

A Very Young Amateur Interviews A Very “Well Seasoned” Amateur



**Star Covington,
VA6SCC,**

This is Star Covington, VA6SCC, of Edmonton, Alberta and I'm an 11 year old new ham.

On April 1, 2023, I got to interview a man who may be the World's Oldest Living Ham!

And this is no April Fools joke! Gordon Skutle, VE6DG, who is 103 years old, has been a licensed ham for 85 years!

Gordon has been around broadcast and ham radio for most of his life and certainly longer than most of us have been alive.

We were welcomed into Gordon's Edmonton home by three generations of Skutles: Gordon, his daughter, and his granddaughter Michelle Skutle, VA6MSH. Also there were my younger brother, my dad Kirby Covington, VE6MFX, Jim Camp, VA6JC and Paul Tyschuk, VE6UFO, from the Quarter Century Amateur Radio Club (QCARC) – <http://www.qcarc.net>.

While this interview was very informal, it was a lot of fun to sit around the dining room table and listen to his stories of years gone by. He told us stories of the 1930s as a young child, which he called “the hungry thirties”, and what it was like searching for radio parts after the Second World War in his quest to build homemade radios.

Upon the dining table were many framed certificates and awards from Gordon's long life in radio. He had a stack of QSL cards from every corner of the globe dating back to the 1940s. What a time to be alive!

I asked Gordon what started him in radio and he related to me a story of him at a young age building a crystal radio set with the parts obtained through the Eaton's catalogue. What a great way to start the hobby!

I haven't talked very far on my radio, but Gordon has talked all the way to Israel! I inquired about what his first radio was, and he said it was an Emerson radio. Do they even make those anymore? When asked what his favourite part about Amateur Radio was, he immediately mentioned Morse Code! He sure enjoyed his CW. Displayed on the table was a shiny Vibroplex Bug I could tell was Gordon's favourite.



Gordon Skutle, VE6DG and Star Covington, VA6SCC of the QCARC.

The best radio he ever owned was a Hammarlund, that he made better by putting parts of another radio in it. It seems Gordon was very good at making hybrid, homebrew radios. He even made a chassis for a radio out of an old car door. He had no power tools so he had to make the hole for the tube socket with a cold chisel and round it with a file. Talk about ingenuity!

We had a really good time together and I'm very glad I could participate in it! Meeting Gordon was inspiring and motivational for me. I wish to sincerely thank the Skutle family for this amazing experience. As a new ham, it means a lot to me.

– 73! Star Covington, VA6SCC

The Quarter Century Amateur Radio Club is honoured to have Star and Gordon as members. Star did a great job conducting the interview and putting her article together. Star holds the Basic with Honours qualification.

Gordon has been a Radio Amateur for 85 years, likely the longest licensed Amateur worldwide, an accomplishment that most of us will never be able to achieve. Star and Gordon both received awards from the QCARC in recognition of these achievements.

An interesting bio of Gordon's long career in broadcast radio can be found at <https://edmontonbroadcasters.com/bios/skutle-gordon/>

Also check out Gordon's CJCA scrapbook at <http://infoese.ca/skutle.html>. More pictures from the interview are on the Quarter Century Amateur Radio Club Facebook page.

73, Paul Tyschuk VE6UFO – QCARC Secretary Treasurer