

Shooting Stars

by MARY ANN COOPER

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vision and I was a lucky recipient of a lot of the comic writing."

Frances Heflin, who has portrayed Mona Kane, mother to femme fatale Erica Kane, for the entire run of the show, reflected, "I think 'All My Children' is different from other shows because it's more diverse, more socially conscious. It's never been afraid to try new things. It appeals to emotions, to intellect and to the humor people have. These past 20 years have been wonderful for me. I wish everyone could be on for 20 more years."

The inimitable Ruth Warrick recalled that when she joined the cast as Phoebe Tyler two decades ago people put her down: "How could 'Mrs. Citizen Kane' lower herself to do soaps?" But I really have been vindicated," she continued. "Soaps are now the dominant form of show business and Phoebe is world-famous. Personally, I feel 'All My Children' has continued to be successful because we are about real life and real people."

Mary Fickett, who received the first Emmy ever awarded a daytime actress, for her portrayal of Nurse Ruth Martin, said, "What makes 'All My Children' so different is that Agnes Nixon has taken upon herself to meet the challenges of very controversial subjects - Down Syndrome, abortions, rape. She tackled these problems long before they were done in prime time, and that's what stands out about the program." Reflecting on her 20 years, "Time passes much too quickly," she said, laughingly.

Having co-starred as Dr. Joe Martin, patriarch of one of the show's core families, for two decades, actor Ray MacDonnell commented, "Part of what makes 'All My Children' so enduring is (that) people look upon us a second family."

"All My Children's" award-winning veteran casting director Joan D'Incecco had these nostalgic thoughts, "Being part of the beginning has allowed me to experience the growth of the show in every way. 'All My Children' became my second family, and it grew as my own children grew ... a Dickens novel set in contemporary America. I can still see Susan Lucci in her red pantsuit on the day I met her. I guess she epitomizes the growth and appeal of the show."

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