



Siobhan Barker – St. Joseph’s Elementary Graduate of 2004

I look back on my education from St. Joseph’s Elementary, and I truly have fond memories. I was the girl who enjoyed the small things like raising and tying up the flag while the school sang O Canada, working the overhead projector with the lyrics to the hymns during mass, band concerts in the gymnasium, directing a play based on Charlotte’s Web, and swinging on the tire swings until I felt sick.

St. Joe’s was my home for eight years and I think it molded me into the person I am today. Every teacher I had was supportive of my aspirations of being a professional ballet dancer. It was crazy that I knew from such a young age that that was what I wanted to be when I grew up. Still, they allowed me to miss school when I was performing in *The Nutcracker*, when I had a ballet exam, when I was dancing in the Kiwanis Festival, and they helped me catch up on my schoolwork.

All of these events led me to a high school education where I was able to dance half of the day and study the other half of the day. If I wasn’t given the opportunity to dance like I did through my elementary years, I couldn’t have possibly managed the later years. I moved on to dance professionally with Ballet Kelowna, and then with Canada’s Royal Winnipeg Ballet. When I was just a young girl in kindergarten, I told my parents I wanted to dance with the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, and my dreams had come true!

After a few years of dancing professionally, I made the career move to Musical Theatre. I studied at the Canadian College of Performing Arts for three years, where I learned to sing, and act as well as choreographer. They call performers who sing, dance and act “triple threats.” With these newly acquired skills, I have new aspirations of performing on Broadway!

In the meantime, however, I am back in all the old familiar places – working at Charity Hall by day, teaching dance at my old ballet school by night, and planning the next phase of my life and career! I was taught at a young age to follow my dreams, and I’ve been doing just that. It’s exciting and inspiring to look out the window of Charity Hall on to the playground that I used to play in, and spot the next little ballerina in the crowd! It’s funny how my life has come in a full circle!