

Silent Key.

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

Max Rieper, VK2DT, passed away on the 15th of January, at the age of 93.

At the age of 18, Max became an RAAF trainee at Ballarat. He then got a job with the Department of Civil Aviation [DCA], working as a radio operator in New Guinea. In March 1950, at the age of 20, Max received his "Amateur Operator's Certificate of Proficiency" and the callsign VK9MR.

Later moving to Melbourne, Max remained active in Amateur Radio. He took part in numerous CQ Worldwide DX contests, receiving awards for his participation in 1954 - 2nd place in the Australian 20 metres phone division, and again in 1956, taking 1st place.

In 1962, Max joined the Australian division of Collins Radio Company, working on many communications projects, including the establishment of the Radio Australia, Darwin transmitter site.

Late 1971, Max left Collins Radio to join the Swiss telecommunications company HASLER A.G – in 1973 moving with his family to Sydney and changing his call sign to VK2DT.

In 1990 Max left Hasler & started his own company Teltek, concentrating on power line carrier equipment & cable markets. This continued until his retirement in about 2004.

Please pause with us, while we remember Max.

[pause 5 seconds]

Vale [va-LAY] Max Rieper, VK2DT.

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

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

VK2WI News would like to hear from clubs and groups planning Amateur Radio activities; just email the details and contact information, to news@arnsw.org.au. We also welcome reports on recent activities.

General enquires can be directed to the ARNSW office via email, to office@arnsw.org.au, or by leaving a phone message on 02 9651 1490.

In last week's news, we mentioned that the planned frequency changes to VK2WI transmissions, have been postponed. We will let you know about the new date, in a future news bulletin.

Tonight, we also 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.

ARNSW Elections

As previously announced, the Annual General Meeting of Amateur Radio New South Wales is on Saturday the 22nd of April 2023.

At the AGM, five of the nine directors will be retiring. Nominations will soon be open for eligible members who wish to be a director for the years 2023 and 2024. The term of a director elected in 2023 is two years – until the AGM in 2025.

Nomination forms will be available for download from the website, arnsw.org.au, or from the office.
Nominations close at 11am on Saturday the 11th of March 2023.

*Peter VK2EMU
Returning Officer*

RadNet Update

Last month, we brought you an update about some changes coming up on the network. With more, here's Matt VK2FLY;

[Play File: 15-B-RNT-6.wav]

Duration: 2m46s

In: This week we welcomed...

Out:....For Amateur Radio New South Wales RadNet.

[Transcript]

This week we welcomed back VK2RCN to the network. The repeater on the Mid North Coast has been out of action for several months due to a lightning strike and the Oxley region Amateur Radio club has taken the opportunity to move the repeater to their new hut at Telegraph Point.

The site is truly a professional looking site and Henry and the guys at Oxley have done a simply amazing job. So, if you're in range of the repeater or are planning a road trip up the coast; don't forget to program your radio for VK2RCN.

While we're talking about programming radios the VKDMR network of which the ARNSW RadNet is a part will be making quite substantial changes this coming week.

The changes are intended to both simplify the configuration of the network and allow more simultaneous Q.S.O. The configuration might seem complex, but the changes are quite simple. The call channel is talk group 505 on time slot 2. It is the only talk group that will broadcast on all repeaters. So, when you key up 505 be aware you are broadcasting you CQ or call to over 70 repeaters. Once you have established communication, QSY to another talk group.

You can choose a talk group from 3801-3808 on time slot 1. Once you QSY and once you and any other party you wish to talk to keys up the talk group, the network will automatically link any two or more repeaters together and you can converse feely. The network will detect when your QSO is finished with a timeout and release the repeaters back for other users.

It's that simple. The regular VKDMR Net on Tuesday will also change from talk group 5 time slot 1 to 505 time slot 2. When it comes to reprogramming your radio it's a simple matter of changing the time slots on talk groups 3801-3808 to time slot 1 from time slot 2.

More information can be found on the ARNSW Microsite at arnsw.net or on the VKDMR website at vkdmr.com.

Also remember to remind your club or amateur radio group if you are in NSW and you are not yet part of Radnet and would like one of ARNSW's DMR repeaters hosted at your site, to get in touch via email on dmr@arnsw.org.au

Don't forget Tuesday is D Day for radio reprogramming and I will catch you on air soon.

This has been Matt VK2FLY for Amateur radio New south Wales, RadNET.

Weekly Solar and Geophysical Report

For the period of the 27th of January to the 2nd of February.
First, the summary of activity;

Dates across the columns are	27 th	28 th	29 th	30 th	31 st	1 st	2 nd
10cm Flux	145	138	137	136	137	134	135
Fredericksburg A-Index (AFr)	6	8	5	4	6	3	2
Australian Index (Aaus)	7	7	4	4	6	5	3 estimated
T index	109	114	115	119	112	112	119

Solar activity remained at R0 levels all week, with only some C-class flare activity.

Geomagnetic activity was mostly at quiet levels, below warning threshold. Magnetometer data on the 1st of February, recorded a weak impulse of 8 nanoTesla, at 1637UTC.

F2 critical frequencies in Southern Australia saw periods of enhanced conditions; local night frequencies were enhanced 25% on the 27th, 20% on the 28th and 29th, 25% on the 31st, 15% on the 1st of February, and 20% on the 2nd of February. Frequencies were also enhanced 15%, during local daylight hours on the 28th.

The forecast, issued on the 3rd of February, through until the 9th;

Solar activity is expected to be mostly low, though there is a chance higher level flaring if some previously active regions return to the solar disk; this is expected to happen from the 4th to the 5th of February.

Geomagnetic conditions should remain quiet.

Maximum usable frequencies in the Australian region are expected to be near predicted monthly values, up to 15% enhanced.

Data courtesy of the Australian Space Weather Forecasting Centre.

Solar Flux Index update

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

Having finished January, we had a;

Minimum of 136, Average of 185 and a Maximum of 234
With peak dates from the 12th to the 20th, and the 27th to the 31st.

So far for February, we are expecting a;

Minimum of 125, Average of 142 and a Maximum of 155
With peak dates from the 7th to the 18th;

And looking ahead to March, we are expecting a;

Minimum of 135, Average of 141 and a Maximum of 155
With peak dates from the 7th to the 17th.

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>]

Foundations of Amateur Radio

This series, written and produced by Onno VK6FLAB, continues a weekly examination, of the building blocks of Amateur Radio.

[Play File: 16-FOAR004.wav]

Duration: 2m54s

In: "Foundations of Amateur Radio ..."

Out: "I'm Onno VK6FLAB"

For more information about this series, including audio, transcripts and other useful amateur radio resources, Onno's website is; vk6flab.com; you can follow him on Twitter, @VK6FLAB; and you can contact Onno by email, to cq@vk6flab.com.

[Play File: 17-E-ID2.wav]

WICEN News

This morning, about 25 WICEN members were here at Dural for a working bee; testing, repairing, and upgrading equipment so it's ready for any emergency.

Looking ahead to March – on the 5th, WICEN will provide communications support for the Memory Walk & Jog event at Penrith, in western Sydney. If you would like to participate, or just find out more, email wicen.ops@vrarescue.org.

Weekly voice nets are at 6pm and 6:30pm on Sunday evening, using FM voice, DMR or HF voice, depending on the week. All WICEN members and other Amateurs are welcome to join in.

Next Sunday;

The 6pm net will be on the Kurrajong 70cm FM repeater, 439.825MHz with a 91.5Hz tone, with net controller VK2WIB; and the 6.30pm net will be on DMR Talk Group 3810, with net controller VK2WID.

WICEN NSW is a communications support squad of VRA Rescue NSW, providing skilled radio communicators, in times of emergency. WICEN also supports local community events; providing practical training in tactical field communications, and to build other radio skills.

For more details of WICEN net schedules, and other information, check out the WICEN NSW web site, at <http://nsw.wicen.org.au>, that's

N - S - W DOT W - I - C - E - N DOT O - R - G DOT A - U

WICEN is also on Facebook and on Twitter @wicennsw [at WICEN N S W]; there, you can find photos and information about current and previous WICEN activations.

For information about other WICEN groups around Australia, visit the web at wicen.org.au – and click on the map.

[WICEN NSW facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/WICENNSW>]

[WICEN NSW twitter at <https://twitter.com/wicennsw>]

ARRL DX news

BOUVET; , A large group of operators will be active as 3Y0J. Activity will be on 160 to 10 metres using CW, SSB, and FT8.

TIMOR-LESTE; Satoshi, JH2EUV is active as 4W/JH2EUV until March 3. Activity is on 40 to 10 metres using FT8.

SENEGAL; Willy, ON4AVT will be active as 6W7/ON4AVT from Warang from February 6 to March 31. Activity will be on 80 to 10 metres using SSB and various digital modes. This includes being active on Satellite QO-100.

KUWAIT; Special event station 9K9NLD is active until February 28 to commemorate Kuwait's National Liberation Day.

EAST MALAYSIA; Operators 9M8LJW, 9W8VYY, 9W8AKN, 9W8ZAL, 9W8ERY, 9W8EDY and 9W8AAZ are active as 9M8SOTA from the mountains in Sarawak. Activity is on 80 to 10 metres, including 60 metres, using CW, SSB, and FT8. Their length of stay is unknown.

NEPAL; Robert, S53R is active as 9N7AA from Kathmandu and is active on 30, 12, and 10 metres. He has been active using FT8 on 30 metres between 1100 to 1400UTC.

BURUNDI; Elvira, IV3FSG and Vladimir, OK2WX will be active as 9U5R and 9U4WX, respectively, until February 27. Activity will be on 80 to 6 metres using CW, SSB, and various digital modes.

THE GAMBIA; Andre, ON7YK is active as C5YK from Bijilo until February 24. Activity is on 20 to 10 metres using all modes.

WALLIS AND FUTUNA ISLANDS; Jean-Gabriel, F4CIX, is active as FW1JG and expects to be there until January 2024. He is active on 40 to 6 metres using SSB and FT8.

PANAMA; Members of the Panama Radio Club are active with special event callsign 3E30PCARA during February to celebrate its 30th anniversary.

OGASAWARA; A group of operators will be active as JD1YCC from Chichijima, IOTA AS-031, from February 7 to 13. Activity will be on 2 metres, 70cm, and 23cm with EME.

US VIRGIN ISLANDS; Gene, W8NET, will be active as N8N from St. Croix, IOTA NA-106, from February 6 to 10. Activity will be on 80, 40, 20, 17, and 10 metres using SSB and FT8. He plans to activate three POTA locations while there.

BRAZIL; A number of operators are active as ZX89L until February 15 to celebrate the 89th anniversary of the founding of LABRE.

SEYCHELLES; Peter, G4HSO is active as S79/G4HSO until February 21. He is active from 3 different locations. Activity is holiday style on the HF bands using CW, and the mode VarAC.

ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA; Greg. N9GB will be active as V26DX from Antigua, IOTA NA-100, from February 9 to 16. Activity will be holiday style during his evenings on 40 to 6 metres using CW, SSB, and some FT8.

THIS WEEKEND ON THE RADIO. Mexico RTTY International Contest, North American CW Sprint, 10-10 International SSB Winter Contest, 2023 AM Rally, QRP 80-Metre CW Fox Hunt, NCCC Sprint CW Ladder, K1USN Slow Speed CW Test, Vermont QSO Party, European Union DX Contest, F9AA CW Cup, Minnesota QSO Party, FYBO Winter QRP Sprint, AGCW Straight Key CW Party and British Columbia QSO Party are all on this weekend.

The K1USN Slow Speed CW Test, ICWC Medium Speed CW Test, OK1WC Memorial, RSGB 80-Metre SSSB Club Championship, Worldwide Sideband Activity Contest, ARS Spartan CW Sprint, NAQCC CW Sprint, QRP 40-Metre CW Fox Hunt, Phone Weekly Test, A1Club AWT, CWops Test, VHF-UHF FT8 Activity Contest, Mini-Test 40 and Mini-Test 80 are scheduled for February 6 to 8.

Club News

We start this week from the Oxley Region Amateur Radio Club; yesterday's general meeting saw a very interesting presentation by David VK2AYD, on the contribution of Radio Amateurs, to the success of the work at Bletchley Park during World War 2.

The Club's next Coffee Morning is coming up at 10am on Thursday the 9th of February, at Brooklyn's Burger Bar, Thrumster.

At the new Telegraph Point site for VK2RCN, the 2 Metre voice repeater on 147.0MHz is back on air. The RadNet DMR repeater went back into service on Thursday the 2nd of February; and, apart from a brief loss of internet connection on Friday afternoon, the repeater is working well. Intensive working bees continue, and the site is on schedule for formal commissioning later this month, once all repeaters have been installed and tested.

Foundation training and assessments, along with examinations for Standard or Advanced licences, are planned for February. To register, contact the club via the contact form on the website, or write to PO Box 712 Port Macquarie NSW 2444.

There are two club nets each week; the mid-week net from 7:30pm on Thursday nights, and the weekend net at 9am Sunday mornings. Both are on the VK2RPM 2 metre repeater, 146.7MHz with a 91.5Hz sub-audible tone for access, and on EchoLink as VK2RPM-R. Members and visitors are encouraged to participate in the club on air nets as often as possible.

To find out more 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 club information. The newly published January 2023 edition of the club's bimonthly newsletter "Oxtales" is now online, with past issues on the website as well. The January 2023 issue contains a progress report on the new VK2RCN Telegraph Point site, although a great deal of additional work has been completed since the report was written. 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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Illawarra Amateur Radio Society

The next meeting of the Society is coming up on Tuesday the 14th of February; yes, we know that's Valentine's Day; but, the Society is hoping that the members will all get a "hall pass" to attend!

The general meeting starts at 7:30pm, directly following the Society's Committee Meeting at 6:30pm. Attendees are most welcome to arrive from 6.30 onwards to enjoy a pre-meeting chat and cuppa in the foyer.

Meetings are at the BlueScope Steel Visitors Centre, on the southern side of the Wollongong CBD. After turning off Springhill Road into the BlueScope main entrance road, attendees then turn immediately right before the security gates, following the large signs towards the Visitors Centre.

This coming meeting is the first for the year, and will include a presentation on the development, construction, and planned installation of a new repeater Control Board. Keith VK2KQB has spent considerable time working through the many requirements of a controller. It has multiple features like full remote control, isolated audio inputs and outputs, low and high mute and push-to-talk signalling and many on-board audio message capabilities. It will be most interesting to see the culmination of many months work.

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

You can find out more about the Illawarra Amateur Radio Society, including details on Amateur Radio training and examination activities, 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 next meeting of the Illawarra Amateur Radio Society, at 7.30pm on Valentine's Day, Tuesday the 14th of February, at the BlueScope Steel Visitor Centre in Wollongong.

*Advised by Rob VK2MT
President of the Illawarra Amateur Radio Society.*

Hunter Radio Group

The first Monthly Meeting of the Hunter Radio Group for the year, will be this coming Thursday the 9th of February.

It will be at the Hunter TAFE Campus School of Electronic Technology in Tighes Hill Newcastle, in the RF Transmission Lecture Room, 1st floor Building J. The meeting starts at 6:30pm, and will include a lecture presentation.

Members are reminded that fees are due on the night – please see the Secretary.

The Group conducts a weekly net on the Group's VHF Repeater, on 146.9MHz. The net is on Wednesday evenings at 7:30pm, with net control be Club president, Len VK2ZFD.

*Rodney VK2CN
Secretary, Hunter Radio Group.*

Central Coast Amateur Radio Club

The Club's Kariong Clubrooms are open even Saturday from 10am.

Mayham will not run this year – the committee are refocusing and re-aligning the direction of the event, and hope to return in 2024.

The third "Christmas Ham" event will now run in March, from the 1st to the 24th; check the club's website and social media for more details.

At VK2RAG Somersby, D-Star, RadNet DMR and 2m EchoLink services are fully functional; and BrandMeister DMR and 70cm EchoLink and IRLP are still on the sick list. The Somersby WebSDR is online at websdr.ccarc.org.au; its configured to listen on 6 metres, 2 metres, 70 centimetres and 23cm.

The Club's Morning Tea Net is on each weekday from 10am, and the weekly Net is at 8pm on Thursday night. Both nets are on the VK2RAG 2 metre repeater - 146.725MHz with a 91.5Hz sub-audible tone, and on the CCARCNSW and HAM EchoLink conferences.

The Thursday evening net is also live video-streamed on the club's Facebook page.

You can find out more about the CCARC, including information on upcoming social events and all the details we can't tell you about here; on the web at ccarc.org.au – by phone, 02 43402500 – or social media, search Central Coast Amateur Radio Club; remember to "like" to follow for updates.

73 Alan VK2MG

Publicity Officer, Central Coast Amateur Radio Club.

Sydney ATV Group

The Group's ATV repeater at Lawson in the Blue Mountains, transmits high-definition TV on 445.50MHz, with analogue and digital inputs on 23cm.

Reception is possible over the Sydney Metro area, or via the British Amateur TV Club streaming web site; select VK2RTS Sydney. You can also text to say that you're watching – just enter /nick, a space then your name, your following text will appear in the column above.

Regular nets are on Monday evenings starting at 7:30pm. We regularly have technical talks, show our latest projects, general interest videos and much more.

You can call in during the net on the Lawson repeater, 147.325 MHz with positive offset, with reports, questions or help with receiving Amateur Television. Why not join in and find out more about this fascinating and fast-growing aspect of digital amateur radio.

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

St George Amateur Radio Society

Firstly, a note about last week's gathering; where Paul VK2GX, gave a presentation on the upcoming changes to the VKDMR network – a copy of this presentation, is now up on the Society's website.

As mentioned earlier in VK2WI News, the talk group changes will be happening this week; and Paul's presentation, contains a handy summary of the new arrangements.

Later in the year, the Society will be again holding the Don Edwards memorial slow Morse contest, commemorating Don VK2NV, who became a silent key in early 2021. Don's operating was almost exclusively on CW, and he often encouraged club members to either learn Morse or increase their speed.

The contest is on the third weekend of May, and aims to encourage all amateurs to give Morse a go. Contest rules are that contacts should be no more than 10 words per minute, and many of the contacts in last year's contest were 5 words per minute or less. If you learnt Morse code years ago to get you HF licences and then hid your Morse key at the back of the cupboard, this contest is a good opportunity to dig it out again and have a go.

If you have never learnt Morse code, there are many online training websites. For those who need a refresher, there is the ARNSW's Morse practice beacon on 3699kHz, which is on air 24 hours a day except during VK2WI News bulletins. Also, the American Radio Relay League produce Morse practice MP3 files which can be downloaded from www.arrl.org.

The Don Edwards memorial slow Morse contest will be held in two parts. Saturday 20th May 6pm to 9pm on 80 metres, then Sunday 21st 1pm to 4pm on 40 metres. The Society looks forward to working you on air.

Details about all of the Society's activities can be found on the website, www.sgars.org.

*Peter VK2EMU
Publicity Officer, St George Amateur Radio Society.*

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Activities on the air

Daily;

Manly-Warringah “early bird” net, 6:30am on or near 3690kHz LSB; if that’s too early, the “morning” net is from 8am on or near 7189kHz.

Amateur Radio Central West Group lunchtime net; 1pm on VK2RCW.

The **CCARC Morning Tea net** on *weekdays* from 10am; VK2RAG, 146.725MHz with 91.5Hz tone, also on EchoLink.

Mondays;

Westlakes ARC nets 9:30am on 40 metres, 7115kHz, VK2ATZ Portable.

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

Hunter Radio Group VK2AWX News 7:30pm, 146.9Mhz and 438.025MHz.

Sydney ATV Group net 7:30pm; call in on 2m repeater 147.325MHz.

Amateur Radio Central West Group net at 8pm on VK2RCW.

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

HADARC net 8pm on VK2RNS, 147.25MHz, also available via EchoLink.

Waverley ARS net 8pm now back on VK2RBV, 438.1125MHz with 91.5Hz tone. Activities online and on air; see website.

Tuesdays;

Blue Mountains ARC net from 8pm on 3543kHz.

Illawarra ARS 80m net at 8:30pm, 3666kHz.

Wednesdays;

Westlakes ARC net 9:30am on 7115kHz.

HADARC 8pm on 3608.5kHz

Blue Mountains ARC 8pm on VK2RBM, 147.05MHz with 123Hz tone.

Amateur Radio Central West Group from 8pm on 3653kHz.

Hunter Radio Group net 7:30pm on 146.9MHz.

Thursdays;

Fishers Ghost ARC net from 7:30pm on VK2RFG, 438.65MHz with -7MHz offset and 91.5Hz tone; also, on EchoLink.

Oxley Region ARC from 7:30pm on VK2RPM 146.7Mhz with 91.5Hz tone.

St George ARS 8pm on VK2RLE 146.8MHz.

The **CCARC weekly net** from 8pm on VK2RAG, 146.725MHz with 91.5Hz tone, and EchoLink.

Fridays;

Morning tea with HADARC at 9am on 7106kHz.

Westlakes at 9:30am on 7115kHz.

Amateur Radio Central West Group at 8pm on VK2RCW.

Saturdays;

Illawarra ARS net 9:30am on VK2RMP 146.850 and VK2RUW on 146.675.

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

Westlakes Stone the Crows net; 6am on 3588kHz.

Sundays;

Oxley Region ARC from 9am, VK2RPM 146.7Mhz with 91.5Hz tone.

Westlakes DMR Net from 8:30am on Talkgroup 8. 2 Metre nets throughout the week, see website for details.

WICEN NSW nets from 6pm on Chatswood 2m or Kurrajong 70cm repeater; and from 6:30pm on DMR or HF. Check website for details.