

Silent Key.

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

Dick Hoffman VK9LH, passed away peacefully at home on Lord Howe Island on the 15th of March 2023, aged 85.

After a career as a ship's Radio Officer, Dick and his wife Noelle ran a plant nursery at Dural in Sydney. Dick and Noelle moved to Lord Howe Island in the early 1970s where they built a house with an Art Studio for Noelle's painting; she is a well-known artist. The house is on an elevated part of the Island, and Dick was very active on the HF bands until recently.

Following a hip replacement last year, Dick worked very hard to restore his mobility. Unfortunately, after he contracted COVID, his health deteriorated this year.

Dick will be sadly missed. To his wife Noelle, the Amateur Radio community extends its sincere condolences.

A service will be on Lord Howe Island; a date has not yet been set.

Please pause with us now, while we remember Dick.

[pause 5 seconds]

Vale [va-LAY] Dick Hoffman VK9LH.

*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;

Coming up next Sunday the 26th, is the March “Members Morning Meetup” at VK2WI Dural.

The site will be open from about 9:30am, and with refurbishment of the Centenary Building nearing completion, parts of the indoor area will be available for use. The Dural site provides plenty of green space in fine weather for conversation, boot sales and disposals tables.

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 9444 0123.

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.

Balun Buildathon

After a long absence, they are coming back – Sunday the 11th of June, here at VK2WI 63 Quarry Road Dural.

You'll have your choice of constructing a 1:1 or a 4:1 balun from a kit. You can also order high quality Kevlar antenna wire. All items must be pre-ordered and paid for on the day.

For enquiries or bookings, you can email balun@arnsw.org.au or leave a phone message with the office, on 02 9444 0123.

There will be more details in a future VK2WI News bulletin.

73 AI VK2OK

Function and Events Co-ordinator for AR New South Wales.

A note from our News Editor.

VK2WI News reports on a wide variety of activities relating to Amateur Radio.

We are currently seeking expressions of interest, for a contributor to provide a regular feature report on contesting activity, with particular focus on activities in the Australian and Pacific region.

The report could be weekly, fortnightly, or monthly; ideally as an audio contribution, alternatively, as a script suitable for a live read.

For more information or any enquiries, contact the VK2WI News team via email, news@arnsw.org.au.

*Mathew VK2YAP
News Editor, VK2WI News.*

Weekly Solar and Geophysical Report

For the period of the 10th to the 16th of March.

First, the summary of activity;

Dates across the columns are	10 th	11 th	12 th	13 th	14 th	15 th	16 th
10cm Flux	171	157	150	143	139	136	135
Fredericksburg A-Index (AFr)	10	5	6	2	12	19	6
Australian Index (Aaus)	5	3	5	1	14	20	3 estimated
T index	113	145	150	142	163	112	136

Solar activity remained below warning levels, with a few low-level C-class flares observed on the 14th. Geomagnetic activity was quiet to unsettled from the 10th to the 14th. The 15th saw activity at G1 level, with a weak geomagnetic impulse of 19 nanoTesla, recorded at 0427UTC. The 16th saw the period, remaining below warning threshold. The 16th returned to quiet conditions.

F2 critical frequencies in Southern Australia showed periods of enhancement; 25% during local night on the 10th; 30% during the day and 25% during the night of the 11th; 40% during the day and 35% during the night of the 12th; and enhancement of 35% to 40% on the 13th and 14th. The 15th was then enhanced 15% during local night; and the 16th was enhanced 15% during local day and 25% at night.

The forecast, issued on the 17th of March, through until the 23rd;

Solar activity is expected to be at R0 to R1 level.

Geomagnetic conditions should mostly remain quiet, with a chance of G1 activity.

Maximum usable frequencies in the Australian region are expected to be near predicted with enhancements of up to 30% possible.

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.

In February, we had a;

Minimum of 134, Average of 173, and a Maximum of 343
With peak dates from the 8th to the 18th.

So far for March, we are expecting a;

Minimum of 130, Average of 155, and a Maximum of 188
With peak dates from the 1st to the 12th

And looking ahead to April, we are expecting a;

Minimum of 140, Average of 159, and a Maximum of 180
With peak dates from the 6th to the 20th.

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: 15-FOAR011.wav]

Duration: 2m24s

In: "The origins of names..."

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: 16-E-ID2.wav]

WICEN News

WICEN was providing safety communications earlier today, for Dementia Australia's "Memory Walk and Jog", in Canberra. Next Sunday there are two more Memory Walks: one in Cronulla and the other in the Hunter. Memory Walks last just a few hours, so they are ideal "starter events" for new WICEN members.

In April, WICEN will be active in Penrose State Forest near Mittagong, supporting the Scouts NSW's "Dragon Skin" event.

Operators are needed for upcoming events; to join in on the action, or just find out more, email wicen.ops@vrarescue.org.

WICEN's Weekly voice nets are at 6pm and 6:30pm on Sunday, 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 Chatswood 2m FM repeater, 147.150MHz, with net controller VK2WIC; the 6.30pm net will be on the WICEN VHF DMR repeater network.

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

[Memory Walks: <https://www.memorywalk.com.au/find-an-event>]

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

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

Club News

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

At last Friday night's get-together, members were treated to a talk by Paul VK2ICQ. The next Monthly General meeting is at 2pm on Saturday the 1st of April, at the SES building in Central Road, Port Macquarie.

After many intensive working bees, the new Telegraph Point site is close to completion; all that remains is installation of the APRS digipeater, and the VK2RCN 6-metre FM repeater on 53.8MHz.

The VK2RCN DMR repeater unexpectedly lost internet connectivity last Thursday morning due to a 4G network change. While the repeater continued to operate stand-alone during the period without connectivity, full operation was restored at 1pm on Friday afternoon after a couple of trips to the site and much technical work by Paul VK2ICQ. Thank you to Matt VK2FLY for his assistance and support in restoring the service.

The next Foundation training and assessment weekend is on the 1st and 2nd of April, along with examinations for Standard or Advanced licences. 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 March 2023 edition of the club's bimonthly newsletter "Oxtales" is in preparation, and past issues are 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.*

Hunter Radio Group

The 2023 AGM was held on the 9th of March, with the following members elected;

President; Richard VK2FRKO
Vice President; Lee VK2KAL
Secretary/Treasurer; Mark VK2MAS

The next meeting will be on Thursday the 13th of April, in the Telecommunications lecture room at the School of Electronics, Hunter TAFE, Tighes Hill, Newcastle. The meeting starts at 6:30pm, all are invited.

The Group's weekly net is on the Mt Sugarloaf VHF Repeater, on 146.9MHz. Its on Wednesday evenings, starting at 7:30pm.

*Rodney VK2CN
For the Hunter Radio Group.*

Blue Mountains Amateur Radio Club

The Club's April meeting is being brought forward to avoid clashing with the Good Friday public holiday next month.

This meeting, will be held on Friday the 31st of March, at 7:30pm, at the usual venue of the Club Rooms, 4 Moore Street Glenbrook, in the Blue Mountains – doors open from 7pm.

Visitors and prospective new members are always welcome.

The Club will also be participating in the John Moyle Field Day on the 18th of March. They will operate into the evening, using several bands from the 'Bulls Camp Reserve' in the Blue Mountains. Listen for Club Callsign, VK2HZ.

There are several weekly nets – we have details in "Activities on the air" later in this bulletin. There is also a DMR Net on Monday nights – see the Club website for details.

The Clubs continues with both Foundation and Upgrade courses this year. The next Foundation course is is scheduled for the weekend of the 15th and 16th of April. Exams for other licence grades will also be available on the 16th. Courses and exam days do fill-up quickly, so please contact Club secretary, Irene VK2VAN, by email to; secretary@bmarc.org to register, or for more information.

More information about the club can be found on the website, at www.bmarc.org.

*Advised by Steven VK2TSG
President, Blue Mountains Amateur Radio Club.*

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Central Coast Amateur Radio Club

The Club's Kariong Clubrooms are open every Saturday from 10am. As always, members and visitors are most welcome.

Yesterday was the Club's antenna workshop, with the goal of cleaning and re-fitting the tri-band beam antenna. The club rooms were full of willing participants who were offered pizza in exchange for blood, sweat and tears... well, mostly tears... But, after all the elements were cleaned, the team found a large improvement of both received signal and overall SWR was much better. A little more fine-tweaking is still to be done on the traps, but overall the day was a huge success.

The club wishes to thank those who participated in the day and in bringing the beam back into service. Also, thanks to those involved in obtaining the shiny new sign for the Club premises along with the vector files for the club logo.

Don't be an April Fool! The next monthly business meeting will be at 1pm on Saturday April 1. And your last chance to get a "slice" of "Christmas Ham"... until midday on March 24. On offer are a Rigexpert AA-1500 Antenna Analyser, and a DX Commander Classic 80-10m Vertical Antenna kit; check the club's website and social media for details.

At VK2RAG Somersby, D-Star, RadNet DMR and 2m EchoLink services are fully functional. 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.

Manly-Warringah Radio Society

The Society's centenary Special Event Station, V I 100 M B portable, has been active this weekend in the John Moyle Memorial Field Day, from somewhere in the vicinity of Nowra. For electronic QSL info, see the club web site or check out VI100MB on qrz.com. The station will continue to be active throughout this centennial year.

Wednesday's presentation by Zara VK2ZYP, about the history of Sydney's Luna Park, was well received. If you weren't able to come along "just for fun", you'll be able to see the lecture soon on the club's YouTube channel, VK2MB-TV.

Speaking of parks... Carmel VK2CAR, Colin VK2JCC, Stuart VK2BMX, and others, have been activating various parks in northern Sydney. On Friday the 10th, they were active in Wahroonga Park, operating a portable station, handing out club business cards, and talking about the hobby with curious passers-by. On Friday this week they were at it again, this time at Rofe Park in Hornsby Heights.

Running a portable station in the park is great fun, gets you out of the shack, and is an easy way to promote this great hobby of ours! Any park will do: it doesn't need to be an official POTA entity.

The Society is once again active on Facebook as "ManlyWarringahRadioSociety" (all one word), and on Twitter and YouTube, @VK2MB ["at V K 2 M B"]. Follow, like, subscribe, or whatever to keep up with the latest happenings at the club!

The Manly-Warringah Radio Society meets every Wednesday evening at the First Terrey Hills Guides Hall, 7 Beltana Avenue, Terrey Hills. Doors open at 7.30pm for an 8pm start, and visitors are always welcome. If you need directions, call in on the club's 2 metre repeater on 146.875, or check the club web site for details.

The web site address is mwrs.org.au, that's M-W-R-S dot O-R-G dot A-U.

73 Richard VK2SKY

Publicity Officer, Manly-Warringah Radio Society.

Hornsby and Districts Amateur Radio Club

The last mid-monthly experimenter's meeting was packed out, with a larger than usual membership turnout, and three visitors.

The meeting began with some distraction in the form of a storage cupboard, containing some old books and magazines – some dating back to the 1960's.

Attention then turned to some of the helpful websites and apps shared by members, including;

The Droidstar App – only on Android, as the name suggests- can connect to M17, Fusion, DMR, P25, NXDN, D-STAR reflectors and AllStar nodes.

The Windy App; allows weather analysis and visualisation and is really helpful to show lightning with sound and shaking of the phone when a strike hits anywhere across Australia. It Runs on Android and IOS.

Brandmeister Hoseline – this site allows you to listen to many streaming nodes across the Brandmeister DMR network across the world.

And the Blitzortung site provides real time lightning visualisation.

Did you know that Commercial RTTY systems were in service between San Francisco and Honolulu as early as April 1932 and between San Francisco and New York City by 1934? Well, digital radio has come a long way since then, and at the next HADARC Monthly meeting on March 28th, Rob VK2DIO will discuss some more recent developments. Also, Tony VK2BTL will focus on the practicalities of DMR, including the good, the bad, and the ugly of getting setup.

Finally, HADARC is pleased to have another new member join the club. Poojith YU3YPP is studying in Australia for a year and has joined HADARC to share his international and local experience on radio. Welcome, Poojith!

73 and let's keep radio-active,

*Matt VK2BAI
HADARC President.*

[Play ID File: 18-E-ID4.wav]

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 net 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 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. 2 Metre nets throughout the week, see website for details.

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, usually on Talkgroup 3802; listen to Talkgroup 505 at 8:28am.

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