

# Thinking Day On The Air

By Paul Lewis G4APL

February 2002

## TDOTA 2002 preface

First of all welcome to the Guide and Brownie Leaders that may be reading the CatRad and Caterham Guide's TDOTA 2002 report.

This years and future years event has now been agreed to be run on the third weekend of February. Which has also been co-ordinated with the North American Guides and the rest of the world. This is very good news for our guides.

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 or digital television. Intermediate Amateur Radio Exam, Radio Amateur Exam. Both are C&G (City and Guilds) Exams.

Since January 1<sup>st</sup> 2001. The RadioCommunications Agency (RA) has instigated a Foundation Licence. Which covers the basic knowledge, minimum requirements to get started in Amateur Radio. This course is about 12 hours of intensive instruction of theory and practical, with a computerise test at the end. Most students past. Later the student can progress further by taking further courses to Intermediate Licence, then work towards the Full Licence. Gaining access to more facilities as one moves up a stage.

Several of the Caterham 9<sup>th</sup> Guides 'who can't get enough radio' have taken away details of the Foundation Licence this time.

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 Guide groups and Radio



Robin assisting 7yr old Catriona 4<sup>th</sup> Caterham with her Greeting Message

## Amateurs.

During December Robin and Paul were asked to phone the Guide's TDOTA UK Radio Co-ordinator, who happened to be a Radio Amateur. Who had been passed a copy of the report that Robin had sent in many months before, and wanted some photographs. During this long conversation it turned out that Paul was speaking to a District Commissioner. (You never know whom you are talking to. And that applies to Radio Amateur's where one is on equal terms)

Early January, Paul G4APL started reviewing the TDOTA 2002 paper work and making the required changes. 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.



Guides looking for requested information.

## 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 2002 (TDOTA) for the Caterham Guides and Brownies was held on Saturday 16 February 2002 at the home and Ann and Paul Lewis, who hold the Radio Amateur Callsigns G7BSF, G4APL and Annabel Lewis 2E1PAL Guide Young Leader 9th Caterham Brownies This will be the 11<sup>th</sup> time the Caterham Guides and Brownies will be at Ann and Paul's home for their

## TDOTA & JOTA.

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

Thursday, Friday 14, 15 February, Paul took some annual holiday off work. There was concern due to the recent high winds that caused some damage in the garden. These had ceased and the forecast was very good.

Paul decided to raise the Tower with all the aerials, then checked out the aerials. Rearranged the house for the separate work area's required.

John G8MNY arrived around 11:00hours with the extra equipment.

By late afternoon Friday, the house was set-up and the VHF, HF and LF transmitter and amplifier were tested on air and all was ready for the 30 Guides and Brownies expected the following day.

Last thing Annabel sent an Email to the GOTA Canadian Guide co-ordinators to advise them that all Systems are GO and what frequencies we would be operational on.

### The Event

Saturday 16 February 06:30 all the PC's the guides would use and equipment switched on and checked out. Paul fired up the HF (High Frequency) Transmitter on 20 metres at 07:00 hours (with Annabel 2E1PAL along side doing the operating for the first time) on the 20 Metre band and the first contact was made with NE Brazil followed by contacts with Girona Spain, couple of contacts with Melbourne Australia, Gisborn North Island New Zealand, McKenzie North British Columbia Canada, North Italy, Arnsburg Germany, Perth Australia

The CatRad TDOTA team Mike G3TJW, John G8MNY and Bryan G0SYR arrived at 08:30 hours, Ted G7OBF was expected at 11:00 to assist over the lunch time period to help Paul and Ann.

Janette (Robin) 9<sup>th</sup> Caterham Guide Leader arrived at 08:50 just before the first Guides, Brownies.

Annabel and Paul handed the HF station control over to Mike and Bryan who started making contacts with Guide Stations around the United Kingdom on 40 Metres receiving and sending Greeting messages. From 13:00 to 21:00 GMT concentrated on the HF Overseas bands.

The VHF Station went on air with the Guides and Brownies at 09:20 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 and failed to establish a link. The Convers system was used throughout the day by our guides.

In the technical area the Guides were taught how to build the crystal set instructed by Bryan

The Brownies and Guides had to participate in two discussions covering propagation and radios, aerials, taking apart and old fashioned 'brick' mobile phone comparing different handheld transceivers by John.

Prepare Greeting messages and taught the correct procedure on how to send the Greeting message over the Amateur Radio airwaves, and be able to respond to follow up questions.

Phonetic Alphabet testing was carried out by John. It was noted that the Brownies need much more preparation time before the event.

The youngest brownie age 7 Catriona knew the phonetics and past the test first time. She even picked up the HF operator, elbowed the operator in the ribs and told him to use India and not Italy. Well Done!

The Guide Leader (ROBIN) and Guide helpers (second or more visit) (Sophie 9th, Sam 9th, Natalie 9th, Mary-Kate 9th), and Annabel assisted the Brownies and ensured that the paper work was being completed and that all the required tasks were carried to gain the Radio Communication Badge and Certificates.



**Technical Area Old fashion Mobile Phone Transmitter Receiver being passed round**

Lunchtime, Ann and Paul fired up the Barbecue in the garden on a nice sunny day.

The Guide helper Sophie 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 day Robin and her Guides and Brownies spoke to or listened to all the stations we contacted.

During the morning we concentrated on talking to other TDOTA stations sending and receiving Greeting Messages with UK stations

GB0FDG Fairfield Division Guide (Croydon)

GB0SJB St Joseph Brownies Malvern Worcester (80Mins)

GB0IHG 1<sup>st</sup> Highworth Guides Near Swindon Wiltshire (80mins)

GB2KGB Killan Guides & Brownies Killan Scotland



**Bryan watching Natalie 9<sup>th</sup> Caterham Building Crystal Set**

49 stations were contacted on the HF (14.,28 MHz) and LF (7 MHz) bands.

94 Messages Sent, 58 received

Countries worked.

New South Wales Australia, Western Australia  
Queensland Australia, Spain, Netherlands, Germany, Italy  
New Zealand (north Island), Canada, Moscow Russia

UK

Glasgow and Killan (Scotland), Croydon, Malvern Worcester, Swindon Wilts, Bexley Kent

USA

Boxville Tennessee, Newburn South Carolina, Nth Carolina, Roseville & Lansing (Michigan) Fairbanks Alaska, San Antonio Texas, Knoxville Tennessee, Washington DC, Ladies island South Carolina.

Canada

Montreal, Toronto, Ottawa, Hamilton Ontario, St John New Brunswick, London Ontario, Kingston Ontario, Vancouver.



**Bryan checking with a Brownie what needs to be carried out next**

Europe

PI4RIS TDOTA Netherlands we even saw a picture of the Operator Edwin PA3GVQ in action on his web page via the Internet during the contact.

North America and Canada.

Conditions were excellent.

GOTA stations worked.

Robin had some long conversation with Canadian Guides during her 'Radio Quality Time' during 18:30 to 21:00 Hours

VE2QQ Hamilton Ontario Canada - GOTA

VA3JPS Canada - GOTA

VE3IEY Kingston Ontario Canada- GOTA

VO2JCR Goose Bay Labrador Canada - GOTA

VE7SCC Burnaby Mountain Vancouver Canada - GOTA

VE3EIE/Mobile Nepean Ottawa Canada - GOTA

VE3GGC Lake Simco Ontario Canada - GOTA

VE3ICV Ottawa Canada - GOTA

VE9LC St. John New Brunswick Canada - GOTA



**Annabel Young Leader 9<sup>th</sup> Caterham 2E1PAL Operating 2metre station**

On VHF 2 Metres 14 stations were worked including 5 Messages sent 94 received 30  
All those that attended the TDOTA station worked towards their Radio Communication badge or Certificate. Completed all the required tasks by 18:30.

The HF bands on 28Mhz and 14Mhz were buzzing, Mike, Bryan and Paul continued until 21:00Hours with Robin chatting to other Guides in Canada

During this period we were called out of the blue by a friend of over 25 years KL7/G4DMA Lawrence.

He use to live in Coulsdon and appears on the air from extreme parts of the world. It was a wonderful surprise and he spoke to Larissa, Leonie, Chantel and Mary-Kate from Anchorage Alaska.

The number of visitors that came to the event were 26, which meant that the Brownies and Guides had a good time.

1 Guide, Brownie, Rainbow Leader (ROBIN The\_Boss)  
1 Young Leader Caterham 9<sup>th</sup> Brownie (Penguin)  
1 Brown Owl 5<sup>th</sup> Caterham Brownies  
6 from 9<sup>th</sup> Caterham Guides  
2 from 1<sup>st</sup> Caterham Brownies  
4 from 4th Caterham Brownies  
4 from 5th Caterham Brownies  
2 from 7<sup>th</sup> Caterham Brownies  
5 from 9th Caterham Brownies

Supported by 7 Radio Amateurs G0SYR, G3TWJ, G4APL, G7BSF, G7OBF, G8MNY, 2E1PAL, plus all those Radio Amateur's that came on during the day and 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.

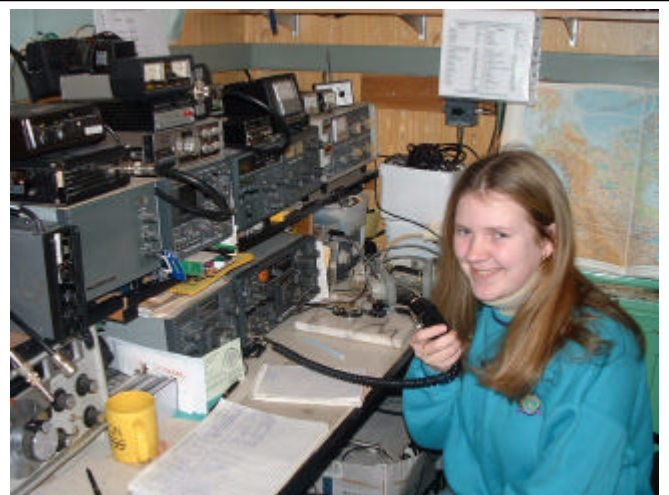
After the event Paul spent a few evenings going through and analysing the logs to prepare this report and write out a QSL card for each of those Guides, Brownies and stations that we spoke to.

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

JOTA 19 October 2002



**Paul G4APL with Robin 9<sup>th</sup> Caterham  
Operating 2metre station**



**Annabel Young Leader 9<sup>th</sup> Caterham 2E1PAL  
Working Australia on 20 metres**



**Ann G7BSF operating 2metres with the Guide and  
Brownies waiting to send their messages**