

# Jamboree On The Air

By Paul Lewis G4APL

October 2004

## Jota 2004 preface

First of all welcome to the Guide and Brownie Leaders that may be reading the Caterham Radio Group's (CatRad) and Caterham Guide's and Brownies JOTA 2004 report.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> weekend in October (Saturday) the Caterham Guides were able to attend the JOTA event at 'SKY-WAVES'

There are two radio events that Guides and Brownies can join in. February is Guides Thinking Day On The Air (TDOTA) and the Canadians Guides On The Air (GOTA). This event is now co-ordinated to run on the third weekend of February. October is Scouts and (Guides) Jamboree On The Air (JOTA)

Both events are world wide, and run over a period of 48 hours from Midnight Friday to Midnight Sunday. The JOTA event is the largest.

The first Jamboree On The Air was held in 1958. This year the Caterham Guides participated in the 47<sup>th</sup> Annual event. It was expected some 400,000 Scouts, Guides were active over the weekend, supported by Radio Amateur's worldwide over the 48 hour period. Sending, Receiving Greeting messages and meeting other Guides and Scouts over the Amateur Radio Airwaves on the Short wave bands (High Frequency) as well on the VHF (Very High Frequency) bands using the various modes available.

This is the 16<sup>th</sup> time that Caterham Guides and Brownies have held the event at the home of Ann and Paul Lewis who hold the Radio Amateur Callsigns G7BSF and G4APL.

As one can expect, some guides have revisited the CatRad



**VHF and HF Short Wave beams used to communicate around the UK and the rest of the world.**

event 5 to 16 times. Later as 'helpers'. Each Brownie or Guides requires about four hours to complete the tasks.

Brownies visiting for the first time are working towards their Radio Communicator Badge.

First Time Guides work towards their Communication in the Community and Get on the Airwave badge as well as completing the tasks for the certificate.

Second time guides work on additional tasks and assist the operators in running the station.



**9<sup>th</sup> Caterham Guide Sophie M3SOF with the Brownies on 2M.**

Third visits, starting to get the hang of Amateur Radio assisting the other Brownies and Guides. They may then be interested enough to complete a Radio Amateur Foundation Course run by other clubs.

The 9<sup>th</sup> Caterham Guide leader is very enthusiastic for their Radio Communication Day using Amateur Radio. Robin is proud to have have three Licensed Radio Amateur's her group..

So we come to the 47<sup>th</sup> annual JOTA event which was being run as on previous visits. Here is the story.

## Preparation

During June 2004, Paul G4APL on annual leave spent some of the time reviewing the JOTA 2004 paper work to reflect the changes in the Brownie and Guide's. Communicator Badge and Communicate in the Community

During August, Robin confirmed that JOTA is to go ahead,

though numbers of guides wishing to attend will be unknown until the JOTA event. (after they arrive)

The paper work was passed to Janette Ralph 'Robin' Guide Leader Caterham 9<sup>th</sup> Guides, to co-ordinate the Caterham Guide and Brownie companies during September.

Once confirmed Paul contacted the Radio Society of Great Britain (RSGB), to inform them that the Caterham Radio Group (CatRad) would be active again this year on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> October 2004.

The Amateur Radio Callsign used for the event was again GX0SCR, the special event Callsign of the Caterham Radio Group.

During the preceding week Ann and Paul re-arranged the house on Thursday Evening and all day Friday, setting up



**Robin 9<sup>th</sup> Caterham Guide Leader assisting Bryan G0SYR with the logging in the HF Station, Laura M3LRA Operating**



**Caterham Brownies enjoying the technical session with John G8MNY and Ann G7BSF just out of the picture**

the equipment and test in each of the rooms.

Paul was also monitoring the Short Wave bands the previous weekend which were excellent. During the week they became poor. Paul read a solar report. That stated the Suns solar disk became spotless for the first time this 11 year cycle, as we approach the minimum due late 2006 or early 2007. That was going to upset the Magnet Field around the planet earth on which short wave signal bounce around the world. Listening on the Short Wave 20 Metre Amateur Radio Bands (14MHz and 21MHz) conditions to North America were not good and signals were very not stable. i.e. lots of fading. So looks like we are expecting a hard time making overseas contacts. We will just have to wait and see what we can do for our Guides and Brownies on the day The Tower supporting all the aerials was raise to the full height to enable the best chance of getting our signals out.

#### The Event

Saturday 16 October Paul at 06:50hrs Caterham Time, Paul was in the Radio Shack tuning around the 20 metres HF (High Frequency) band, with the HF beam pointing

towards New Zealand and Australia via the long path. As Paul expected it was going to be a hard day as nothing was heard on the 21 and 28Mhz Amateur bands. Only a few signals could be heard on 20 metres. Some Russian speaking stations off the back of the beams.

Powered up the Amateur Packet Radio Systems at 07:10Hrs in the other rooms and linked them in to the Caterham WorldWide Convers server [gb7cip.ampr.org](http://gb7cip.ampr.org), and found VK6SH waiting for him on Channel 11.

This was the Western Australia (WA) Head Quarters station operated by Phil and Peter. We both put out test calls on 14.143MHz and nothing was heard at either end with Paul beaming the radio signal over the long path to Australia over Central and South America.

Peter VK6HU took over on the Keys, whilst Phil tried to hear our radio signal. Here is a brief extract from Peter's Live packet radio text. "I take your point about the happy faces. I was WA State organiser from 1969 to 1985 and National Commissioner from 1985 to 1996 inclusive. I have had a change of warrant to Activity Leader in my old Branch Radio/Electronics Team and enjoy the lesser effort!! Enjoy your cuppa and thanks. - Second year in contact with Caterham." Paul now with his cup of tea started calling CQ (seek you) Australia whilst Phil and Peter kept an ear on the frequency. Paul was called by Australian stations, VK2RJ Les 100 Miles north of Sydney, VK3AUS Harold Melbourne, VK2ALH Les (did not recognise Paul's voice even though we met at one of our Club meetings several years ago until Paul gave his own callsign). VK2DD Harry 150 Miles north of Sydney. VK6LC Malnear. Perth Western Australia. Phil and Peter could hear Mal speaking to Paul though unable to hear Paul's signal. Time now was 9AM.

Bryan G0SYR, John G8MNY had already arrived and had set-up the technical area.

Robin the 9<sup>th</sup> Caterham Guide Leader (The\_Big\_Boss) arrived at 08:45hrs and managed to pass greetings with Mal VK6LC. The signals to and from Australia were variable and the path soon failed.

9<sup>th</sup> Caterham Guides Laura M3LRA, Sophie M3SOF arrived to join Belynda M3BYL. Paul advised Laura that she was to operate the HF Station, instructed and overseen by Bryan G0SYR. Whilst Sophie and Belynda were to operate the VHF 2 Metre station overseen by Ann G7BSF and Paul G4APL. They would swap over during the day so as to gain maximum experience in operating on the Short Wave and VHF Amateur Radio Frequencies.

We decided to switch over the 40 metres (7MHz) By now (09:00-09:30) the first ten Brownies and Guides were in the other rooms preparing their greeting messages. Polishing up on their phonetic alphabet that they were learning the previous week. (After all they have to take a test later)

You would have noticed that Mike G3TJW was not on parade this time. Due to the fact that his family and friends were throwing a two day party to celebrate his 70<sup>th</sup> birthday over the weekend.

For the next four hours Laura and Sophie operated the HF station taking turns, contacted stations around the UK and across the English Channel.

Robin and the Guide Helpers ensured those completing the require tasks were speaking or listening to any new stations contacted.

13:40 UTC that station was operating on 21MHz and spoke to stations in Ukraine, Missouri USA, Boston USA, South London UK, Philadelphia USA, Wisconsin USA, Bulgaria, Cleveland Ohio USA, Long Island USA, New Jersey USA, GB2GP Gill Well park, North London, Connecticut USA. By now we were really struggling and decided to switch over to 20 Metres (14MHz) at 16:10 UTC We made contact with scout station in Portugal CT7NMV, CT7AVN and struggled with a contact in New Jersey USA

The HF station was active 07:00 to 18:00 hours UTC 40 greeting messages sent. 30 Received 50 Stations contacted.

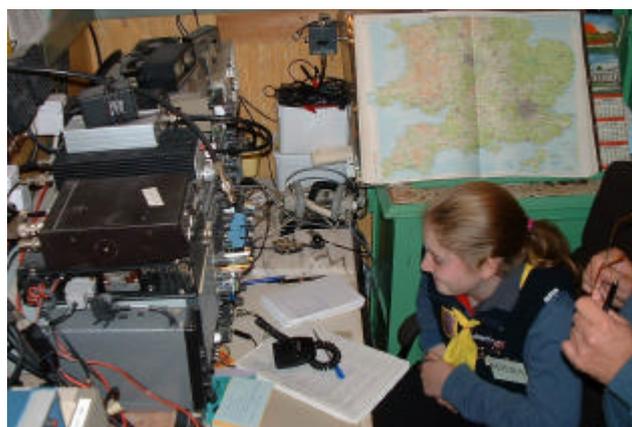
Packet Radio World Wide Convers. (07:10 to 20:15 UTC) Two PC's were set-up in different rooms and connected in to the AmateurPacketRadioNETwork (amprnet) over TCPIP radio and Internet links. WorldWide convers network, accessing via the Caterham Radio Group GB7CIP local server.

This was very popular with the Guides (Natalie 9<sup>th</sup> Caterham had a very long live keyboard contact with Scout station VK2SH operated by Peter. (mentioned earlier). Others seen using this system Belynda, Katie, Abigail c, Laura (and speaking to Gil W1GMF in Abington 20 miles south of Boston Ma.). A log was maintained for Robin (Guider to review after the

event)

The VHF 2 Metre (145MHz) Station (25 watts into a co-linear aerial) was in the room where the QSL cards, greeting messages and learning the phonetic alphabet going on in the background. The station went on air with the Brownies at 08:10(UTC) (9:10AM) Main operators were M3BYL Belynda, Laura M3LRA, Sophie M3SOF overseen by Ann G7BSF, Paul G4APL assisting with the logging and check logging. John, G8MNY assisted during the lunch time period to allow the Guides to enjoy their BBQ lunch.

With our aerial up at 45 feet. 570ft ASL (Above Sea Level) and 99 UK special event stations listed and 3 clubs. Our



**9<sup>th</sup> Caterham Guide Laura M3LRA during a HF contact with Bryan G0SYR just out of the picture in the background**

JOTA station contacted, GB2RST (Radio Scouting Team), GB2GUN(Bisley Camp), GB2LSL (Enfield), GB2ESG (7<sup>th</sup> Epsom Scouts), GB1HID (Isleworth Scouts), GB0WDS (Ware & District Scouts), GB7MHD (Mid Herts District), GB0EKT (Eagle & Kingfisher Troup – Essex) GB4BDS (Banstead District Scouts) The 2metre station was active 08:10 to 18:30 UTC. 148 greeting messages sent. 79 Received and 26 Stations worked.

The technical area which was looked after by John G8MNY. The Brownies and Guides were able to learn about Radio Transmitter, Receivers, Aerials.. They compared an old mobile phone with a modern phone (Take it apart and rebuild it), propagation as well as phonetic alphabet testing. All tasks required that enabled the Brownies to gain their Radio Communication Badge and Guides their Certificate.

Lunch time saw Paul again firing up the Barbecue in the garden. It was dull cloudy day with a slight breeze.

Assisted by Ann and the Caterham Guide helpers, who took the orders and Paul and Ann made sure there was enough food to eat. by those present.

All those that attended the JOTA station to work towards their Radio Communication badge or Certificate completed all the required tasks by 18:30.

An exchange heard over the air with our 2 Metre operators. Scout sending his greeting message to us.

Laura M3LRA operating

Laura: 'ready to receive your message'

Scout: '... I did have a five fish, and they all died'.

Laura: 'I am terribly sorry to hear that. How did they die'

Scout: 'My brother squashed them'



**Ann G7BSF Checking that the Brownies completed paperwork to ensure that they have completed all the require tasks before signing off their work**

Laura: 'Oh'

The three operators fell about with laughter. The comment totally unexpected.

A few photographs were taken during the event by Paul G4APL.

After the event, John, Bryan and Paul put the house back together.

25 Guides, Brownies and Leaders attended their Radio Communication Day.

A total of 109 Greeting Messages were received and 188 sent.

Janette Ralph (Robin) 9<sup>th</sup> Caterham Guides

Karen Booth Brownie Leader 9<sup>th</sup> Caterham Brownies

3 1<sup>st</sup> Caterham Brownies  
5 4<sup>th</sup> Caterham Brownies  
5 9<sup>th</sup> Caterham Brownies  
2 7<sup>th</sup> Caterham Guides  
8 9<sup>th</sup> Caterham Guides

Supported by 7 Radio Amateurs, G4APL, G7BSF, G8MNY, M3BYL (Guide) M3LRA (Guide) M3SOF (Guide), plus all those Radio Amateur's that came on to give

our JOTA station a call to make it a very successful event for the Caterham Guides.

449 Guides, Brownies and Leaders have now visited Paul and Ann's home SKY-WAVES over the past eight years (16 events).

The evening ended with the team sitting down to the usual meal and post event debrief.

After the event Paul spent a few evenings going through the logs to write out a QSL cards for all those Guides and Scouts and stations that we spoke to.

A Special thank you to the three M3  
9<sup>th</sup> Caterham Guide Operators  
Belynda M3BYL  
Laura M3LRA  
Sophie M3SOF  
who between them operated the  
VHF and HF Station  
for 90% of the time

and

Thank you all,  
Guider's, Guide Helpers  
and the  
CatRad Jota Team

≡A JOB WELL DONE≡

Web Site

<http://www.theskywaves.net>

Thinking Day On The Air 2005  
CatRad + Guides TDOTA 2005  
Saturday 19th February 2005