

Art Goldman Interview, January 2016

J: June

A: Art

1:30

J: Hello.

A: Hi.

J: Is this Art Goldman?

A: Can you hear me alright?

J: I sure can, can you hear me ok?

A: Very well.

J: Oh good, great. It's nice to meet you over the phone. My name is June.

A: Nice meeting you.

J: May I call you Art or do you go by Arthur?

A: Art.

J: Art, very good. Thank you in advance very much for making time in your day to speak with us. I want to go over a couple of things before we get started if that's ok.

A: Sure, go to it.

J: Ok, great, so the first thing is that we are recording this conversation. They probably mentioned that to you. And the reason for that is so that I don't have to take notes and make mistakes. We will be publishing the transcript so along the way I want to make sure you know that if you should happen to say something that is too personal to make public then you can just say right then and there, "Hey, cancel that part from the transcript" and we can go ahead and do that, ok?

A: I prefer that. That's wonderful.

J: Perfect, great and just by way of background, we do these interviews with residents of Watermark communities all over the country and the purpose for doing them is so that we can help folks out there who have not made their moves yet or may just be beginning to think about making a move to a retirement community, just to kind of show them how that process went for different people that we interview. You can say anything that is on your mind. I'm going to ask you some questions but if there is anything you want to add along the way just chime in, ok?

A: Right.

J: Alright, very good. Ok so just to start, when did you first move to The Watermark at Logan Square?

A: September 1, 2015.

J: Ok, alright.

A: I've only been here a total of approximately four months.

J: Oh, ok, good. And where were you living just before you moved in?

A: I forgot the address already.

J: It's ok. I don't need to know the exact address I just was trying to get an idea, were you living in Philadelphia or?

A: I lived for 15 years at the Rittenhouse Claridge.

J: Ok.

A: And that was about where the bank is you know, the PNC Bank just down a few feet.

J: I see and I see that you were actually born in Atlantic City and went to West Philadelphia High School. Did you grow up on the shore or did you grow up in the city?

A: Mother was on vacation and I spoiled it for her.

J: That's a great story I'm sure in your family. Ok, so you're a Philly native then.

A: Very, definitely.

J: Ok, good.

A: I like Philadelphia very much.

J: And then, I'm not from there so forgive my ignorance, but is Rittenhouse Claridge, is that an apartment building?

A: Yes it is. It's a very nice apartment right across from Rittenhouse Square. Just across the street and I had an apartment facing Rittenhouse Square which is a lovely area. I was very happy there.

J: Yes, I've heard of that area. It sounds beautiful. Ok, so take me back to when you were living there at Rittenhouse Square and you first started thinking, "Hmm, maybe it is time for me to make a transition to a different place." What was going through your mind?

A: I had some medical history which I'd rather retain. It wasn't because I didn't like it there. I was very very happy and I would have stayed there indefinitely if there is such a thing as indefinite in life. But I began having falls and my kids were concerned because they're afraid that at Rittenhouse Claridge, although it is very good apartment house, it didn't have medical protection and they were concerned I would fall in my apartment, they wouldn't know about it. So we tossed this around. I really didn't want to move and I felt the rationale for having me move, protection against falls and things like that was a logical approach.

J: Great, so your kids were involved in the conversation and how many children do you have?

A: I only have two.

J: Ok, do they live in Philly also?

A: One lives in Philly and one lives in Yardley, Pennsylvania which is about 20 to 30 miles north of Philadelphia.

J: Ok.

A: It's right across from Trenton.

J: Ok and once you decided that maybe you'd like to take a look, did they help you look around or how did that process work?

A: They did the basic research and I didn't do much looking. Although I have seen many retirement homes and homes for people that have disabilities, so I had some knowledge of them.

J: And how did you together come to the conclusion that you would move to The Watermark?

A: I didn't want to go to the suburbs. I wanted to stay in Philadelphia and that was the number one condition. And then I had heard about the Watermark and I heard some good things via its reputation. And so I went to see it and I thought about it and since I wasn't acutely ill I wanted to time it that I would get part of my summer in Rittenhouse Claridge and then move over to the Watermark. Which happen to be September 1st or

2nd.

J: Ok so you didn't want to be in the suburbs, you liked the city and now that you've moved in, it's in a little bit different part of the city but how are you enjoying it?

A: It took me time to regulate, it's a big place and to get to know people, what its functions are and where they are geographically in the building. It improves over a period of time.

J: So you're getting accustomed to being in a large building and what kinds of activities do you participate in there?

A: Well, I go to the gym, gym activities, I go to the opera, I go to classes, any special trips I take out. I'm fairly active.

J: It sounds like you are very active. Now, you are a physician is that right?

A: That's correct, not practicing nor licensed. Since I was not practicing I had to give up my license.

J: Ok but how many years did you practice in Philadelphia?

A: I started in 1948.

J: Wow. That's great. So you've got a medical background and you came there so that you'd have more medical protection as you said. Have you had occasion to have to use that or is it just a comfort for you?

A: Comfort level particularly for my children, they don't have to worry, "Where is father at this moment? Is he on the floor?" Because I had four falls in the past four or five years. I did not injure myself in the falls, they were gentle falls.

J: Well, that's lucky, right?

A: That was fortunate and I went through a period where my balance wasn't too good. I have a feeling at this point in time and I can't be absolutely sure that I'm correct about what I'm saying but I haven't had a fall here and I feel much better oriented space wise and less prone to feel that I have an imbalance.

J: Good. Did you tell me that you are participating in the exercise classes there? Maybe that is helping.

A: I'm going to the gym primarily and I did go to the exercise classes at one point in time. For the past month or so I had a severe virus, I did not have to see a physician for it but I didn't feel too well, I was coughing heavily so it cut my activity down. And just simply cutting my activity down in time I felt considerably better. I'm over whatever it was at that time.

J: So you got your energy back. That's great.

A: I feel good now.

J: Good. So let me ask you this, would you have any advice that you might be able to offer other folks that may be in your situation where they're looking to make a move?

A: I can't say. What I would say is get one that's a very efficient apartment with a nice physical appearance, which this does have. Go to one which has good food. Go to one which has a lot of activities to keep your interests alive and at the level you are interested in. I think that's a very good thing. And I basically have those things now.

J: Well good. You mentioned you take some of the classes. Those are the Watermark University classes I take it? Which ones have you been taking?

A: So many I can't tell you. I usually go to one class or so a day and I go to see movies as well, entertainment, trips. And I am a music lover so I go to the opera. I go to the ballet, less so the orchestra but when I was at Rittenhouse Claridge I went to the Curtis

Institute of Music almost once or twice a week and it was only a block and a half away from my apartment. It's much further at this point in time but not too bad.

J: So when you go to the opera or the ballet do you just hop on the loop there, they take you right there and drop you off?

A: They do, they tell you when the bus is leaving, what day, what time and I have to sign up for it beforehand.

J: That sounds pretty convenient.

A: Yeah, it's good because the streets are not as good for walking here as they were in my other place, nor am I as good at walking.

J: Yeah.

A: But I'm doing fairly good.

J: Good for you and I see here on the little sheet they gave me that you've done quite a bit of traveling in your life.

A: Yes, I traveled extensively with my wife. I was a runner and did hiking so that took me to different places as well.

J: So you traveled around and did different running events.

A: Yeah, I used to go running or run just for the fun of it. And I did five half-marathons.

J: Good for you.

A: My 50th year I started that.

J: That's great, that's inspiring.

A: I enjoyed running. My kids all do.

J: Your kids all run also?

A: Yes.

J: You must have been a great role model for them.

A: I don't know about that, (inaudible) ability to follow through in that direction.

J: Let me ask you this because it's so recent now that you've just had that enormous snowstorm. How was that? Did you go outside or did you just hunker down and stay in?

A: Well, because a person that has balance instability you don't want to go out too much on the outside anyhow and with the snow and the ice on the street I figured this was not a good time to chance it. I thought I could get away with it that's not (inaudible) you have to do better than that.

J: Well, were you at least able to watch the snowfall from your window?

A: Yeah, no problem.

J: And how many feet did you guys get?

A: Looked to me like only two or three feet but I think we had much more than it was reported in the paper.

J: Really?

A: Where are you stationed?

J: I'm in Arizona.

A: Oh, we used to in the winter go to Tucson.

J: Well, that's where I live.

A: It's a wonderful area.

J: Yeah, it sure is.

A: I enjoyed it thoroughly. We climbed mountains there and we'd go on other trips there. It's a beautiful area.

J: Well, I'm looking at the mountains right now. It's a beautiful day here.

A: (Inaudible) a picture.

J: Well, that's nice. Well, I can't think of any other questions that I forgot to ask but perhaps you have something that you would like to share with folks out there, something they may not know about what it's like to live in a retirement community. Some people kind of have a wrong impression of what they're like.

A: Well, it's like an apartment here. The only thing an apartment doesn't have are some checking, because people walk around and see if you're having any problems or you're not responding, going to your meals or whatever it may be. But there is a loose checking on you to make sure you are accountable, you're not lying on the floor or you're not responding because I always feel that I'm fairly safe in that regard.

J: Good and did you know anyone when you moved in first of all, or have you met some nice friends since you moved in?

A: I do have some friends, yes.

J: But you didn't know anybody when you moved in?

A: No, I did not.

J: Ok, I think we're going in and out here a little bit.

A: Am I not talking loud enough?

J: I hear you fine right now.

A: Ok, I'll try to keep it up higher.

J: Ok, so the fact that you didn't know anybody, was that a little intimidating or were you made to feel welcome?

A: They have a program where people invite you to meals with a group. It's welcome but it's so large you don't cover much territory in that regard.

J: Yeah, well you're still fairly new there. It does take some time to make those bonds.

A: I'm not saying anything unfavorable in this regard, it's just that we have a large population here.

J: Right.

A: And if you want to come here you'll notice that there is a high prominence of women residents.

J: Yes, so you've got a lot more women than men, right?

A: Right and I would like a little more male companionship. Not that I don't like women but some people have said there is a ratio of eight women to every. I don't know if that's correct. That's hearsay so don't take that as gospel.

J: I couldn't really hear what you said about the ratio.

A: Eight to one. I don't know if it's true or not.

J: Oh, well that may be a real selling point for some men! Ok, well can you think of anything else you'd like to share?

A: Ask me a few questions that I may not have covered.

J: Well, let's see, what about the neighborhood you're in? Have you been able to explore that a little bit, any of the restaurants or anything?

A: They have decent restaurants and the neighborhood is interesting. It's not as pretty as Rittenhouse Claridge but it is a nice neighborhood.

J: Yeah and does your apartment have any kind of view to speak of?

A: It's not a bad view. It's just a general view of the city and the river. It's pleasant.

J: Good, well I can picture it, especially covered in a blanket of snow.

A: You get your snow occasionally.

J: Occasionally there is some on the mountain tops.

A: But you're in a lovely city.

J: Thank you and so do you. I love Philadelphia.

A: It's very nice place. This has been my anchor and my lifestyle. I like Philadelphia. I like the surroundings, I like the arts. We have some very good things here. It's a very nice city.

J: It really is, so much culture, so much history and the people are nice.

A: I agree with all that.

J: Yeah, alright Art. Well, I can't think of anything else to ask you and I just want to thank you again for making time out of your day to speak with us.

A: I'm glad to do it and when you have that group together I will be glad to meet them. I will get the specific time in about a month I understand.

J: Right, right and so people may come and ask you questions and you know you can just talk to them in person and tell them what you think.

A: Right and did I cover it alright for what you wanted?

J: Absolutely, you covered it great and it was fun talking with you and if we have any more questions we'll let you know, ok?

A: Thanks very much and have a good what remains of the winter.

J: Thank you very much, you too. Take care Art.

A: You take care. Good speaking to you.

J: Thank you, bye-bye

A: Bye.