

Silent Key.

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

With great sadness, we belatedly report the passing of Winston Lloyd Blyth, known as Bob VK2XIQ, last September at the age of 80.

Bob had lived in retirement at Telegraph Point for many years, prior to that residing in Port Macquarie.

Bob retired to his home in Port Macquarie after a long technical career with Telstra and its predecessors. He generously contributed his expertise in radio communications to the Oxley Region Amateur Radio Club, and this valuable contribution was recognised by awarding him one of the first Life Memberships of the club.

Bob was an avid experimenter, and often helped fellow amateurs with their projects. He was skilled across a wide range of activities, from making printed circuit boards to computer projects.

As well as enjoying his technical hobby activities, Bob volunteered as a marine base station operator with Port Macquarie Sea Rescue for many years. He particularly enjoyed being rostered on with other local amateur radio operators who also volunteered there. He had particularly acute eyesight and was always first to spot vessels a long way out to sea. Bob will be sadly missed.

The funeral service for Bob was held at the Manning Great Lakes Memorial Gardens Chapel on Wednesday the 22nd of September 2021.

Please pause with us, while we remember Bob.

[pause 5 seconds]

Vale [va-LAY] Winston Lloyd Blyth, known as Bob VK2XIQ.

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

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

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

While the VK2WI Dural site is currently closed to visitors, you can still make contact via email, to office@arnsw.org.au, or by leaving a phone message with the office, on 02 9651 1490.

We wish to remind our listeners of some telephone services that are currently available if you have 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.

Later in this bulletin, we have a summary of on-air activities from Sydney and across the state. We would welcome any updates from club and groups especially regarding events and activities over the holiday period. You can email news@arnsw.org.au – we don't need full items, just the details of the activity and contacts; and, as always, we welcome reports to follow up on the outcome of recent activities.

Tonight, we again welcome listeners on the EchoLink "HAM" conference, and the Australian & New Zealand EchoLink Network. Callbacks will also be taken after tonight's bulletin; our thanks to John VK3HJQ, and the Australian & New Zealand EchoLink Network team, for making this relay available.

During the week, we received a message from Rob VK6WHO, Vice-president of the VHF group at Wireless Hill, Perth. The group is looking for some assistance from Amateurs near Killara in Sydney, to set up a special contact via EchoLink in March. If you are able to assist, please contact Rob VK2WHO directly, or via the ARNSW office.

And with a late note – we've had a tipoff from Matt VK2BAI that tonight, there is the possibility of a National TV program featuring HADARC members and Amateur Radio, as part of a larger story. If you are interested, check out tonight's episode of the "60 Minutes" program at around 8:40pm, note that the program is rated MA. We will have more details next week, but suffice to say for now that Matt, Rod and Colin from HADARC perhaps shouldn't quit their day jobs to pursue an acting career...

ARNSW Elections

As previously announced, the Annual General Meeting of Amateur Radio New South Wales is on Saturday the 9th of April 2022.

At the AGM, four of the nine directors will be retiring. Nominations are open for those members who wish to be a director for the years 2022 and 2023. The term of a director elected in 2022 is two years – until the AGM 2024.

Nomination forms are available from the office, and on the website at arnsw.org.au.

Nominations close next weekend – at 11am on Saturday 26th February 2022.
Peter VK2EMU
Returning Officer

RadNet Update

This week, we welcome a new repeater to the ARNSW RadNet; VK2RNW.

The new site, on Governor Mountain in the Kaputar National Park in North-West NSW, covers a massive area of over 40,000 square kilometres. Hand-held coverage is now available in Moree, Narrabri and Gunnedah with mobile coverage as far south as Tamworth and East to Inverell.

The repeater operates in DMR mode on 438.575 with a -7 Mhz offset, and carries the ARNSW Talkgroup 1910, plus all the talk groups of the VKDMR Network.

Stay tuned to the broadcast for more exciting locations being added to the network soon; and don't forget to check out the RadNET microsite at; arnsw.net – that's ARNSW dot NET.

*73 Matt VK2FLY
ARNSW RadNET co-ordinator.*

Weekly Solar and Geophysical Report

For the period of the 11th to the 17th of February;

This report issued on the 18th of February.

First, the summary;

Dates across the columns are	11 th	12 th	13 th	14 th	15 th	16 th	17 th
10cm Flux	113	111	105	107	114	103	97
Fredericksburg Index (Afr)	12	10	9	6	3	6	4 observed
Australian Index (Aaus)	17	10	9	5	2	7	2 estimated
T index	31	62	61	57	69	75	49

Solar flare activity was low on the 11th, then Moderate on the 12th with an M1.3 flare at 0847UTC, low on the 13th, Moderate again on the 14th with an M1.0 at 1731UTC, Moderate on the 15th with an M1.2 at 1818UTC, then low on the 16th and 17th.

Geomagnetic activity was quiet to unsettled on the 11th and 12th, then quiet from the 13th to the 17th. SWS magnetometers recorded a weak impulse of 14 nanoTesla at 1030UTC on the 11th.

F2 critical frequencies in Southern Australia, were mostly near predicted monthly values. Depression of 20% during the day was observed on the 11th. Enhancements of 20% were observed during local night on the 15th; and 15% during the day and 30% during the night on the 16th. Depression of 15% was observed during local day on the 17th.

Now, the forecast for the 18th to the 24th of February;

Solar activity is expected to be low, becoming moderate later in the week.

Geomagnetic activity is expected to be at quiet to unsettled levels.

Maximum Usable Frequencies are likely to be 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.

Having finished January, we had a;

Minimum of 84, Average of 102 and a Maximum of 130
With peak dates from the 13th to the 20th, and the 28th to the 31st.

So far for February, we are expecting a;

Minimum of 95, Average of 112 and a Maximum of 130
With peak dates from the 1st to the 11th

And looking ahead to March, we are expecting a;

Minimum of 98, Average of 107 and a Maximum of 115
With peak dates from the 1st to the 9th, and the 24th to the 31st.

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>]

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-FCAL098.wav]

Duration 1m40s

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

Several stations are active for this weekend's ARRL International DX CW contest;

AZORES; Henning, OZ2I is active as CQ8EE from Sao Miguel Island, IOTA EU-003.

BELIZE; A group of operators are active as V3T.

HAWAII; Fred, NA2U will be active as KH7M from the Pu'u O'o Radio Club station, as a Single Op entry.

NEW ZEALAND; Mark, ZL3AB, Geoff, ZL3GA and Phil, ZL3PAH are active as ZL3X as a Multi 2 entry.

TUNISIA; Ash, KF5EYY will be active as 3V8SF as a Single Op entry on 80 metres.

US VIRGIN ISLANDS; Operators WP3A, AD4Z and NK4DX are active as KP2B.

... and in other DX activity this week;

ST. KITTS AND NEVIS; Bill, W3UL is active on the HF bands as V47UM from Nevis, IOTA NA-014. He will also be active in the CW contest.

TURKS AND CAICOS ISLANDS; Jim, K4QPL is active as VP5/K4QPL. Activity is holiday style on the HF bands using CW and SSB. He is active as VP5M in the contest as a Single Op/Low Power/Unassisted entry.

TANZANIA; Borut, S53BV is active as 5H3BV from Shamiani, IOTA AF-063, until February 24. Activity is on 40 to 15 metres using CW and SSB.

MALAWI; Don, K6ZO is active as 7Q6M while working at the Embangweni Mission Hospital. Activity is in his spare time. This includes entry in the ARRL International DX CW contest, and the upcoming CQ WorldWide 160 Metre SSB and ARRL International DX SSB contests.

ALGERIA; Kamel, 7X2GK will be active as 7T22ANT from February 21 to 27 as part of the 19th Antarctic Activity Week.

ST. LUCIA; A number of stations will use the special J643 prefix until February 26, celebrating 43 years of St Lucia's full independence.

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES; Members of the Emirates Amateur Radio Society will be active as A60SFD/x until February 25, celebrating Saudi Arabia's founding day.

CAPE VERDE; Oliver, DJ5QW will be active as D44DX and D4CW from Sal Island, IOTA AF-086, until March 2. Activity will be on 80 to 10 metres using CW and SSB.

GREENLAND; Alex, OZ7AM and Mikkel, OZ7AKT are active as OX7AM and OX7AKT, respectively, from Kangerlussuaq, IOTA NA-018, until February 22. This includes entries in the ARRL International DX CW contest.

NETHERLANDS; Members of VERON's section of Mid and North Limburg are active with special call sign PI75LIM throughout 2022, celebrating their 75th anniversary.

CURACAO; Andy, W9NJY is active as PJ2/W9NJY until February 21. Activity is mainly on 30, 17 and 12 metres using CW. This includes being active as PJ2T as a Multi/Multi entry in the ARRL International DX CW contest.

SURINAME; Markus, DJ4EL and Joerg, DJ1JB plan to be active as PZ5G from Papegaaien Island, IOTA SA-092, from February 23 to 26. Before and after this activity, they are active as PZ5GE and PZ5GL, respectively, from the mainland until March 1.

TURKEY; Rolf, DL6RO is active on the Hf bands as TA4/DL6RO near Antalya, until March 15.

INDONESIA; Special event call 8C9MGP is active from Lombok Island, IOTA OC-150, until February 21.

REPUBLIC OF KOSOVO; Special event station Z60ID is active for 24 hours to mark the Republic of Kosovo's 14th Independence Day and the formation of the IARU Society SHRAK. In addition, look for Driton, Z61DX to be active as Z60A in the ARRL International DX CW contest.

THIS WEEKEND ON THE RADIO; The ARRL International DX CW Contest, 14th American Lighthouse Weekend, NCCC RTTY Sprint, QRP 80-Metre CW Fox Hunt, NCCC Sprint Ladder, K1USN Slow Speed Test, Russian PSK WorldWide Contest and Feld Hell Sprint will certainly keep contesters busy this weekend.

The Run for the Bacon QRP CW Contest, OK1WC CW Memorial, Worldwide Sideband Activity Contest, RTTYOPS Weeksprint, SKCC CW Sprint, QRP 40-Metre CW Fox Hunt, Phone Weekly Test, A1Club AWT, CWops Test, 80-Metre/40-Metre CW Mini-Test and UKEICC 80-Metre CW Contest are all scheduled for February 21 to 23.

WICEN News

This weekend sees the first WICEN NSW training exercise for the year, FEB EX22. This exercise setup a wide area HF communications network on both amateur and commercial frequencies and simulates the loss of phone and internet communications.

The exercise also introduces new WICEN members to field operations, under the guidance of experienced members. All amateur radio operators are welcome to take part; frequencies in use and how to participate, are on the WICEN NSW website, under Coming Events.

True Grit is a military inspired obstacle course race; it's the weekend of the 5th and 6th of March. WICEN NSW will be providing safety communications support to the event which will be held at Dargle Farm, Lower Portland. WICEN is looking for a small number of volunteers; If you are interested, contact Nic VK2KXN at nicholas.mclean@vrarescue.org.

Hunter WICEN will be providing communications for the Watagan Horse Enduro on the weekend of 30th April and 1st May. If you would like to participate, please contact Dan VK2GG at daniel.joyce@vrarescue.org.

WICEN weekly voice nets are on Sunday evenings, starting at 6pm, on either the Chatswood 2 metre repeater, or the Kurrajong 70cm repeater. Please check the website for details.

WICEN NSW, is a communications support squad of VRA Rescue NSW. For more information on upcoming events, or how to join, visit the website at nsw.wicen.org.au.

For information about other WICEN groups; WICEN ACT is part of the Canberra Region Amateur Radio Club. Their website includes WICEN and general Club information and can be found at www.crarc.org.au. WICEN Victoria has a weekly net on Tuesday at 8:30pm, on 3.6MHz. More details on the web at vic.wicen.org.au.

Club News

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

The next general meeting is planned for 2pm on Saturday the 5th of March, at the SES building in Port Macquarie. The inconvenience caused by recent cancellations is regretted, however the Committee continues to closely monitor the COVID-19 situation to ensure that future activities comply with restrictions and circumstances which may change at short notice.

Now is the time to plan to attend the Oxley Region Amateur Radio Club's annual field day on Saturday and Sunday the 11th and 12th of June, during the Queen's Birthday Long Weekend. The Field Day will be at the spacious Wauchope Showground Hall, with the Field Day Dinner at Port Macquarie Golf Club on Saturday night.

Candidates for the Foundation, Standard and Advanced Licences can contact the club via PO Box 712 Port Macquarie NSW 2444. Assessments for the Advanced, Standard and Foundation licences will run once sufficient candidates have registered their interest and public health restrictions permit.

There are two club 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 with a 91.5Hz sub-audible tone for access. Access to VK2RPM is available via EchoLink for those outside the repeater coverage area. Members and visitors are encouraged to participate in the club on air nets as often as possible.

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 2022 web edition of the club's bimonthly newsletter "Oxtales" is now online, and past issues can be viewed on the website as well. You can also find the Club on Facebook; just search for Oxley Region Amateur Radio Club.

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

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Central Coast Amateur Radio Club

The Clubrooms have reopened, subject to public health orders. Members please note; next month's meeting is a Special General Meeting, to consider changes to the Club's Constitution. Details have been emailed to members, please make yourselves familiar with them.

The Club's field day, Mayham, is scheduled for Sunday the 1st of May. Expressions of interest are still open for lectures; please contact Col VK2ZCO by email, to ccarc@ccarc.org.au for information. EFTPOS will be available at the gate. Examinations will be held for both Australian and US qualifications.

The Club's Morning Tea is on at 10am daily and after the VK2WI News on Sunday mornings. Last week's Thursday night net, at 8pm, was hosted by Alan VK2MG, on the topic; *"Assuming that money was not an issue, what new toys might you be looking at?"* with some interesting answers including the purchase and refurbishment of an old space tracking dish. Both nets are on the VK2RAG 2m repeater – 146.725 MHz with 91.5Hz tone, and on EchoLink HAM and CCARC conferences.

The Fortnightly SSTV net is hosted by Adrian VK2ABS, the Club's youngest member. The net consists of 2 to 3 rounds, predominately in Scottie-2 mode. The net has seen a large amount of participation from members, and Adrian would love to see you drop in. The next net is on Friday the 4th of March, on the club's WICEN repeater – 147.125 MHz with a 91.5 Hz tone. All are welcome to watch or participate.

SSTV and Weekly nets are also video streamed live to the club's Facebook page, and recordings of past nets can be found, in the "Videos" section.

You can find out more about the CCARC on the web at ccarc.org.au; via phone on 02 43402500 or on social media by searching for Central Coast Amateur Radio Club; remember to "like" to follow for updates.

73 Alan VK2MG

Publicity Officer, Central Coast Amateur Radio Club.

Pride Radio Group

The Group kicked off their new regularly weekly net yesterday, Saturday the 19th of February, with host Kimberley KJ7OMO.

The net was carried on the Waverley Amateur Radio Society's 70cm repeater at Paddington, VK2ROT, as an initial test with hopes of carrying the net on a regular basis. The net is also carried on the ANZEL EchoLink network along with various repeaters around the world.

The Group will also be operating special event callsign VI2022PRIDE from various Mardi Gras events around Sydney over the next few weeks, including Mardi Gras Fair Day, which was at Victoria Park this afternoon, on the VK2ROT repeater.

Pride Radio Group is free to join and welcomes all operators, however you identify or whomever you love. For more information, visit the website, at prideradio.group.

*73 Jared VK2WAY
For the Pride Radio Group.*

St George Amateur Radio Society

The Society's monthly gatherings continue online, with the next on Wednesday the 2nd of March, at 7:30pm.

The Society looks forward to a time when they can resume in-person meetings, which will also be streamed for those who still wish to avoid in-person interaction, as well as for country-based members.

The Society will be active in John Moyle Memorial Field Day, on the weekend of the 19th and 20th of March.

Then on the weekend of the 14th & 15th May, the society will be holding the Don Edwards Memorial Slow Morse Contest on 80m and 40m. For the two weeks prior to this contest, the Society will be holding practice Morse sessions every evening on 80m. More details to follow.

For more information about these events, along with general information, visit the society's website at sgars.org.

*73 Peter VK2EMU
Publicity Officer*

Fisher's Ghost Amateur Radio Club

The next meeting of the Club is the Annual General Meeting. It is on this coming up Wednesday the 23rd of February, in Block M at the Campbelltown School of Performing Arts, Beverley Rd. Campbelltown, commencing at 7:30pm. The AGM will be followed by the Monthly General Meeting.

All financial members are encouraged to attend the AGM to vote for their 2022 committee, and as usual, Visitors wishing to learn more about the hobby of amateur radio are most welcome to attend.

The Club's weekly net, on Thursday evenings, starts at 7:30pm on the Club repeater, VK2RFG. The repeater frequency is 438.650MHz. It has a negative 7MHz input and a 91.5Hz tone is required for FM access.

To find out more about the Club's activities, visit the website at fgarc.org.au.

Submitted by Peter VK2PR

On behalf of the Fisher's Ghost Amateur Radio Club.

Hornsby and Districts Amateur Radio Club

The monthly meeting is coming up this Tuesday, with Collin VK2JCC, also known as "Mister Portable", presenting the newest addition to his antenna stable; the "Porta-tenna Experimental". This design incorporates several features found in commercial designs, allowing you to configure both resonant and non-resonant multiband verticals and wire antennas. Don't miss this interesting presentation to start the new HADARC year.

The meeting starts at 8pm on the 22nd of February, at Mt Colah Community Centre and online via the Jitsi conferencing system.

International Marconi Day is the UTC Day of Saturday, 23 April. HADARC will once again be operating VK2IMD across various HF bands, from 10 am Saturday to 10 am Sunday. The Cornish Radio Amateur Club have indicated that their participation will go ahead from home stations should Covid rules dictate.

The club's three weekly nets are;

Monday evenings at 8pm on the VK2RNS 2m repeater, 147.25MHz. No tone is needed for access, but 91.5 Hz is sent; Wednesday's 80 metres net is also at 8:00 pm, on 3608.5kHz; and "Morning Tea with HADARC", is on Fridays from 9am on 7106kHz.

Both HF nets are plus or minus QRM; Listen for VK2MA.

The Club's website has up to date details on club activities, including setup information for Jitsi Meet; it's 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.*

[Jitsi Meet details:

Phone: 08 7150 1136 and enter 3145759306#

Web: <https://meet.jit.si/HADARC>]

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Activities on the air

Lightning Net 8pm Mondays on 1860kHz, Net control Steve VK2STG.

Snowy Mountains ARC net 7:30pm Saturday on Southeast network; VK2RFS 146.75MHz, VK2RSE 147.375, VK3RDH 146.625, and EchoLink.

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

Great Lakes Radio Club weekly net 7pm Monday, on the VK2RGL Repeater, 147.1MHz with 91.5Hz tone, EchoLink VK2RGL-R.

Westlakes 80 metre nets Monday, Wednesday, and Friday at 9:30am on 3565kHz. 2m nets on 146.775MHz, see website for details.

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

Central Coast ARC Morning tea at 10am daily – after news on Sundays; Thursday nights 8pm; VK2RAG 146.725MHz with 91.5Hz tone and EchoLink. Next SSTV net February 18.

Amateur Radio Central West Group lunchtime net 1pm daily; evening net Monday and Friday at 8pm, VK2RCW. HF net 8pm Wednesday 3653kHz.

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

Blue Mountains ARC Nets on VK2RBM, 147.050MHz with 123Hz tone; Wednesdays from 8pm; Second Sunday of the month from 5pm.

Waverley ARS net 8pm Monday VK2RBV, 438.1125MHz. Activities online and on air; see website. Sydney Harbour & Ferry Contest 6th March.

Sydney ATV Group net 7:30pm Monday on 445.5MHz from Lawson.

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.