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## WATCH AND ROLL

Philadelphia's Govberg Jewelers continues to make its mark on the industry

by Natasha Wolff | November 25, 2014 9:45 am



The Govberg Jewelers[1] legacy began in 1922 when young watchmaker and diamond expert Albert Govberg opened a family-run specialty store along Philadelphia's historic Jewelers Row. Ninety years later, Govberg Jewelers continues to offer a unique selection of watches and jewelry under the leadership of Albert's grandson Danny Govberg, who works alongside his own sons, Brian and Marc. The jeweler operates three locations, two in the heart of Philadelphia and the third in the neighboring town of Ardmore. While long recognized as a watchprovider, Govberg Jewelers has greatly expanded its jewelry offerings in recent months with styles by Roberto Coin and Charriol on offer as well as many diamond designs from Govberg's Signature Collection.

We spoke with Danny Govberg about how, 30 years after taking over the business, time really does fly.

### **What does it mean to you to be a third-generation jeweler?**

To be a third-generation jeweler is a challenge. The two generations ahead of you created something; a foundation, a culture, a precedent for success. By the time you reach generation three, they are pretty set in their ways, and you need to be the force to introduce changes in company philosophy in order to thrive. Now that my sons are in the business, it is back to square one. We constantly evaluate and reinvent our strategy and company practices—in essence, we operate as a start-up.



Govberg family

**What was the best advice you ever received from your grandfather, Albert Govberg?**

Work hard. There is no quick fix and no substitute. You must work hard.

**What sets Govberg apart? What is the secret to your success?**

Passion and focus. Over the last 30 years, we have developed an incredibly strong focus on a specialized and narrow range of products and services, primarily within the watch category. Rather than being distracted by other interests, company energy and resources went into establishing excellence within a niche category.

**What mark are you and your sons leaving on the company?**

My father and grandfather ran Govberg Jewelers as a traditional, local family jeweler. Our business today operates within a global context, particularly alongside the growth of our pre-owned watch initiatives and our watch repair business. A couple years ago, we recognized a gap in the number of qualified watchmakers across the country who are able to address service and repair needs for the nation's Swiss watch owners. So we built a web-based repair platform to efficiently deliver our specialized services to a far-reaching audience. We operate a dedicated repair facility, Govberg Repair[2], where 12 certified watchmakers address everything from battery replacements to the complete overhaul of complicated mechanical movements.

**You are at the forefront of selling watches and jewelry online. What made you decide to enter the online marketplace?**

Our online model is pretty unique and sophisticated and it's all about the pre-owned watch segment, a category that's exploding right now. In fact, we have an entire pre-owned watch department with talented computer developers and engineers who have enabled us to reach the tech-savvy luxury watch consumer across multiple platforms. Today's consumer expects the flexibility that the digital space affords—transactions happen in front of a computer late at night, on an iPad, or even a smartphone at a red light. At any given time, our website displays more than 200 unique pre-owned models for sale, and we include extensive pictures and information for the current condition of each piece. To support our active buying business, we have a watch selling portal on our website[3], and a Buy My Watch app to walk clients through the process of selling pre-owned pieces to us.



Inside a Govberg store

**Are people now comfortable spending thousands on a watch online?**

A percentage of our business does happen remotely, but the store environment is an important part of that equation.

**What are your favorite timepieces to own right now?**

Patek Philippe Nautilus Travel Time Chronograph. Patek Philippe expanded its collection of complicated Nautilus models by endowing its chronograph with a travel time function to display two time zones at a single glance.

Rolex GMT-Master II. The distinctive black and blue rotating bezel of Rolex's GMT-Master II is fashioned with Cerachrom, an extremely hard ceramic material that boasts anti-corrosion properties and will maintain its vibrant colors over time.

Audemars Piguet Royal Oak Chronograph. The Royal Oak captures form and function, horological history and enduring style, while appealing to the first time watch buyer and the watch purist alike.

Breitling Navitimer. Favored by pilots and avid aviators, the Navitimer 01 46mm is a recent extension of the legendary Navitimer collection, featuring the requisite notched rotating bezel, slide rule and three chronograph registers across a dial measuring 4 more millimeters than its predecessor.

Vacheron Constantin Historiques American 1921. Introduced as a reinterpretation of one of Vacheron Constantin's historical timepieces, this uniquely proportioned timepiece offers an Art Deco aesthetic, yet is distinctly modern and sophisticated.

Hublot Big Bang Gold Ceramic. This model is the ideal embodiment of Hublot's guiding principle of Fusion, balancing modern proportions and materials.

Written by Natasha Wolff[4]

**Endnotes:**

1. Govberg Jewelers: <http://www.govbergwatches.com/>
2. Govberg Repair: <http://www.govbergwatchrepair.com/>
3. website: <http://www.govbergwatches.com/>
4. Natasha Wolff: <http://dujour.com/contributors/natasha-wolff/>

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