

Silent Key.

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

On last week's news, we advised of the passing of John Bishop VK2ZOI, president of Hornsby and Districts Amateur Radio Club, in the early hours of Friday, January 29th, at the age of 75, due to metastatic melanoma.

We have been updated this week, that John's Funeral will be held at 2pm on Friday the 12th of February at Magnolia Chapel, Macquarie Park Cemetery and Crematorium. Masks must be worn during the funeral.

After the funeral a wake for John will be held at The Asquith Bowling Club, (1 Lodge St, Hornsby, from 3:30 to 6pm.

Please contact the Secretary of HADARC if you wish to attend either the funeral or wake, as numbers are presently limited to 100 for each. Hopefully, this will change before the 12th of February.

The family has asked that, instead of flowers, donations be made to The Melanoma Institute Australia. [<https://www.melanoma.org.au/get-involved/donate>].

The full obituary for John, along with funeral details and a link to the webcast will be available on HADARC website at <https://hadarc.org.au> under the NEWS heading.

Please pause with us now, as we remember John.

[pause 5 seconds]

Vale [va-LAY]
John Bishop VK2ZOI.

Thanks to Rod VK2DAY for updating VK2WI news.

[Play File: 14-E-ID1.wav]

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

While no events are currently planned at VK2WI Dural, and the site remains closed to visitors; you can still make contact via email, to office@arnsw.org.au, or by phone message to 02 9651 1490.

The ARNSW Education team is planning to resume training weekends in 2021. The first scheduled weekend for the year is March 14th and 15th, with the possibility of additional days depending on interest. As current arrangements require significant forward planning, please register with the team by email to education@arnsw.org.au. Those interested will be kept informed by email, and we will have further updates here on VK2WI News.

Later in this bulletin we have a summary of on-air activities from Sydney and across the state. You can let us know what is happening in your area by email; to news@arnsw.org.au – we don't need full news items, just the details of the activity and contacts. We also welcome any updates on the progress in these activities; which we can report on VK2WI News, to tell listeners how it went.

We also wish to remind our listeners of some telephone services that are available, if you currently have any health concerns – the National COVID hotline is 1800 020 080, providing general advice; if you are feeling unwell, Healthdirect is on 1800 022 222. Both services are available 24 hours a day; and are a free call from most telephone services.

The first 2021 issue of the ARNSW Newsletter, *All Access*, has now been sent out to members on the email list. If you haven't seen a copy in your inbox - and would like to – its best to check we have a current email address. Get in touch with membership@arnsw.org.au with your update, and you can be added to the list.

Once again this week, we welcome listeners on the EchoLink "HAM" conference, and the Australian & New Zealand EchoLink Network. Callbacks will also be taken tonight on the network after the bulletin. Our thanks to John VK3HJQ and the Australian & New Zealand EchoLink Network team, for making this relay available to VK2WI News.

ARNSW Elections

The next Annual General Meeting of Amateur Radio New South Wales is on Saturday the 17th of April 2021.

At the AGM, five of the 9 directors will be retiring. Nominations will soon be open for eligible members who wish to nominate to be a director, for the years 2021 and 2022. Each elected director serves a two-year term – until the AGM in 2023.

Nomination forms will shortly be from the website, or from the office.

Nominations close at midday on Saturday 6th of March 2021.

Peter VK2EMU
Returning Officer

Weekly Solar and Geophysical Report

For the period of the 29th of January to the 4th of February.
First, the summary;

Dates across the columns are	29 th	30 th	31 st	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th
10cm Flux	76	74	73	74	73	74	74
Fredericksburg Index (Afr)	2	2	0	4	11	10	8 estimated
Australian Index (Aaus)	1	1	0	3	14	8	6 estimated
T index	-3	-3	+2	-6	+9	-6	-16

Solar activity was very low all week.

Geomagnetic activity was quiet from the 29th of January until the 1st of February. On the 2nd, activity ranged from quiet to active levels, with the SWS magnetometer recording weak impulses of 9 nanoTesla, at 0352UTC and again at 0551UTC. After that, the 3rd remained at quiet to unsettled levels, then the 4th returned to mostly quiet conditions.

F2 critical frequencies in the southern Australian region, remained near predicted monthly values, except for a few periods of depressions; 15% during local night on the 31st of January; 20% after local dawn on the 2nd of February; 15% during the day and 25% at night on the 3rd; and depression of 15% during the 4th of February.

Now, the forecast for the 5th to the 11th of February;

Solar activity is expected to be very low, to low.

Geomagnetic activity is expected to be at quiet to unsettled levels, with possible active periods on the 7th and 8th.

Maximum Usable Frequencies should be mostly near predicted monthly values, with the possibility of minor to moderate depressions.

Data courtesy of Space Weather Services.

Solar Flux Index update

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

Having finished January, we saw a;

Minimum of 73, Average of 76, and a Maximum of 82
With peak dates from the 1st to the 5th; and the 17th to the 26th

As we start February, we are expecting a;

Minimum of 73, Average of 75, and a Maximum of 78
With peak dates from the 13th to the 26th.

And looking ahead to March, we are expecting a;

Minimum of 72, Average of 75, and a Maximum of 78
With peak dates from the 12th to the 21st.

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 January 2021

Compiled with data courtesy of Space Weather Services

Solar activity was predominately at very low levels this month, with no M or X-class flares observed. Low solar activity was observed on the 19th of January with a small C1 X-ray class flare. Several high-speed solar wind streams due to coronal holes, were observed during the month; on the 5th to 6th, 11th to 12th and 25th to 26th. Minor solar filament eruptions were observed on the 1st, 2nd, 8th, 29th and 30th of January. None of these events were significantly geo-effective.

No significant geomagnetic disturbances were observed during the month. Mild increases in geomagnetic activity were observed on the 5th, 11th and 25th, predominately in association with coronal-hole induced solar wind streams. A sudden weak impulse was observed on the 11th, probably in association with the observed solar filament eruption; however, no significant geomagnetic activity followed the impulse.

Some mild to moderate ionospheric depressions, of up to 20% were observed during the month. These were likely due to the weak geomagnetic activity associated with either coronal-hole induced solar wind streams, or small solar filament eruptions.

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: 15-FCAL137.wav]

Duration 1m30s

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.

[Play File: 16-E-ID2.wav]

ARRL DX news

KUWAIT; Members of the Kuwait Amateur Radio Society are active as 9K60NLD throughout February, to celebrate Kuwait's independence. All stations from Kuwait may also use the prefix 9K60 during this time.

FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY; Special event station DC220GERKE is active until the end of April to commemorate the 220th birthday of Clemens Gerke, a German pioneer of telegraphy who revised Morse Code to its present form. Activity is on the HF bands.

SCOTLAND; Gareth, M0MOL is active as MM0MOL/p from the main island of Shetland, IOTA EU-012, until the end of March. Activity is on the HF bands using QRP power, after work, and mainly during his evenings.

REPUBLIC OF KOREA; Kang, DS4DRE is active as DS4DRE/4 from Komun Island, IOTA AS-060, until the end of January, 2022. Activity is on 80 to 10 metres using CW and SSB.

JAPAN; Special event station 8N0J is active until April 30, 2022 to celebrate the creation of the city of Joetsu, which was formed when the two cities of Takada and Naoetsu merged in 1971.

MARIANA ISLANDS; Tom, KC0W is active as KH0/KC0W and plans to be active on 160 metres using CW and FT8 in his spare time.

ARGENTINA; Special event station L21RGA is active all year, to celebrate the 100th anniversary of IARU member society Radio Club Argentino.

FINLAND; Members of the Finnish Amateur Radio League are active throughout 2021 with special event call OH100SRAL to celebrate their 100th anniversary.

DENMARK; Special event station OV0JUTLANDIA is active until the end of March, to commemorate the humanitarian mission of the Danish hospital ship Jutlandia during the Korean War. Activity is on the HF bands using CW, SSB and various digital modes.

PITCAIRN ISLAND; Meralda, VP6MW has been active on 20 metres using SSB from around 1530 to 1630UTC.

VIETNAM; Eddy, XV1X has been active on 40 metres using FT8 around 1200UTC.

SERBIA; Members of the Serbian CW Club are active with special event station YT165TESLA during all of 2021 to commemorate the 165th anniversary of Nikola Tesla's birth.

THIS WEEKEND ON THE RADIO. The North American CW Sprint, AM Rally, NCCC RTTY Sprint, QRP 80-Metre CW Fox Hunt, NCCC Sprint CW Ladder, K1USN Slow Speed CW Test, Vermont QSO Party, 10-10 International SSB Winter Contest, EurAsia HF Championship, Mexico RTTY International Contest, F9AA CW Cup, Minnesota QSO Party, FYBO Winter QRP Sprint, AGCW Straight Key 80-Metre CW Party, British Columbia QSO Party, FISTS Saturday CW Sprint and the European Union DX Contest will certainly keep contesters this upcoming weekend.

The ARRL School Club Roundup runs from February 8 to 12.

The K1USN Slow Speed CW Test and OK1WC Memorial are scheduled for February 8.

The Worldwide Sideband Activity Contest and RTTYOPS Weeksprint are scheduled for February 9.

The Phone Fray, CWops Mini-CWT Test, RSGB 80-Metre Club Data Championship, VHF-UHF FT8 Activity Contest, NAQCC CW Sprint and QRP 40-Metre CW Fox Hunt are scheduled for February 10.

WICEN News

WICEN NSW, is a communications support squad of the NSW Volunteer Rescue Association.

Dementia Australia's Memory Walk and Jog events, have been added to the WICEN NSW calendar. The first two in NSW are in the Illawarra on Sunday the 21st of February followed by the Hunter on the 21st of March. The Sydney events are in May. Each is a short Sunday morning event, packed up my mid-morning, and suitable for new members.

WICEN weekly nets are on Sunday evenings; the main net is at 6pm with a secondary check-in net using DMR voice, at 6:30pm. Members have been experimenting with WINLINK and JS8CALL to pass short text messages on Monday evenings, supported by a Google Meeting.

The WICEN website, at nsw.wicen.org.au; includes details on exercises, the Covid safety plan, and a web contact form. Facebook users will find an official WICEN NSW page; and an informal, national WICEN group.

WICEN members are reminded to regularly check their vrarescue.org email address. Members are also encouraged to take advantage of the free courses offered by the Office of Emergency Management.

WICEN ACT is part of the Canberra Region Amateur Radio Club. Upcoming events are the Memory Walk on Sunday, February 28th and the BMSC National Capital Rally on March 27 & 28th. Their website includes WICEN and general Club information; its at www.crarc.org.au.

WICEN Victoria has a weekly net is on each Tuesday at 8:30pm, on 3.6MHz. Duncan's Run at Turra-Bulga State Forest is scheduled for the 20th and 21st of March; the Baw-Baw Extreme April 15 & 16; and the Ballarat Memory Walk, April 18. All are subject to confirmation. more details on the website at vic.wicen.org.au.

[OEM link: <https://www.emtraining.nsw.gov.au/> Messaging software at: <http://js8call.com/> and <http://winlink.org/>]

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Club News

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

The Club held its first in-person meeting for the year yesterday, with a general meeting at the SES Building in Port Macquarie. The meeting was held in accordance with the club's COVID-19 Safety Plan. The Club's Committee continues to closely monitor the evolving public health situation, to ensure that activities comply with restrictions, which may change at short notice.

The club's 2021 50th Anniversary calendar has proven to be very popular, and a few copies are still available.

Now is the time to start planning for the Oxley Region Amateur Radio Club's 2021 annual Field Day is on Saturday and Sunday the 12th and 13th of June, during the Queen's Birthday long weekend. Please plan and book accommodation early, as the area will be even more popular than usual this year.

The club has two nets each week; the mid-week net starts at 7:30pm on Thursday nights, and the weekend net starts at 9am Sunday mornings. Both nets are on the VK2RPM 2 metre repeater on 146.7MHz, which requires a 91.5Hz sub-audible tone for access. VK2RPM is also available via EchoLink, for those outside the coverage area of the repeater.

For more information about the Oxley Region Amateur Radio Club, visit the website at orarc.org. The site contains a wealth of Amateur Radio items in addition to the club information. The January 2021 web edition of the club's bimonthly newsletter "Oxtales" is now online, and past issues can be viewed on the website as well. 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.*

Hunter Radio Group

The VK2AWX Monday night news broadcasts resume tomorrow night, the 8th of February.

Wednesday evening nets continue on the Group's VHF Repeater, on 146.9MHz, starting at 7:30pm.

*Rodney VK2CN
Secretary, Hunter Radio Group.*

Central Coast Amateur Radio Club

The Club has been made aware that long term club member Rev Bruce Holland VK2ZAD, became as Silent Key on the 27th of January 2021, aged 93 years. Vale Bruce VK2ZAD. SK.

The Club held their first monthly general business meeting for 2021 yesterday, with discussion on many topics, most importantly, the 2021 Wyong Field Day.

The Club's Executive and field day committee have been monitoring the local health situation closely across Australia. The team would also like to thank those members who participated in the recent survey and provided their thoughts and insights into operations of the day.

In light of the recent events across Australia, the executive team, with support of the club's membership, has decided to postpone the Wyong Field Day scheduled for Sunday the 28th of February. This was a decision that has not been taken lightly, but the safety of both the Club's members and those who attend on the day is our number one priority. With the health situation still unstable and changing every day, it is in the best interests of all to postpone this event.

However, in light of this, the club wishes to announce the Central Coast Amateur Radio Club "Mayham" event will be held on Sunday the 30th of May, at Wyong Race Course. For the latest news and information regarding this event, please check out the club's website and social media, as well as updates in future bulletins from VK2WI News.

The Club's next SSTV net will be on Friday the 12th of February at 7:30pm, on the Club's 70cm repeater 438.075MHz. This will be the second SSTV net hosted by the club's youngest member, Adrian VK2ABS, and support from both listeners and contributors would be greatly appreciated.

The Clubs Newsletter, *Smoke Signals*, continues to deliver with some great content. Henrick VK2FTDR has been fantastic with taking on the role and the club encourages all members to give it a read each month and provide feedback to the club. Henrick is also on the prowl for content, big or small, the club would love to hear what you have been up to radio/electronics related... or even just so inclined. Even just a few sentences and a photo.

There are some temporary changes to the club's repeater operations while maintenance is carried out. The P25 439.950 MHz mixed mode repeater, the 2 Meter 146.6375 MHz and 70cm 438.325 MHz D-Star system is currently off air. In the interim, P25 & D-Star services will be available via the MMDVM repeater on 438.875MHz.

Speaking of Repeaters; in conjunction with the ARNSW Radio Network group, the Club now has a VK-DMR repeater operating on the Central Coast. Its on 438.850MHz with a negative 7MHz offset, and VK-DMR talk groups.

The Club's Thursday evening net this week was hosted by Brad VK2NM. The hot topic this week was the recent ACMA Consultation. Numerous points of view were briefly spoken about, however many required more time to completely read all documents and suggestions surrounding the proposals.

Bob VK2AOR and Dave VK2KFU continue to mix it up during the week with the clubs Morning Tea net. Bob will be hosting the net on Monday, Wednesday and Friday with Dave VK2KFU hosting on Tuesdays and Thursdays... with Dave's experience facilitating nets along with his own spin on "This Day in History" it is a very enjoyable net to be involved with. A huge thanks go out to Bob and Dave for running the nets, it's greatly appreciated.

Both nets are on the VK2RAG 2 Metre repeater, 146.725MHz with a 91.5Hz sub audible tone. Currently EchoLink is not available, but the team is working on it.

You can find out more about the CCARC on the web at ccarc.org.au; or on social media by searching for Central Coast Amateur Radio Club. Remember to give the club a "like" to follow for updates.

Brad VK2NMZ

Vice-President and Publicity, Central Coast Amateur Radio Club.

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Illawarra Amateur Radio Society

The first meeting of the Society for 2021 will be this coming Tuesday evening, the 9th of February. The general meeting starts at 7:30pm; directly after the Committee Meeting at 6:30pm. Attendees are welcome to arrive early and enjoy a pre-meeting chat and cuppa in the foyer.

Meetings are at the BlueScope Steel Visitor's Centre, on the southern side of the Wollongong CBD. After turning off Springhill Road into the main entrance road, immediately turn right just before the security gates and follow the signs to the Visitors Centre. Due to the large size of the Visitor Centre, physical distancing requirements can easily be maintained.

At the February meeting, the Society's resident teacher Vaughan VK2KBI will be discussing the basics of electronics and electrical theory. Everyone can do with a "brush-up" on the basics, including such gems as Ohm's Law!

The night will conclude with coffee, tea and cake in the venue's large foyer, where you can also relax on the very comfortable lounges, while of course maintaining the necessary physical distancing.

A reminder of the Society's weekly Nets; the Saturday morning net starts at 9:30am, run by Steve VK2BGL. You can join on the 2 metre repeaters, VK2RMP on 6850 or VK2RUW on 6675, or call-in on EchoLink, via VK2BGL-R. The second weekly Net is on 80 metres on Tuesday evenings, except for meeting nights; the usual frequency is 3666kHz, plus or minus for other usage, and it starts at 8:30pm.

You can find out more about the Illawarra Amateur Radio Society on the web at iars.org.au, and the society is also on Facebook. The website again; iars.org.au.

To conclude, all listeners are invited to attend the first meeting of the Illawarra Amateur Radio Society for 2021 – its at 7.30pm on Tuesday the 9th of February; at the BlueScope Steel Visitors Centre, Springhill Road, Wollongong.

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

Amateur Radio Repeater Group

The Group will be running a 2m Fox Hunt on Sunday the 14th of February, along the M5 Corridor, south from Crossroads towards Campbelltown. The fox will be hidden in a public space, park or bushland.

Co-ordination will start from around 8:30am on the Fisher's Ghost 70cm Repeater VK2RFG; which is on 438.650MHz with a negative 7MHz offset and 91.5Hz tone required.

If you are interested in attending the hunt, you can email info@arrg.club to register your interest.

This would be a great event to get your kids involved and have a great day out.

For more information and further updates, visit the group's website at www.arrg.club.

Sydney ATV Group

If you're interested in Amateur Television but don't want to tie up your evenings, then keep listening...

The Sydney ATV group now have a Thursday afternoon net starting at 2:30pm, transmitting high definition TV on 445.50MHz. Reception is possible over the Sydney Metro area, or via the British Amateur TV Club streaming web site; select the VK2 callsign and the HTML5 option. You can also text to say that you're watching.

The group is a bunch of friendly amateurs showing our latest projects such as warp drives, time machines and travel videos plus lots more. Why not join us to find out more about this fascinating and fast-growing aspect of amateur radio.

Give us a call on the Lawson repeater, 147.325 MHz with positive offset, with reports, questions or help with receiving Amateur Television. We are also on Monday nights from 7:30pm for the night owls.

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

Hornsby and Districts Amateur Radio Club

An extensive Obituary has been posted on the HADARC website for Club President, John Bishop VK2ZOI.

As mentioned earlier in the bulletin, John's Funeral will be held at 2pm on Friday the 12th of February at Magnolia Chapel, Macquarie Park Cemetery and Crematorium. This is close to North Ryde Metro Station. After the funeral a wake will be held at The Asquith Bowling Club, 1 Lodge St, Hornsby between 3:30 and 6pm. It would be appreciated if those planning on attending, contact the club via the web contact form, so numbers can be better estimated.

An informal, family friendly, dinner is planned for Tuesday February 9th at the "Magpies Club" in Waitara. There is both a very good South East Asian kitchen, and a traditional club bistro. Again, please contact the club regarding attendance.

Tuesday, February 23rd will be the first meeting back at Mt Colah; it will feature several short presentations, including on the NanoVNA by Steven VK2AAV. The meeting starts at 8pm, at the Mt Colah Community Centre near the northern end of Pierre Close; that is, across Pierre Close (not the highway) from Mt Colah Railway Station.

The Club's website has up to date details on club activities and arrangements for meetings, plus the Covid Safety plan; it's at www.hadarc.org.au. Members are reminded that back-issues of *QUA* are available after logging in; including scanned copies going back to December 1991.

The club has a group on Facebook, which can be found by searching for VK2MA, and on twitter, @VK2MA.

The Club's three regular nets continue 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.

The Club's 2 metre repeater, VK2RNS on 147.250 MHz, can now be accessed on Allstarlink Node 41646, and on EchoLink VK2RNS-R.

Nets are supplemented with Jitsi, an open source audio and video conferencing system. Out-of-town members and visitors are most welcome to participate in any nets via Jitsi or linked repeaters.

*Submitted by Julian VK2YJS
HADARC Publicity Officer.*

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Activities on the air

Oxley Region ARC nets 7:30pm Thursday, 9am Sunday. VK2RPM repeater, 146.7Mhz with 91.5Hz tone.

Great Lakes Radio Club weekly net 7pm Monday on VK2RGL, 147.1MHz.

Westlakes nets Monday, Wednesday and Friday; 9:30am on 3565kHz.

Hunter Radio Group VK2AWX News 7:30pm Monday, on 146.9Mhz and 438.025MHz. Meeting net Wednesday 7:30pm on 146.9MHz.

Central Coast ARC net Thursday night on VK2RAG 146.725Mhz, 91.5Hz; also Echolink *CCARCNSW*.

Amateur Radio Central West Group afternoon tea net 4pm daily; Monday and Friday night net at 8pm, on VK2RCW. HF net 8pm Wednesday 3653kHz.

Illawarra ARS Nets - Tuesday at 8:30pm on 80m, 3666kHz. Saturday 9:30am on VK2RMP 146.850 and VK2RUW on 146.675.

Blue Mountains ARC nets 8pm Tuesday on 3543kHz, 8pm Wednesday on VK2RBM, 147.050MHz with 123Hz tone and 53.875MHz.

WICEN nets on Sunday evenings from 6pm.

Waverley ARS net 8pm Monday on VK2RBV, 438.1125MHz. Activities online and in person, see website for details.

Fishers Ghost ARC net 7:30pm Thursdays on VK2RFG, 438.65MHz with - 7MHz offset and 91.5Hz tone required, also on Echolink.

St George ARS net 8pm Thursday, on VK2RLE 146.8MHz.

HADARC Monday night 8pm on VK2RNS, 147.25MHz, Wednesday from 8pm on 3608.5kHz, Friday 9am on 7106kHz.

Manly-Warringah on air meeting net, Wednesdays 8pm on 146.875MHz.