

# W.A.R.C. QRM MAGAZINE

President: Greg VK2KGO  
Secretary: John VK2YW  
PO Box 294 Wagga Wagga NSW 2650  
Meetings at Small St Clubrooms  
Last Friday of each month

Callsign: VK2WG – VK2RWG – VK2RTW  
Nets: 146.750 / 3605Mhz Tuesdays 2030hrs  
7.165Mhz Sundays 1200hrs EST  
IRLP Node - 626  
Editor: John VK2YW Patron: Rivtron

**March 2003 Issue**

**Next Meeting – Friday 28 March**

## President's Words

Hi all. What a sad end to this month. We see the end of an amateurs' life that has without doubt affected us all. Of course I am talking of Sid VK2SW. I am sure that Sid had an influence in the education of the majority of us as amateurs. He always expressed his opinion, whether at meetings, on the air or more recently by letters to the club and Amateur Radio magazine. Sid's influence will be sorely missed by this club and the amateur radio community in general.

I was unable to attend Sid's memorial service due to work commitments, however I understand it was well attended and quite moving. Let us hope that the good things that Sid put into amateur radio are never forgotten. It would be nice to have something in the club that will be an inspirational reminder of Sid's amateur radio life.

Please come to the next meeting where we can have our own memorial for the life of Sid. Lets dedicate the meeting to Sid and allow us to farewell him as a club.

Yours in AR  
Greg VK2KGO

# Sid VK2SW



We were all very saddened to hear last week of the news that Sid VK2SW had passed away peacefully in his sleep following a valiant fight with cancer.

I first met Sid in early 1969 when I went around to the workshop at the back of Ravas where he was working at that time. I wanted to know how to go about learning Morse Code and how to study for a licence. I was just 17. That meeting was to start an association that would span some 34 years. I am proud to have known him and to have called him both friend and mentor. I am sure there are many of us who think similarly.

Sid was a life member of our club and for some very good reasons. He came to Wagga in the mid 1960s after contributing much to the WIA VK2 Division. He continued this close association with the WIA up until his death. After arriving in Wagga he became the driving force behind resurrecting AR in the city and in the late 1960's helped form the what was known then as the Wagga & District Amateur Radio Club. For many, many years Sid was either President or served on the Executive and was also a past editor of this magazine. He supported and worked for the South West Zone conventions which were later sponsored by the South West Amateur Radio Society where he also served as President and on the executive. He continued this association by contributing and supporting these conventions when our own club ran them. He was our WICEN rep at a time when we were actively involved in the floods.

His technical knowledge was second to none and was always willing to pass on this knowledge to anyone who sought his help. He conducted all our early courses and I am sure there are many of us including myself who owe our licences to his teaching and dedication.

His absolute forte was in Morse. I am still in awe of his prowess in this regard and many times I remember seeing him belting away at the key while carrying out a conversation with those about him. Most of us struggled with CW but Sid's excellent grounding in the merchant navy and later at OTC made this language second nature to him. Over the years he ran many classes enabling people to get their licences and in the early 1980s ran some advanced classes. Whilst I still struggle with this mode I am pleased to have had a couple of CW contacts with him. I happily recall him sitting across my dining room table when I lived in Lake Albert Road during the mid 1970s giving me practice for my CW exam which I proudly passed with all credit due to Sid.

Much of what our club is came from Sid's efforts. Things that immediately spring to mind are our Channel 3 repeater of which he was very much a driving force and more recently, the 70cm repeater system. Sid designed and built a system that linked VK2RTW into Mt. Ginini and the VK East link system. He could often be found up there chatting

up and down the link and it was many of these people who responded with their condolences to our report of his passing. He procured and converted the original 70cm repeater that sat on Willans Hill for many years with it only being replaced last year. With Doug VK2ZMP's assistance he built "Rommel", our portable 2m Repeater. He started the 40m Sunday net in the late 1970s as a meeting place for Wagga and ex-Wagga folk to regularly meet. It continues to this day and is well known throughout eastern Australia. You could always rely on getting a contact on our repeaters from Sid. If he were up he would always answer as many that have passed through the region will attest to. All the early Christmas parties were held at Sid and Jean's.

He was one of our most prolific "home brewers". He constructed most of his early radio equipment and later spent many hours modifying commercial equipment or building power supplies or pre-amps and lots of antennas. Who of us received a converted Pye Radiotelephone (8002) and later an 828 or other similar rig that was converted by him? His last fairly big job in that respect was the ordering of crystals and the conversion of many of the UHF radios over to the new repeater frequency. His original shack was the outside garage and after the shack moved inside, this area became his heavy working area and storeroom.

Sid had a wonderful sense of humour and I will always remember many of his sayings such as..."keep yer powder dry" and ..."like a German band on pay night" ...and "he deserves the Iron Cross". Some of us will remember the "Animal" nights where he both gave and was on the receiving end of many a prank. Some may also recall a certain Field Day and a particular breakfast.

Handhelds or "twitphones" as he affectionately called them played a big part over the years. From early days of he and Doug building portables and the endless tests to later on when he purchased them commercially. You could always tell which part of the house he was in by the sound of his audio and whether it had echo on it or not.

He was an avid HF operator who worked most bands and when not working 20m CW could often be found on the "man's band" of 160m where he had many friends. He was also active on 2m both SSB and FM where he took part in many DX sessions. He was one of very few in the area who spoke to Andy Thomas the astronaut. HF mobile was another passion and it was only in the last few years that his mobile HF aerials no longer adorned the family car because he found it difficult to operate.

Sid was always keen on newer technology and whilst he always professed that he didn't understand computers he had a couple over the years. He enjoyed packet radio and later SSTV where he was able to pass on many of his early photos of the club members and happenings over the years, as he was also a keen photographer.

To Jean and family we extend our sincere condolences. He will be sorely missed as a 'true' amateur, WIA and club stalwart, mentor and friend.

Vale Sid VK2SW. – John VK2YW.

# Snippets

\*\*\* Alan VK2KAW has just returned from southeastern Victoria where he and Ruth spent a pleasant 10 days at an engine rally and sight seeing.

\*\*\* Barry VK2KUZ and Ann VK2MKJ should be close to arriving back following some houseboat driving on the Murray.

\*\*\* Neil VK2KNR and Miffy are currently travelling the Great Ocean Road area.

\*\*\* The rest of us haven't been anywhere. ☺

\*\*\* Jeff VK2AQ went quiet during the week after the van did a valve. He was heard to mutter something about LPG Vs. Petrol.

\*\*\* Leigh VK2LRR has been experimenting with software known as WSJT. This has allowed him to hear distant stations on 2m using meteor scatter. Leigh has agreed to do a demonstration at the April club meeting.

\*\*\* New to Wagga is Tom VK2NAU. Tom arrived in town last week and is currently purchasing a home. Keep an ear out for him on Ch3.

\*\*\* Work is slowly progressing at the moment on the painting of skirting boards and architraves at the clubrooms. Most of us do not like painting but if you can assist, we'd love to see you. Don't forget that each Saturday morning is a working bee but if you can't make that, why not call in for a cuppa mid morning.

\*\*\* The 70cm Repeater VK2RTW is now back on air again. Thanks to Paul VK1BX who came across last week and found that the unit had taken an over voltage spike which had taken out its pre-amp.

\*\*\* Sorry to hear that Joyce XYL of Russ VK2AZR has suffered a fall and is currently recuperating. Fortunately, there are no broken bones. We hope you are back on your feet very soon, Joyce.

\*\*\* Also on the sick list is Val, XYL of Dave VK2JYE. We also wish her a speedy recovery.

*In light of the recent world happenings, the following might be of some interest to those with Communications receivers.*

## USAF Global HF System Frequencies

The Global HF System (GHFS) was started by the US Air Force in June of 1992. This system was created by consolidating several other USAF HF networks, including the Strategic Air Command "Giant Talk" system. The goal of the system was to develop a worldwide HF network for providing Command & Control HF communications to all authorised DOD aircraft and ground stations.

When you hear an aircraft or any stations calling "MAINSAIL" on any of the GHFS frequencies this is a "general" call for any ground station to answer and provided the calling stations with what ever he needs. Any GHFS ground station will respond to the call "MAINSAIL". Depending on the service required the station may request the aircraft to change to a discrete frequency for improved and extended service.

EAM's or Emergency Action Message. Another very important aspect of the GHFS is the transmission of EAM's. EAM's are the coded military orders or bulletins that have the highest priority. When EAM's are broadcast, ALL other users of the system are to standby. If you hear a voice giving a long series of letters phonetically this is an EAM.

SKYKING messages are special EAM's. These presumably could be the nuclear go/no-go codes. There was a higher than normal number of EAM's and SKYKING messages being transmitted

after the attacks of 9/11/01. Urgent SKYKING messages are repeated three or four times instead of the usual two. SKYKING is a group call sign, meaning "Any this net." "Do not answer" is the standard procedure of self-authenticating broadcasts, meaning that recipients don't need to give away their positions or existence by challenging the orders. While tuned to any of the GHFS frequencies and hear "SKYKING SKYKING Do not answer" you can bet you're hearing a very important, highest priority, and heavily encrypted message!

### **Frequency in KHz-USB**

4709 Sigonella

4724 Andrews, Ascension, Elmendorf, Guam, Hickam, Lejes, Offutt, Salinas, Thule, Yokota

6712 Andrews, Ascension, Guam, Lajes

6724 Sigonella

6739 Ascension, Elmendorf, Guam, Hickam, Salinas, Offutt, Thule, Yokota

8992 Andrews, Ascension, Elmendorf, Guam, Hickam, Offutt, Salinas, Thule, Yokota

9007 Sigonella

9025 Lejes

10780 (1) AF Eastern Test Range (Backup for Ascension), Cape Canaveral, Antigua, Ascension, Maui

11175 (2) Andrews, Ascension, Elmendorf, Guam, Hickam, Salinas, Offutt, Thule, Yokota

11181 Lajes

11271 Andrews, Ascension, Elmendorf, Guam, Hickam, Lejes, Offutt, Salinas, Thule, Yokota

13212 Lajes

15016 Andrews, Ascension, Elmendorf, Guam, Hickam, Lajes, Offutt, Salinas, Thule, Yokota

15038 Sigonella

20390 AF Eastern Test Range (Backup for Ascension), Cape Canaveral, Antigua, Ascension, Maui

### **Footnotes:**

(1) - 10780 is usually the primary frequency NASA uses to communicate with the Booster Recovery Ships during a Space Shuttle Launch. Start listening to this a day before up to a few hours before any Shuttle launch and you'll hear Cape Radio on this frequency. This frequency is sometimes used during non Shuttle launches as well.

(2) - 11175 is probably the most active of all the GHFS frequencies. If you want to hear your first military station, set your radio on this freq. and usually within an hour you'll hear something. Even with a portable radio and telescoping antenna you should be able to catch some Military comms on this frequency (your radio must be capable of receiving USB).

### **GHFS Ground Station Locations**

Andersen - Andersen AFB, Guam near Agana

Andrews - Andrews AFB, near Washington, DC

Ascension - Ascension Island Auxiliary Air Base in the South Atlantic Ocean

Croughton - Croughton Air Base, England, UK

Elmendorf - Elmendorf AFB, Alaska

Hickam - Hickam AFB, Hawaii near Pearl Harbor

Incirlik - Incirlik Air Base Turkey In May 2001 Incirlik was replaced by Sigonella

Lajes - Lajes Air Base, Azores - North Atlantic Ocean

Offutt - Offutt AFB, Omaha, NE

Salinas - Salinas, Puerto Rico, This is only a remote for Andrews.

Thule - Thule Air Base, Greenland

Yokota - Yokota Air Base, Japan

West Coast - McClellan AFB, Sacramento, CA NOTE: This was called McClellan but in January 2001 now is known as "West Coast"