

# Thinking Day On The Air

February 2001

## TDOTA 2001 preface

First of all welcome to the Guide and Brownie Leaders that may be reading the CatRad and Caterham Guide's TDOTA 2001 report.

This event was much smaller than last October's JOTA and ran for 48 hours world wide. Though there are not that many stations active outside the United Kingdom and Canada

Unfortunately the USA and Canadian Guides Association had their Guides On The Air (GOTA) the previous weekend. 17, 18 February. Annabel 2E1PAL learnt about this during January.

It's about time that the World Guiding Association co-ordinators use the same rules as to when the Thinking Day On The Air weekend will be. So that there are more TDOTA and GOTA stations are on the air at the same weekend world wide.

It's a shame that the UK Guides Association no longer have a Radio Communication Badge. This is a first step of gaining an insight to the some of the various aspects of communication via wireless, be it a mobile phone, analogue, digital television. Novice Amateur Radio Exam, Radio Amateur Exam. Both are C&G (City and Guilds) Exams.

There is lot of support from the Caterham Senior Guider's up to Commissioner Level for the Radio Communication Days using Amateur Radio to communicate around the United Kingdom and the rest of the world. Sending and receiving Greeting Messages with other Guider's and Scouts groups

During January, Paul G4APL started reviewing the TDOTA 2001 paper work. Contacted the Radio Society Of Great

Britain (RSGB) that the Caterham Radio Group (CatRad) would be active again so that the Club Licence would be amended to allow Greeting Messages to be sent to more countries than that specified on the Transmitting Amateur Radio Club licence.

## Preparation

The updated paper work was passed to Janette 'Robin' to co-ordinate the Caterham Guides and Brownie companies during February.

The Thinking On The Air 2001 (TDOTA) for the Caterham Guides and Brownies was held on Saturday 24 February 2001 at the home and Ann and Paul Lewis, who hold the Radio Amateur Callsigns G7BSF, G4APL and Annabel 2E1PAL Guide Young Leader Caterham 9th Guides and Brownies This will be the 9<sup>th</sup> time the Caterham Guides will be at Ann and Paul's home for their TDOTA & JOTA.



**Standing Robin (Janette) Caterham 9<sup>th</sup> Guide Leader Penguin (2E1PAL Annabel Operator)**



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

Thursday 22 February, Paul took some holiday off work so that the Tower with all the aerials on could be raised higher and the aerials checked out.

On Friday Paul spent the day re-arranging the house for the separate work area's required.

John G8MNY arrived around 15:00hours with the extra equipment.

By mid evening the house was set-up and the VHF, HF and LF transmitter and amplifier were tested on air and all was ready for the 35 Guides and Brownies expected the following day.

Last thing Annabel sent an Email to the GOTA Candian Guide co-ordinators to advise them that all Systems are GO and what frequencies we would be operational on. Some stations that we spoke and corresponded with last weekend would come on to support us if they heard our station on.

#### The Event

Saturday 24 February Paul fired up the HF (High Frequency) Transmitter at 07:00 hours on the 20 Metre band and the first contact was made with Armidale (3500 feet above Sea Level). 350 Miles north of Sydney Australia. This was followed by a call from a English station working in George Town Kentucky (Local time was 03:05 Hours in the morning), then a call from Melville Western Australia, and Gran Canaria

The rest of CatRad TDOTA team Mike G3TWJ, Ted G7OBF, G8MNY John, arrived at 08:30 hours to assist Paul and Ann.

Janette (Robin) Caterham 9<sup>th</sup> Guide Leader arrived at 08:45 just before the first Guides, Brownies.

Paul handed the HF station control over to Mike who started making contacts with Guide Stations around the United Kingdom on 40 Metres. There was so much interference from the French contest stations that it made the band unworkable for passing greeting messages. We did managed to get Sam (9<sup>th</sup> Caterham Guides) to have a few words with her Granddad in Wallesey North West England It was decided to switch over to the 80 metre band, and from Middy concentrate on the HF Overseas bands.

The VHF Station went on air with the Guides at 09:30 with Annabel 2E1PAL and Ann G7BSF with Ted G7OBF ready to take over, until 17:30.

The Packet Radio PC's (2) were connected into the Caterham Radio Group's TCP/IP server that would provide the Guides one of many contacts all over the world as well as working other Guides with in the UK (Hopefully). In the event only one other group was active.

In the technical area the Guides were taught about and how to build a crystal set instructed by John.

The Brownies and Guides had to participate in two discussions covering propagation and radios John.

Phonetic Alphabet testing was carried out by John, Ted, and Ann

The Guide Leader (ROBIN) and Guide helpers (Sam 6<sup>th</sup> visit), Sarah (4<sup>th</sup> visit), Annabel, ensured that the paper work was being completed and that all the required tasks were carried to gain the Radio Communication Badges.

Lunchtime, Ann and Paul fired up the Barbecue in the garage. After all it was a nice dry chilly and sunny day. The Brownies Belynda 9<sup>th</sup>, Vicky 4<sup>th</sup> took the orders and Paul did his best to ensure the food was burnt to an edible enough state before being consumed by those present. (working lunch for the Amateur Radio Operators in between overs)

During the afternoon Robin and the five Brownies Jade, Alice, Leonie, Philippa and Belynda spoke to or listened to all the stations we contacted in North America and Canada. Robin had a good chat with Helen who was operating VE2 Girl Guides Quebec



Anne (1<sup>st</sup> Caterham Brownies) with her Brownies Penguin (2E1PAL Operator)

37 stations were contacted on the HF (14,21, 8 MHz) and LF (7 MHz) bands.

We had many excellent contacts with the stations in North America and Canada. Including Canadian Guide GOTA co-ordinator, Senior Branches Guider, Area PR Adviser, Guides Canada Vice President. Helen Archibald VE2YAK. Who was operating VE2GGQ (Annabel spoke to Helen the previous weekend over the radio and notified her of our operating frequencies via Internet email throughout the day). We also had contact with the Boy Scouts of America station, who had tried for two hours to contact our station. And made it just after all our Brownies had to go home. They will ensure that they have scouts in attendance for next February as they did not know the Guides had a TDOTA this weekend.

Countries worked.  
New South Wales Australia  
Western Australia



Caterham Brownies enjoying themselves

Gran Canaria

England  
Merseyside, West Sussex, Oxfordshire,  
Northamptonshire, Berkshire, Essex, Derbyshire

USA  
Georgetown Kentucky, Harrisburg Pennsylvania,  
Harrells North Carolina, Florida, New Mexico,  
Maryland, Hillsville Virginia, North Illinois, Mead  
Washington, Santa Monica California, Ohio, Bear  
Washington, South Dakota, Santiago California,  
Richmond Virginia,

Canada  
St. George Ontario, Ingersoll SW Ontario, Point Claire  
Quebec, Winnipeg Manitoba, Vancouver Island,  
Ontario,

On VHF 2 Metres 14 stations were worked including 3 TDOTA stations.

Send District Guides (Brownies), Radio Scouting Team (Herts), Beaconfield Guides, Bognor Regis Guides

All those that attended the TDOTA station worked towards their Radio Communication badge or Certificate. Completed all the required tasks by 18:00.

The HF bands on 28Mhz were buzzing and Robin, Mike and Paul continued until 20:15Hours



Robin on Air with Mike G3TWJ.

The number of visitors that came to the event were 22, which meant that the Brownies and Guides had a good time.

4 Caterham 9<sup>th</sup> Guides  
& 1 Guide, Brownie, Rainbow Leader (ROBIN The\_Boss)  
1 Young Leader Caterham Guide & Brownie (Penguin)  
7 Caterham 1<sup>st</sup> Brownies + Brownie Leader Anne  
7 Caterham 4<sup>th</sup> Brownies  
4 Caterham 9<sup>th</sup> Brownies

Supported by 6 Radio Amateurs G3TWJ, G4APL, G7BSF, G7OBF, G8MNY, 2E1PAL, plus all those Radio Amateur's that came on to gave our TDOTA station a call to make our event successful.

The evening ended with all the team helping Paul put the house back together, then sitting down to the usual meal.

On HF we sent 86 and received 18 Greeting Messages.  
On VHF we sent 79 and received 10 Greeting Messages.

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

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