

Jamboree on the Air

Giving young people a taste of amateur radio



GB2CIS. South Essex Amateur Radio Society operated with the Canvey Sea Scouts.

2014 was the 57th Jamboree on the Air, otherwise known as JOTA. It is an annual event in which Scouts and Guides all over the world use amateur radio to contact other groups and interested amateurs. Each year, with the help of individual radio amateurs

and clubs, about half a million Scouts and Guides get together on the air.

Since 1958, when the first JOTA was held, stations have used SSB, CW, digital modes and television to make their contacts.

GB2CIS. South Essex

Amateur Radio Society operated GB2CIS for the Canvey Sea Scouts at Canvey Heights, Canvey Island. This year was very busy with a least 35 Scouts, Beavers and Cubs attending. During the day they had quite a lot of pile ups with the many stations that wished to work them using their full size G5RV and a 5/8 over 5/8 collinear for 2m at 30ft. There was also a small display of Morse keys for the Scouts to see and practice Morse code. Vic's bacon rolls went down well again, well done Vic! The club had



GB2SHG. 2nd Herrington Scouts operated under the supervision of Wearside Electronics ARS.



GB1CUB. Bromsgrove & DARC's shack hosted Bromsgrove District Scouts.

excellent feedback from the Scout leaders saying that they appreciate the work that they put into this fantastic event and hopefully they will do it all again next year!

The club has operated this JOTA station on and off for the last 25 years now and it is still one of our favourite events of the year.

GB2SHG. Members of 2nd Herrington

Scouts operated GB2SHG for JOTA at their headquarters with the station run by Wearside Electronics ARS. The photo shows the Scouts operating under the supervision of Barry, GOSCI. From front to back are Matthew Walters aged 12, Matthew Cape aged 12, Issy Walters aged 10, Barry, GOSCI with Diana Walters (parent) who sent a greeting message to other amateurs. A great day was had by all with plenty of contacts into G and aboard. The Scouts thanked the club for putting the special event station on.



GB1CUB. Bromsgrove & District ARC's shack hosted Scouting's JOTA/JOTI weekend when the club entertained Bromsgrove District Scouts. Over the course of the two days, 60 Beavers, Cubs and Scouts achieved their Communication badges. Activities included Morse code, sending messages via text, e-mails and communicating on the radio plus other activities required to gain the award. A competition was held to design next year's QSL card for the event. We would like to thank the amateurs from the UK and around the world who took time out to speak to them as part of their badge work. It was such a great success it is in the diary and booked for next year.

LY1SCOUT. Lithuanian Scouts participated in JOTA for the first time. A number of young Scouts gathered in the Vilnius University ARC to participate in various JOTA activities. The event was also strongly supported by the Lithuanian amateur radio society (LRMD). After an introductory lecture on amateur radio by Simon, LY2EN, activities were divided into three groups. The first group went on air and more than 20 QSOs were completed with Scout stations worldwide. Another group was



LY1SCOUT. Lithuanian Scouts participated in JOTA for the first time.

introduced to ARDF or fox hunting. Despite the cold weather and equipment being very vintage, thanks to refurbishment done by Karolis, LY3KM and Saulius, LY1VP, the young Scouts had a lot of fun. Later, there were quizzes and games that required the youngsters to remember geography and amateur radio subjects like the phonetic alphabet and Morse code.

MX0GBB. Brigg & District ARC were invited,

at relatively short notice, to operate a JOTA station with the 4th Group Ashby Scouts from Scunthorpe. Neither party had experience of participating in this annual event so preliminary discussions were directed towards an agenda that was hoped would be both interesting to the Scouts and help them achieve accreditation towards their Communications badge. Heather Parsons at the RSGB was helpful in arranging for support literature and goodies for use on the day.

Operation was with the club call sign MX0GBB for a few hours on Sunday from the Scouts' refurbished hut in the woods about 3 miles east of Scunthorpe. Their excellent refreshment hospitality was much appreciated! Club and members' equipment included an IC-7200 transceiver plus a telescopic 30ft GRP mast supporting a rotatable dipole antenna with capacity hat loading covering the 6 to 40m bands. The antenna was designed and built by Phil, MOPXS. Despite being surrounded by 80ft plus mature trees, many HF contacts were made and the Scouts were enthralled to exchange greetings and log contacts with other Scouts throughout the UK and Europe under the direct supervision of club members. The Scouts could refer to a 'topics for conversation' crib sheet we had prepared in case of mic fright, but they soon overcame any shyness and jostled to take a turn! RSGB 'I've been on the radio' stickers were soon being proudly displayed by Scouts.

Hank, MOPEM patiently ran Morse familiarisation with sending and receiving sessions. An orienteering exercise with PMR handheld radios was also organised by club members and Scout leaders. This combined compass reading skills with the radios that were used to check in and obtain instructions

The biggest changes from last year were in the Scouts' organisation of the various activities, which took place in various separate rooms and reduced the noise level near the station dramatically; and a rather smaller number of participants that made the on-air contacts far easier to manage.

The station was kept simple: an Elecraft K3, the club's home-brewed fan dipole for the 10

to 80m bands, computerised logging and a panadaptor under

to waypoints. An HF receiver was enthusiastically tuned across the full spectrum to fill individual Scouts' logsheets.

A couple of Scouts were delighted to demonstrate simple Morse oscillators with flashing LEDs and buzzers that they built on the day. Many questions were answered and it was good to see so much interest and enthusiasm. We judged QSL card designs that the Scouts had prepared prior to the event and a small prize was awarded to the winner.

It was a rewarding first venture into JOTA that helped young people have some hands-on amateur radio experience.

GB2GCS. This year's JOTA was a very good one for the Grimsby and Cleethorpes Scout Active Support Radio Team. The event had lots of things going on for the Scouts and Guides such as sign language, emergency telephones, Morse, light waves and something different this year, slow scan and fast scan TV amongst the other things we put on for the weekend.

GB6BBS. After the success of Barnet Scouts JOTA activities last year, albeit with a few teething problems, the Scouts asked Southgate ARC if they could help do it again from their campsite near Mill Hill in north west London. For a location 150m from the overground part of the Northern underground line, adjacent to a council depot and recycling yard and in the middle of north London, the site is very quiet; the noise level from a vertical aerial was less than S3 on all the bands sampled. The fact that there are no houses for nearly a mile to the east and west, nor for two hundred yards to the north and south does rather help!

The station was kept simple: an Elecraft K3, the club's home-brewed fan dipole for the 10

to 80m bands, computerised logging and a panadaptor under



GB6BBS. Southgate ARC worked with Barnet Scouts for JOTA.

the control of a separate PC. The PCs were networked together and, apart from the occasional crash of the logging software, it worked very well. The panadaptor made spotting and picking out stations so much easier.

They contacted 23 stations, of which 11 were Scout stations and two of these were abroad. The highlight for the Scouts was the contact with GB0SBN: Kelvedon Hatch Secret Nuclear Bunker; for the operators it was GB2DHH: DeHavilland Aircraft Museum, operating from the nose of a DH Comet. As ever, many thanks to everyone contacted to for their patience with the Scouts, Cubs, Brownies and Beavers, and especially for humouring the operators. Operators were: Graeme, G8DVJ, Mike, MOASA, Keith, G8RPA, John, G8EWG, John, GOESF, Donald, G4DFB and Martin, G4GRS.

GB2GP. Scouts from all over the world took part in JOTA including the UK's home of Scouting at Gilwell Park. Volunteers set up a station and over 150 Scouts booked tickets to take part. As well as passing messages over the air, Scouts took part in activities including setting up an emergency radio station, electronic kit building, Arduino programming and amateur TV. The team would particularly like to thank everyone who took time to speak to our visitors on the air. Several Scouts went



GB6BBS. (left to right) Adrian, G1BRB RSGB Deputy Regional Manager, Andrew, GOMINI manager for the Grimsby and Cleethorpes Scout Active Support Radio Team and Tom, G4ZRY.