

CAN WE PULL YOU FOR A CHAT?

THE MY MUM, YOUR DAD STARS OPEN UP ABOUT FINDING LOVE

ROGER AND JANEY

The butterflies are back and in full swing after *My Mum, Your Dad* recently landed for a brand-new series. Last year, Roger Hawes, 59, and Janey Smith, 48 – nominated for the show by Roger's daughter Jess, 30, and Janey's son William, 21 – quickly became the nation's sweethearts when they fell in love on the show. Over a year on,

the golden couple are still going strong, splitting their time between their homes in Derbyshire and Sussex. They spoke to *heat* about long-distance relationships, and why dating as a single parent means taking a leap...

What's your favourite memory from the show?

Roger: For me, it was

going into the privacy suite. I was on national TV, rubbing feet! I've watched it a few times, and that was when I knew that I'd been hit by Cupid's arrow. It's the abiding memory of knowing something was changing in me.

Janey: He started to get a little bit jealous.

R: The helicopter date was fantastic, too. I left Janey and ran off towards the helicopter like it was my long-lost love.

J: I was walking through this field in my wedges thinking, 'Erm, over here!'

One in six people have said they feel like there's more chance of winning the lottery than finding love – did you ever feel that way?

R: William said to Janey that they had more chance of cracking the enigma code.

J: Maybe for people

A golden girl with her silver fox



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around our age group, it's a comforting safety blanket to think, 'I'm just going to stay in and watch Netflix'. But life is for living. There's not going to be a knight in shining armour at your door at 7pm, all suited and booted to take you to dinner. You've got to put yourself out there, as daunting as that sounds.

Is dating different when you're a single parent?

J: I've been a single mum pretty much ever since I became a parent, and I think there's a lot of stigma attached to it – which isn't nice to admit. That's why dating platforms like Even, that are catered to single parents are so brilliant. As someone who's been on apps in the past, I did come across people who ghosted you when they realised you were a parent. People are allowed to have those preferences, but it was a bit upsetting.

R: I don't suppose there's anything worse than turning up to a date and somebody doesn't fit the criteria you're after. With Even, people know that

you've got to see children on certain days of the week. That's already taken into consideration.

How is the long-distance thing going?

R: It's not easy, but when you want something, you've got to be prepared to make changes. I don't mind the travel. I sit in the car and listen to the radio. **Roger, you were dubbed the 'silver fox' of your series – how does it feel to be a heartthrob?**

R: It's strange! I've always had men compliment me, but I've never really had to bat off women.

J: Have you had to bat off men?

R: I just have men saying, 'I want to look like you when I get older'. It doesn't sit easy on my shoulders, but long may it continue. I could wake up tomorrow and my hair could start falling out!

Has life changed much since the show?

J: Social media is probably the craziest thing, but we're getting the hang of it now. I still do my upcycling and singing. Roger doesn't

work any more, but he has helped me with some upcycling projects. He wants to be my roadie, too.

R: I'm going to blow my own trumpet and say I have got certain skills.

J: He wanted to have a go at some gold leafing. I said, 'Be careful, it goes everywhere'. That was three months ago, and it's still all over the floor.

Any famous faces who've said they're fans of the show?

J: So many celebs watch it. When we met Susanna Reid and Richard Madeley, Richard said, 'You two are like eggs and bacon, you just go together.'

R: Richard Arnold called me by name and asked for a selfie. That was a 'what the hell?' moment. ■

Even is a supportive dating platform for single parents that offers a space for like-minded singles to explore new relationships confidently. The app helps single parents match, date and be more than just parents

