

Days of our Lives' Suzanne Rogers, a class act

Written by Mark Edward Willows
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Gem, Treasure, and Legend, are the words that come to mind when you hear the name Suzanne Rogers (Maggie Horton) of Days of our Lives.

Rogers has been playing the character for four decades. She is celebrating her 40th anniversary, a milestone and a half with the show.

"It's hard to believe! Forty years working with many different people over time, some of which have passed. I have to tell you, it's really monumental." Rogers said. And then...

"It is such a joy to go to work. I love the work. It's an actor's dream. New things to think of and new things to do, along with new scripts."

Rogers attributes her success to her bosses and the fans, saying that they are the people who decide who stays.

In Hollywood, where fame can be fleeting and a wrong road can easily be taken, Rogers has always maintained the straight and narrow with grace and dignity.

"I try to never disappoint. I keep up a personal healthy life, and I'm very religious," Rogers said. "I don't drink. I don't smoke, or do drugs. I truly believe maintaining this lifestyle is my success, and I believe it shows."

Rogers enjoys giving advice to the younger actors on the show telling them that success can be achieved, and you don't need to take the wrong road to do so.

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Rogers career began as a Rockette at Radio City Music Hall. She also appeared in TV commercials like Pepsi and Noxzema and did musicals, working with the greats like Katherine Hepburn and Leslie Uggams.

She came out to Los Angeles with the Follies at the Shubert Theatre and decided to try her luck in acting and see where it goes. But while she was doing the audition circuit, she held a job at Bullock's on Wilshire, only allowing herself to go on calls on certain days of the week.

A casting director for CBS saw her work and her agent sent her on an audition for Young and Restless, which she didn't get, believing they wanted a blond. But it was a good thing because now there was a film of her.

"Yes! Very important. You needed a film of your work of which I did not have, and auditioning for Young and Restless it gave me one," Rogers explains. "I then tested for Days, and the tape went to Betty Corday (co-creator) and it clicked. I met John Clarke (original Mickey Horton), did a scene and here I am. I remember winning the role on Friday the 13th. I was told to come pick up the crutches."

The crutches Rogers refers to is from her storyline of being in an accident and not being able to walk. She also recalls that to be her favorite storyline, called "The Red Shoes."

Maggie was hurt in an accident and Mickey got her red shoes in a box as an incentive to get going and dance after surgeries to help repair the injury.

"I mean they were beautiful! And I did dance. This story was so lovely and romantic. I cherish it." Rogers reminisces.

Rogers has seen the show change over the years like the world. She said that years back the viewer was more invested into what goes on in people's lives, and today it's more like get it over with. However, she does like the demographics of all ages in the characters saying, "I believe we need that. Husbands, wives, kids, grand kids, parents, it makes it logical and very real."

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Rogers explained that today Days of our Lives is shot differently. Years ago a show a day was done, and today it is shot in segments, which can mean doing more shows a week, but yet it all works out. And she jokingly said that today it is like every boss has a boss and the business is more fickle. And auditioning is scary, you never know what they want, but stressed that experience is important.

Rogers looks forward to her scripts and what Maggie will be up to. In real life she has dyslexia making it harder to read the script. "Yes I do! But I work hard at it at home, and on set I grab the person I'm with in a scene and go over it and then get it done."

Rogers is grateful to still be in an industry and a show that she loves and respects. "When I came on Days. I wanted a job. I wanted stability, and not move on. I wanted to stay here," she said. "I mean it's fine for the young people to spread. Go for it! But when I took this job, I said, I want to be around for a while."

Rogers pointed out that she never looked back with any regrets. Her proud moment was in 1979 when she won an Emmy and is still fond of that moment.

"You know, I have been blessed. I've been around for a long time. I've battled an illness in life, and here I am still doing something I'm proud of and to be able to say that I saw the light at the end of the tunnel."

Rogers attributes her stunning good looks to good genes, saying that her father was handsome, but both parents were nice looking. She lives with her mom and takes care of her.

"I love my mom. She is up in years, but we still get back to North Carolina every holiday to visit my sister, but I love doing local stuff with mom. Mom is not much of a flyer." (laughing)

Soapdom wants to know if you have any message to your long time fans? "Oh Yes! The late great Francis Reid (Alice) helped me a lot, and a big thanks to all of you for being there through

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thick and thin. Story or no story, and for that I'm grateful."

Everyone at Soapdom congratulates Suzanne Rogers on her 40th anniversary with Days of our Lives.