

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 fellow club member Lawrence Noel Newham VK2ELN, on the 19th of March, aged 83 years.

Laurie originally came from Cowra, before moving with his wife Robyn to Orange. In the 1970's Laurie and his family moved to Port Macquarie where he worked for the local Holden dealer before establishing an automotive business. He also taught automotive trades at the local TAFE. Laurie also enjoyed flying, was a member of the local flying club and had an association with one of the flying schools.

Laurie obtained his Amateur Radio licence and keenly participated in the radio club activities. He had been a member for 40 years and was looking forward to being awarded Life Membership next year, when he would have turned 85.

In retirement, Laurie lived on the canals in Port Macquarie. He built his own jetty and enjoyed boating and fishing, along with maintaining his interest in aviation and Amateur Radio. He was always building and repairing things which made him very popular with his extended family and friends.

Over 100 people attended the funeral for Laurie on Friday the 25th of March 2022.

Please pause with us, while we remember Laurie.

[pause 5 seconds]

Vale [va-LAY] Laurie Newham VK2ELN.

*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;

After a long period without in-person activities at our VK2WI Dural site, this morning saw the first event for the year, the “Member Morning Meetup”.

Despite the forecast rainy weather, which did eventuate in some showers throughout the morning, nearly 25 members visited the VK2WI site and enjoyed tea and coffee and a physically-distanced catchup. The Trash&Treasure area was also available for perusal.

As always, you can contact the ARNSW office via email, to office@arnsw.org.au, or by leaving a phone message on 02 9651 1490. We will be introducing further activities throughout the year; the next activity coming up soon is the ARNSW Annual General Meeting, at 11am on Saturday the 9th of April. It will be a hybrid meeting, with both Zoom and in-person attendance options. Details have been emailed or posted to members in the past week.

We wish to remind our listeners of some telephone services that are still available, if you have health concerns. – the National COVID helpline 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 both Sydney, and across New South Wales. We would welcome any updates from club and groups; simply email news@arnsw.org.au – we don't need full items, just the details of the activity and contacts. Don't forget, we always welcome reports on the outcome of recent activities, as well.

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.

A reminder that next Sunday sees the end of Daylight Saving Time; Since VK2WI News maintains the same *local* times of 10am and 7:30pm, the one-hour change may affect HF propagation. If you have reception difficulties on radio, you can also listen to the bulletins streamed live from our website, arnsw.org.au/audio.

Repeater Update

It was reported last week that the VK2RWI 6 Metre Repeater on 53.85MHz, seemed to be transmitting a very weak signal. The fault was investigated, thanks to Mark VK2XOF, and found to be a fault in the PA. Fortunately Mark was able to source replacement parts and the repeater was restored to full power operation on Friday.

Yesterday, we were informed by the Oxley Region Amateur Radio Club, that their VK2RCN repeater site at Telegraph Point, was visited by a lightning strike. The lightning damaged the mains power cabling to the site, along with much of the repeater equipment. There will be significant delay in restoring power to the site. The Club's VK2RPM repeater on 146.7MHz, is still operational.

Weekly Solar and Geophysical Report

For the period of the 18th to the 24th of March;

This report issued on the 25th of March.

First, the summary;

Dates across the columns are	18 th	19 th	20 th	21 st	22 nd	23 rd	24 th
10cm Flux	98	94	95	98	106	106	112
Fredericksburg Index (Afr)	3	6	11	4	7	6	7 observed
Australian Index (Aaus)	0	3	5	2	5	6	6 estimated
T index	61	62	71	64	71	66	64

Solar flare activity was very low on the 18th and 21st, and low otherwise.

Geomagnetic activity was at quiet levels all week, with some unsettled periods on the 20th.

F2 critical frequencies in Southern Australia, were mostly near predicted monthly values, with some enhanced periods; enhancement of 15% during local day on the 18th and 19th; 20% during day and 15% during the night of the 20th; 20% during local night on the 21st; 15% during the day and 20% during the night on the 22nd; 15% during the day and 20% after local dawn on the 23rd; and 25% during the day and 20% during local night, on the 24th.

Now, the forecast for the 25th to the 31st of March;

Solar activity is expected to be moderate early in the week, returning to low levels later. Geomagnetic activity is expected to be at quiet to unsettled levels.

Maximum Usable Frequencies are likely to be near predicted monthly values with period of mild enhancement.

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 92, Average of 110 and a Maximum of 130
With peak dates from the 1st to the 13th

Nearing the end of March, we are expecting a;

Minimum of 94, Average of 111 and a Maximum of 127
With peak dates from the 5th to the 15th, and the 25th to the 28th.

And looking ahead to April, we are expecting a;

Minimum of 95, Average of 109 and a Maximum of 125
With peak dates from the 1st to the 12th, and the 26th to the 30th.

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-FCAL086.wav]

Duration 2m16s

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

Starting this week with stations active for this weekend's CQ Worldwide WPX SSB contest, running from 0000UTC Saturday until 2359UTC Sunday;

CANARY ISLANDS; Miguel, EA1BP is active as ED8W, as a Single Op/All Band entry.

ECUADOR; Members of the Quito Radio Club are active as HD1A from Quito, as a Multi/Multi entry.

GIBRALTAR; Members of the Gibraltar Amateur Radio Society are active as ZB2BU as a Multi Single/Low Power entry.

INDONESIA; Hans, YB2DX is active as a Single Op/All Band entry.

ISLE OF MAN; A group of operators will be active as GT0SP from Scarlett Point Tower in the contest and will be active outside the contest as well. Activity will be on 80 to 10 metres, and possibly 160 metres.

MONACO; Gianpi, IK1TTD is active as 3A/IK1TTD.

ST. KITTS AND NEVIS; Andy, N2NT, Randy, K5ZD and Joe, K3NM are active as V47T from St. Kitts, IOTA NA-104, as a Multi/Single entry.

SOUTH AFRICA; A group of operators will be active as ZS2PE as a Multi Op/Multi Distributed entry. Activity will be on 40 to 10 metres.

... and in other DX activity for this week;

WEST MALAYSIA; Alex, SQ9UM is active as 9M2/SQ9UM from Kuala Lumpur until March 31. Activity is on 40 to 10 metres, using CW, SSB, FT8 and FT4, and a possible entry in the contest.

PERU; Alex, DD5ZZ is active on 40 to 10 metres, as OA7/DD5ZZ from Cusco. He also plans to be active in the contest.

NEPAL; Robert, S53R is active as 9N7AA using FT8 in DXpedition mode on 12 metres, between 1400 and 1500UTC.

COMOROS; Don, K6ZO is active as D60AB until March 29.

TAJIKISTAN; Nodir, EY8MM has been active on 15 metres using FT8 most days around 1100 to 1500UTC.

DJIBOUTI; Matthew, J20MR has been active on 10 metres using FT8 around 1000, 1400, and 1600UTC.

AUSTRIA; Members of the VIC Amateur Radio Contest DX Club are active as C7A until March 31 to celebrate World Meteorological Day.

SABA, ST. EUSTATIUS; Operators Janusz, SP9FIH, Roman, SP9FOW and Dariusz, SP9MQA are active as PJ5/home calls from Sint Eustatius, IOTA NA-145, until April 7. Activity is on 40 to 10 metres using CW, SSB, RTTY, and FT8.

TURKS AND CAICOS; Operators John, AF3K and Ross, W2TT are active as VP5/AF3K and VP5/W2TT, respectively, from Providenciales Island, IOTA NA-002, until March 29. Activity is on the HF bands. This includes being active as VP5P in the CQ Worldwide WPX SSB contest.

MEXICO; Special call signs 6D1A, 6D2A and 6D3A are active until April 15 to celebrate the 62nd anniversary of the Asociacion de Radio Aficionados de la Republica Mexicana.

VIETNAM; Thomas, DL7BO is active as XV9K, mainly on 20 and 10 metres using FT8 and FT4 at various times.

THIS WEEKEND ON THE RADIO; The CQ Worldwide WPX SSB Contest, QRP 80-Metre CW Fox Hunt, NCCC RTTY Sprint, NCCC CW Sprint, K1USN Slow Speed CW Test, FOC CW QSO Party and UBA Spring 6-Metre Contest will certainly keep contesters busy this upcoming weekend.

The QCX CW Challenge, OK1WC CW Memorial, RSGB FT4 Contest, Worldwide Sideband Activity Contest, RTTYOPS Weeksprint, QRP 40-Metre CW Fox Hunt, Phone Weekly Test, A1Club CW AWT, CWops Test, Mini-Test CW 40, Mini-Test CW 80, and the UKEICC 80-Metre CW Contest are scheduled from March 28th to 30th.

WICEN News

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; their April monthly meeting is at 2pm on Saturday the 2nd of April, in the SES Building in Port Macquarie. The meeting will be held in accordance with the club's COVID-19 Safety Plan. 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. Written assessments for the Advanced licence will be run very shortly; other assessments and training 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. VK2RPM is also 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 Newly published March 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

It's only five weeks until Mayham, Sunday the 1st of May. Examinations will be held for both Australian and US qualifications. This year's raffle has some great prizes, and with online tickets already sold out, they will be available on the day.

First place prize is a Yaesu FTDX10. Second place prize is two AnyTone radios; the AT-D878UV-two Plus VHF/UHF HT, and AT-778UV UHF/VHF mobile radio. Third place prize is a NanoVNO and RF Demo Kit.

An MMDVM hotspot will also be on offer as first prize in the fox hunt. You can still pre-register for the foxhunt on the website, along with finding out more about the raffle and the other activities planned for the day; the address is mayham.org.au. The club looks forward to seeing you there.

At VK2RAG Somersby, the D-Star, RadNet DMR and 2m EchoLink services are fully functional. Brand Meister DMR and 70cm EchoLink and IRLP are still having problems. The Somersby WebSDR, websdr.ccarc.org.au is currently configured to listen on 6 metres, 2 metres, 70 centimetres and 23 centimetres.

The Club's daily Morning Tea is on at 10am and after VK2WI News on Sunday mornings. The Thursday night net starts at 8pm. 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. It's usually 2-3 rounds on the Club's 2 Metre WICEN repeater; 147.125 MHz with 91.5Hz tone. Adrian has had a large amount of support from other members and would love to see you drop in. The next net is scheduled for Friday the 1st of April at 7:30 PM.

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; by 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.

St George Amateur Radio Society

The Society's monthly gatherings continue online, with the next on Wednesday the 6th of April, 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.

At the next meeting, Cameron VK2CKP will be giving a presentation about Bob Bruninga, WB4APR. Bob developed APRS (Automatic Packet Reporting System) in the late 1980s when he was a senior research engineer at the United States Naval Academy. APRS is an amateur radio-based system for real time digital communications. Data can include GPS coordinates, weather station telemetry, text messages, announcements, queries, etc.

APRS data can be displayed on a map, allowing for location and can show stations, objects, tracks of moving objects, weather stations, search and rescue data, and direction-finding data. To find out more about Bob Bruninga and APRS, tune in to the presentation.

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*

Hornsby and Districts Amateur Radio Club

The next mid-monthly meeting is at 8pm on Tuesday the 12th of April, at the Mt Colah Community Centre.

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.

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. So far, nearly 40 stations world-wide have registered to take part. HADARC is a participant because the first signals from the UK to Australia, which were sent from North-West Wales, were received in Wahroonga, in late 1918.

The Club's website has up to date details on club activities; 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 VK2RGL; 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 April 1.

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; Tuesdays from 8pm on 3543kHz.

Waverley ARS net 8pm Monday VK2RBV, 438.1125MHz. Activities online and on air; see website.

Sydney ATV Group net 7:30pm Monday; call in on repeater 147.325MHz.

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.