

# Teenage show biz vet is Hollywood bound

By JOHN STEWART  
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Thirteen-year-old Fiona McGillivray will be starring in the *Sons and Daughters* series on CBC television tomorrow (Thursday) night, but she won't be home watching herself perform.

Instead, she'll be at a dance lesson which is just another part of setting the foundation for what she hopes will be a long, long career in the entertainment business.

The Grade 8 student at Allan A. Martin Public School is already a veteran of the "biz." She's been performing professionally since she was seven years old in stage musicals, films, television shows, and commercials.

The show tomorrow night is *I Know a Secret*, based on the short story by Lucy Maud Montgomery. It was filmed two summers ago. Fiona celebrated her 12th birthday on the set.

It was filmed on location in Prince Edward Island by Atlantis Films. Fiona plays Jane Lawrence who returns to her birthplace to live with her mother. The quiet, introspective story centres on the young girl's doubts about her real identity and the insight she gains into other people and herself through her experience.

## SILLY STORY

Fiona initially thought the story was "a little silly" but changed her opinion when she understood its intentions better.

The film has already won an ACTRA award for photography and a 1983 Film Festival Blue Ribbon award for best children's entertainment program. *The Sons and Daughters* series is a six-part series of stories dealing with children based on the work of Canadian authors.

Last summer, Fiona filmed *Home from Far*, also with Atlantis, for the same series. That film, shot in Toronto, will be broadcast when the series resumes next winter.

After being so busy the last few years, Fiona is experiencing the normal lull in activity when child actors get into their teenage

years. Her work in the past had included a Red Skelton television special, a David Steinberg special, a Canadian film called *Kiss Me Better*, an episode of the *Strange But True* TV series and an Aerobar commercial which is still on television.

## DAILY PRACTICE

Last summer Fiona won the Canadian championship for highland dancing for girls 12 years and under after practising for the event for some six hours a day.

Fiona is especially interested in ballet. She studies dance with instructor Gladys Forrester.

She and her 9-year-old sister, Susie, who is also an ACTRA member and a veteran of commercials and television shows such as *I Married The Klondike*, both take singing and piano lessons.

Fiona stresses that she also works hard at her school work, and plans to attend university if her career doesn't get in the way.

The Grade 8 youngster is carefully preparing herself for stardom if it comes, or for another career, if it doesn't.

But she has no personal doubts about which option will actually happen. "It's going to happen. It has to happen. I won't settle for anything else."

## HOLLYWOOD MOVE

In a few years, Fiona is set "to move down to Hollywood" to pursue an entertainment career full time.



FIONA MCGILLIVRAY

"Any form of entertainment is fine with me," she says with a calm assurance. "I'm preparing myself as well if I don't ever make it as a performer, but I really hope I do."

Fiona knows the dangers of making it too early, however. She would hate to make a big splash and then be typecast and unable to break out of the mould of one role, a problem which has beset many others before her.

If desire, confidence, and hard work have anything to do with it, Fiona McGillivray will, indeed, be the star she hopes to be.