, on 80 to 10 metres using CW, SSB and various digital modes.

SLOVENIA; Members of Radio Club Cerkno are active with special event call S500E for all of 2020 to mark half a million QSOs made from the S50E station.

SEYCHELLES; Nick, G7EQM is active as S79EQM until March 29. Activity is holiday style on 20 metres using SSB and FT8.

BELIZE; Iain, G4SGX is active as V31GX, including being an entry in the RSGB Commonwealth contest.

NAMIBIA; Pat, KI4SVM will be active as V5/KI4SVM until March 28. Activity will be holiday style on the HF bands using CW and SSB. This may include being active from SOTA references as well.

CAYMAN ISLANDS; Colin, G4CWH is active as ZF2CA, on 160 to 10 metres using CW and SSB. This includes an entry in the RSGB Commonwealth contest.

NEW ZEALAND; Frank, ZL2BR, Geoff, ZL3GA, Phil, ZL3PAH and Paul, ZL4TT will be active as ZM2B in the RSGB Commonwealth contest.

THIS WEEKEND ON THE RADIO. The Stew Perry Topband CW Challenge, QRP 40-Metre CW Fox Hunt, NCCC RTTY Sprint, QRP 80-Metre CW Fox Hunt, NCCC Sprint, YB DX RTTY Contest, RSGB Commonwealth Contest, SARL VHF/UHF Analogue Contest, F9AA SSB Cup, South America 10 Metre Contest, AGCW QRP CW Contest, Oklahoma QSO Party, EA PSK63 Contest, TESLA Memorial HF CW Contest, QCWA QSO Party, Idaho QSO Party, QRP ARCI Spring Thaw SSB Shootout, North American RTTY Sprint, UBA Spring 2-Metre Contest, Wisconsin QSO Party and Run for the Bacon QRP CW Contest will certainly keep contesters busy over this weekend.

The Bucharest Digital FT4 Contest and RSGB FT4 Contest Series are scheduled for March 16. The CLARA Chatter Party is scheduled for March 17. The 40-Metre QRP CW Fox Hunt and Phone Fray are scheduled for March 18.

WICEN News

WICEN NSW is a communications support squad of the NSW Volunteer Rescue Association. All WICEN Members encouraged to take advantage of the free courses offered by the Office of Emergency Management.

WICEN groups across Australia have been supporting Dementia Australia's Memory Walk and Jog events. However, due to concerns over COVID-19, the event this morning has been cancelled, and future events are subject to health advice. The first event planned in NSW is at Penrith on the 5th of April; see memorywalk.com.au for updates.

The Glow Worm Tunnel Marathon Weekend at Newnes is on June 13th and 14th. BSAR's Navshield is a bush navigation competition, which WICEN is eligible to compete in; it is on June 27th and 28th.

WICEN's website is at nsw.wicen.org.au. Facebook users will find an official WICEN NSW page, and an informal national WICEN group.

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 BMSC "NatCap" Rally is coming up next weekend and the Canberra Two Day Walk is on April 4th and 5th. The Bega Rally is on June 6th and 7th. For more information, see the WICEN and Events pages on www.crarc.ampr.org.

WICEN Victoria is scheduled to support Memory Walk and Jog events; in Melbourne on May the 3rd and in Geelong on May the 17th. The Duncan's Run 100 at Turra Bulga in south Gippsland is on March 21; and the Kenda Motorbike Rally is on May 3rd at Eildon. The Mallee Rally near Sealake is back, on June 6th and 7th. WICEN Victoria's weekly net is on each Tuesday at 8:30pm, on 3.6MHz and the website is at vic.wicen.org.au.

[OEM link; <https://www.emtraining.nsw.gov.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 March Friday night gathering, at 7pm on Friday the 20th of March at the SES Building in Central Road, Port Macquarie. As always, visitors will be made most welcome.

This weekend, the club is conducting Foundation licence training, and examinations for all grades of licence. The next training and assessments for all grades of licences will held when sufficient candidates have registered; contact the club at PO Box 712 Port Macquarie NSW 2444 for more details.

Club station VK2BOR will be participating in the John Moyle Memorial Field Day next weekend, the 21st and 22nd of March. The club's communications caravan which will be set up in the camping area at Camden Haven Airfield, south of Port Macquarie. VK2BOR will operate on all HF bands and 160 metres. The postponed antenna shootout will be run as an additional activity during the weekend.

The club's 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 on 146.7MHz, which requires a 91.5Hz sub-audible tone for access.

For more information about the Oxley Region Amateur Radio Club, visit the website at orarc.org. The January 2020 issue of the club's bimonthly newsletter, Oxtales, is now available, and past issues are available on the website as well. Look for the March 2020 issue which will be published soon. The club is also on Facebook; just search for Oxley Region Amateur Radio Club.

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

Central Coast Amateur Radio Club

On Friday evening the 13th of March, the Club's VK2RAG repeater relayed an international Space Station contact session with the *Australian Air League - South Australia Wing*, at 7:56PM local time. This stream was broadcast not only via the local repeater, but also out live to Facebook. If you missed the broadcast, be sure to check it out on both the clubs Facebook page & Youtube channel. Thanks to John VK3HJQ for providing the broadcast audio.

The Club is seeking participants for the John Moyle Memorial Field Day on the 21st March to setup a portable station at Mount Elliott. This is a great opportunity for those who have not experienced portable work and the simplicity of an end fed wire antenna.

The Club will soon be holding an MMDVM build day. Club members and guests who may be interested in taking part are encouraged to contact our projects coordinator Tom, via email at projects@ccarc.org.au.

The club is holding a Foundation Training & Assessment weekend on the 21st and 22nd of March. If you are interested in obtaining or upgrading your current licence, please contact Karen, our Education Coordinator, at education@ccarc.org.au.

Did you attend the 2020 Wyong Field Day? The club would love to see some of your photos taken to add to our collection. Please reach out to us at ccarc@ccarc.org.au.

The club's Thursday evening net hot topic for this week was "LIPO batteries and it's uses within Amateur Radio" with some fantastic input and ideas spawned from it. Do you have a suggestion for the clubs next weekly net topic or a burning question? Feel free to leave a comment on the club's page or reach out to the club via email.

Remember, you can watch the live stream from Facebook or join in via EchoLink using the *CCARCNSW* conference server.

You can find out more about the CCARC on the web, at ccarc.org.au.

Brad VK2NMZ

Vice-President, Central Coast Amateur Radio Club.

Westlakes Amateur Radio Club

The Club's will be holding their first car boot sale event for 2020, next Sunday the 21st of March. Its at the Club grounds, 6a York Street Teralba, starting at 8:30am.

There will also be a BBQ and hot and cold drinks available, and a club raffle.

There is no cost to set up, but bring your own table. All welcome.

Westlakes has a net every Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 09:30am Local time; Its currently on 80metres, on 3565kHz.

Barrie VK2QG

For the Westlakes Amateur Radio Club

Sydney ATV Group

The Sydney ATV repeater VK2RTS located at Lawson in the Blue Mountains, has recently been upgraded to High Definition. The output frequency has also been lowered by 1MHz, to 445.5MHz, to comply with ACMA national requirements when upgrading.

The repeater is active on Monday and Thursday nights from 7pm to around 8:45pm with liaison on the 147.325 plus offset repeater. All are welcome to call in with reports or help with receiving ATV.

Video is also streamed via the British Amateur TV Club web site; Just click on the members VK2 call sign at the above local times.

*Advised by John VK2ATU
on behalf of the Sydney ATV Group.*

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Manly-Warringah Radio Society

This Wednesday the 18th, is lecture night at the Society, with guest speaker Derry Thomas. Derry will be driving in a car rally, which raises money for the Cancer Council, and to date they have raked in nearly 23 million dollars. There are two such rallies this year: in May (from Alice Springs to the Gold Coast via the Gulf of Carpentaria) and in October (from Mackay to Darwin). Each rally covers over 3000 kilometres.

What is unique about these rallies is the ...“quality”... of the participating shi... vehicles, which are all worth \$1000 or less. One of these vehicles will be available for inspection and selfies on the night.

[Web link: <https://www.shitboxrally.com.au/>]

The January and February lectures, "Repairing Switch-Mode Power Supplies" and "HF Magnetic Loop Antennas" respectively, are now available on YouTube. Just search for VK2MB-TV[V K Two M B hyphen TV]. While you're there check out over 100 other Amateur Radio videos on the channel.

Next, a teaser for what could be the Amateur Radio "Sale of the Century". The club is planning to auction the deceased estate of one of our members, which includes many vintage items. No date has been decided yet, but you can have a sneak peek on the Society's web site, mwrs.org.au.

Finally, the club's D-STAR repeaters will be off-air for a short period while they are relocated to a new site and frequency. The DMR repeaters, which have been off air recently, will be coming back online very soon.

Visit the society web site for other news, information about the various club projects such as the WebSDR (sponsored by ARNSW), the club YouTube channel VK2MB-TV, the club's Scouting program and much more.

The Manly-Warringah Radio Society meets every Wednesday evening at the 1st Terrey Hills Guides Hall, Beltana Avenue, Terrey Hills. Doors open at 7:30pm for an 8pm 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 for more information.

*73 Richard VK2SKY
MWRS Publicity Officer*

Waverley Amateur Radio Society

Last Sunday the society ran the 5th Sydney Harbour Ferry Contest; from all accounts, a great day was had by all on our beautiful harbour. Get those logs in quickly.

The next meeting of the society is this Wednesday the 18th commencing at 7:30pm. The meeting will be held in the ANZAC room of the Rose Bay RSL club, next door to the club's usual meeting venue.

Fifty years ago, in January 1970; Australia's second satellite, Australis-OSCAR 5, piggybacked into orbit with a NASA weather satellite. Despite its small size (comparable to a modern Cubesat), Australis was ground-breaking in many ways. Not only was it the first amateur radio satellite built outside the United States, it was also the first in the world to be developed as a student project, incorporating many unique features that were particularly advanced for the time.

The brainchild of a group of students from the Melbourne University Astronautical Society, Australis was designed and constructed in 1965-66 and was actually ready to fly before WRESAT (the Weapons Research Establishment satellite). However, difficulties with finding a launch meant that WRESAT was launched first. But, with help from the newly-formed AMSAT, Australis eventually flew as OSCAR 5 in 1970. This presentation will explore the fascinating story of Australis-OSCAR 5, its development (a classic example of Australian 'make do' ingenuity), the search for a launch and its operational phase once in orbit.

Kerrie Dougherty is an independent space historian, curator and educator, who was previously Curator of Space Technology at the Powerhouse Museum. She is the author of *Australia in Space*, a comprehensive history of Australian space activities, a lecturer in space humanities for the International Space University and an elected Member of the International Academy of Astronautics. Kerrie works part-time for the Australian Space Agency and has written several science fiction guidebooks as well as numerous articles on Australia's space history.

As usual, many members will gather prior to the meeting for dinner in the bistro of the RSL from about 6:00pm and all are welcome to join them. This promises to be a most interesting talk again from Kerry.

The next shack night is scheduled for Wednesday, April 1st starting at 7:30pm. The next project day will be on Saturday April 4th commencing at 1:30 pm through to 4 or 5 pm.

The society's Morse code group meets on the first Sunday of each month at 11:00 am at the club, so the next meeting is on April 5th.

The digital special interest group usually meets on the second Tuesday of the month; the next meeting is scheduled for April 14th from 7:30pm.

As usual, the clubrooms are open most Tuesdays from 10:00am until 3:00pm for those who would like to have a chat, work on a project and enjoy a cup of coffee from our resident barista in a sort of "men's shed" type of atmosphere.

The next foundation course is due to run in May over the weekend of 23rd & 24th. Full details and registration form can be found on the society's website vk2bv.org.

Don't forget the weekly net on the VK2RBV repeater, starting at 8pm every Monday evening, usually MC'ed by Richard VK2XRC.

There is full information about the Society's activities on the website, vk2bv.org. On the website, you can also book for courses or assessments, or use the contact form on the website to make contact for more information.

*73 from Eric VK2VE
Broadcast Publicity Officer*

Hornsby and Districts Amateur Radio Club

The next HADARC meeting is the March general meeting at 8pm on the 24th at Mt Colah Community Centre.

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.

Members have been experimenting on 144.1 MHz SSB, vertically polarised, in the half hour before the Monday net, with liaison on VK2RNS.

HADARC's website is at 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

Waverley ARS Meeting on the 18th

Manly-Warringah Radio Society lecture night also on the 18th

Oxley Region ARC Friday night gathering on the 20th

Westlakes ARC car boot sale at Teralba on the 21st

John Moyle Contest weekend, 21st and 22nd

CCARC Foundation Training and Assessments on the 22nd

HADARC general meeting on the 24th

ARNSW Trash & Treasure and Radio Experimenters Group on the 29th

April

Urunga Radio convention on the 11th and 12th

Amateur Radio New South Wales AGM on Saturday the 18th

Anzac Day – Australian amateurs can use the AX prefix on the 25th

VK2IMD activation on the 25th

May

ARNSW Foundation Training and Assessment weekend, 16th and 17th

Waverley ARS Foundation training and assessment weekend, 23rd and 24th

ARNSW Trash & Treasure and Radio Experimenters Group on the 31st