

# 100 Years Young

## A Spectrum centenarian shares his secrets to health, happiness and longevity

By Robert Landau, Vice President of Fun

BELIEVE IT OR NOT, CENTENARIANS are one of the fastest growing age groups in the United States. People today are more health conscious, more aware of their environment, and more interested in taking care of their minds and bodies in a way that will truly help them in the long run.

Spectrum Retirement Communities is proud to have a number of centenarians as residents at many of our communities. So, we decided to meet some of these amazing people to find out what makes them tick. What have these centenarians' lives been like and how do they feel at this milestone in their journey? Read on...You just might be surprised at what you find out.

We started with a wonderful gentleman named Mac MacMillan, who is currently living at Rigden Farm independent living community in Ft. Collins, Colorado. Mac was waiting for us at the concierge desk when we walked in. He looked much younger, with one of the most wonderful, bright and cheery smiles we've seen in a long time. His smile lit up the entire lobby...and we weren't the only ones who noticed.

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**SPECTRUM:** Mac, first of all, you look wonderful! If this is what 100 years of age looks like, many of us have a lot to look forward to. What do you attribute this to?

**MAC:** *I guess it has a lot to do with the way I've lived. Also genes, I guess. My Mom lived to be 95 years of age. I don't drink, just socially on occasion, but I really watch that. I've also never smoked. I've worked around smoke, and it's taken its toll on me, but I've never smoked myself.*

**SPECTRUM:** How are you feeling? Are you happy?

**MAC:** *Am I happy at this point in my life? You bet I am! I've had a good life and I'm continuing to have a good life. One goal of mine for many years has been to be secure—financially secure.*

*Did you know that during the Depression, I couldn't even afford five cents for a Coke? Even during those hard times, I was positive and I believed that sooner or later things would change. I have security now and it means the world to me.*

**SPECTRUM:** Tell us a little of your life's story as we're sure many people would be very interested to hear.

**MAC:** *I'm from a small town called West, Texas. I grew up with five sisters and two brothers. They're all gone now and there's only me left. Way back when, I was making \$10 a week in a hardware store in my home town. I wanted more though and soon found myself doing a bookkeeping job in Wharton, Texas for three years.*



▲ MAC MACMILLAN WORKING IN THE GARDEN AT RIGDEN FARM.

Soon enough, I met a manager of an Employment Services office. He gave me a clerical test and I got notice to come to Houston to join the U.S. Employment Service. I worked for the government for years and served in the military for more. All of that helped give me the security I'm enjoying now.

**SPECTRUM:** Ever been married?

**MAC:** Oh yes, you bet! I know you won't believe this, but back in the day I decided to go to a fortune teller. I really wasn't expecting much to come out of it, but I was intrigued and wanted to know anything that she could tell me. She read playing cards and kept telling me that a blonde woman was soon going to come into my life. She kept saying this

during the entire reading. Sure enough, two weeks later, a blonde woman did come into my life and I married her after we started dating. She was a Western Union Office Manager and Teletype Operator. We were married for 60 wonderful years.

*“The longer I live, the more beautiful life becomes.”*

—FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT

**SPECTRUM:** Sixty years! Congratulations! How did you keep it fresh?

**MAC:** We never had a spat for 60 years. We got along, it was our nature to be that way. If we had a disagreement about anything, we just talked about it and it would be OK.

**SPECTRUM:** Any advice for married folks today?

**MAC:** Cooperate and get along with each other. Don't have many disagreements.

## CENTENARIAN SECRETS

What is it that helps centenarians live so long, and so strong? Science is only beginning to find the answers to that question. But we do know that many centenarians have a number of things in common, such as:

- A true love for life and all of its ups and downs
- A religious/spiritual belief
- Social contact with others
- A simple and positive outlook on things, as opposed to an emotionally extravagant outlook
- Emotional fortitude, staying in the present moment and not worrying about tomorrow
- A strong ability to deal with stressful situations
- Good genes
- Low blood pressure
- Self-sufficiency
- Refraining from drinking and smoking
- Many play musical instruments
- The ability to laugh, and find humor in many things
- Adhering to a healthy anti-inflammatory diet
- Constant daily activities that center around stimulating the brain and the senses

**SPECTRUM:** What would your advice be for those who want to live a long and healthy life?

**MAC:** *Take care of yourself, take care of your health. Don't neglect it. Watch what you think. Exercise, too. My wife and I walked two miles every day for over a year back in the 1960s. I lost over 40 pounds and I've never gained it back, not a pound.*

**SPECTRUM:** How do you like living at Rigden Farm?

**MAC:** *I love my apartment on the third floor. I love to cook, too. I used to cook and my wife would clean up. Now, I go to a number of activities here every day. There are so many I often don't know what to pick first. I love to take the Spanish classes here. I had it in college and now it's all coming back to me. It's a pretty language.*

**SPECTRUM:** How is life different now than when you were growing up?

**MAC:** *Even though life is more complicated now, it's better than it was back then. Even with all the computers and inventions, it's much better now. I think people are more happy than they used to be. More things to do and more to be thankful now for, each and every day. This is a wonderful world, so much to enjoy and to be thankful for and appreciate... don't you think?*

And with that, the man with the happy spirit and beautiful smile, looking more like a spry 85-year-old, waved, smiled from his heart, and walked away to continue his day.

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*Look for more profiles of centenarian residents in upcoming issues of Spectrum.*