

VK2 news

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Autumn is here.

Well it now Autumn and hopefully generally better weather throughout the country. There is a varied range of activities in VK2 in this period. The annual Central Coast field day conducted by the CCARC was held in late February at the Wyong Race course venue. In March ARNSW held an antenna building day at the Dural site where Foundation, and other licensees were invited to construct a 40 metre dipole and a coax feed line. Westlakes ARC have a car boot sale scheduled to Saturday the 30 th March at their Teralba club rooms, 9 am start. The Waverley ARS held their fourth Ferry Contest on and around Sydney Harbour on Sunday the 10th March.

In April ARNSW has their AGM scheduled for Saturday the 13th at the VK2WI Dural site, 11 am start. The annual Urunga Convention, running since the 1940's, is on again over Easter in the village of Urunga, on the mid-north coast of VK2.

Into May, the annual WIA AGM is in Sydney, hosted by the Waverley ARS in their Centenary year. There will be other AGM activities round Sydney which were not known when these notes were compiled. Some of these will be covered by VK2WI News closer to their event, if advised to VK2WI. This is done by an email to news@arnsw.org.au

By now we should know the new licensing and assessment arrangements. Regardless of the new arrangements, there is still the role of clubs and groups to provide training to candidates to get them ready for the examinations.

Developments at VK2WI Dural.

At the VK2WI Dural site work continued on the new 40 Metre mast to replace the ageing shorter [30m] triangular repeater antenna tower. The concrete slab was poured in December, a mere 100 tonnes. In January the three section concrete pole was delivered, assembled and erected. It is located in the space between the original VK2WI brick building and the Centenary Building. The next stage of the work is for the mounting of the three bays of brackets and the antennas for 6 and 2 metres and 70 and 23 cms, along with the hard line coax feeders. While this upgrade was undertaken, it provided an opportunity to install underground coax cabling to feed the various HF antennas. Once the mast is commissioned, the old tower will be demolished. In February the disturbed earthworks between the two buildings was landscaped and grassed.

Most of us are aware of the poor propagation on HF at the moment. This is most noticeable with the VK2WI callbacks where no two transmissions are ever the same. To help overcome these coverage gaps VK2WI has been trailing an internet streaming in real time. Go to arnsw.org.au/audio. You can also listen back to recent news bulletins or to a few of the talks and presentations. One that is available is the December 2018 talk by Dick Smith VK2DIK. For some time the evening VK2WI News has included the segments produced by Onno VK6FLAB – on What use is an F Call – of which he produces one a week.

The increasing interest in the newer digital modes has required some adjustments to the HF Band Plans. On 80 Metres, the world wide segment suggestion for digital operation extends up to 3600 kHz. This now impacts on various club and general nets, including the VK2WI news bulletin which is celebrating its half century on 3595 kHz. The equipment on this and most of the VK2WI broadcast system is crystal locked, of which a replacement these days is both rare and expensive. A decision is being considered to move, but to where? To many users any frequency is 'theirs'. Some thought is being given to a move to 3695 kHz. It could keep the morse transmission on 3699 company. The morse and most lower frequency beacons are off line in news bulletin periods to enable reception of callbacks against the usually poor propagation. The 10 metre beacon VK2RSY on 28.262 has returned to its former vertical antenna.

The next Trash & Treasure at ARNSW will be on the usual last Sunday of the odd numbered month – the 31 st March. Car boot sellers will be in a new spot to avoid the new landscaping. This time its mainly a collection of mantle AM radios. Mark VK2XOF looks after the ARNSW T&T but there will be slowing of this activity for a short while. Any inquiries should be directed to office@arnsw.org.au rather than the usual 'disposals'.

Around the clubs.

Hunter Radio Group resumed their Monday evening bulletin in February using their 2 and 70 repeaters. They have a summary of VK1WIA, VK2WI and local news. Port Stephens ARC have commissioned a 70 cm repeater at Gan Gan on 439.700 MHz. The Illawarra ARS have a net on Saturday morning at 9.30 am using their various 2 metre repeaters plus echo-link. Oxley Region ARC had a successful antenna shoot out in February, Their April Friday evening meeting will be a week later, on the 26 th, due to the Easter period. The June long weekend Oxley Region Field Day will be on again round Port Macquarie on the Saturday and Sunday, the venue is still being determined. The Field day dinner on Saturday evening is again at the Golf Club. Port is a popular holiday destination so book accommodation early, if required.

For some it has been AGM time and in February the Summerland ARC at Lismore held theirs with the committee comprising Duncan VK2DLR as President and Roger VK2LRB as Vice President. Secretary is Paul VK2PMG and Treasurer Kris VK2KWW. The committee has Brian VK2FMAN, Dave VK2ZDR and Rob VK2ELH. Their 6 metre repeater, located at the club rooms, is off air with an antenna problem. Also in February the Chifley ARC in Western Sydney held their AGM with Len VK2CBL holding down the role of President, Treasurer and Public Officer. Veselko VK2VES is Vice President and Ray VK2ME as Secretary. The committee members are Graham VK2GJL, Ward VK2HBZ and Ray VK2ELO. Chifley ARC meet every Saturday afternoon. 73 – Tim VK2ZTM.