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MANOTICK



Serving Manotick and surrounding communities for 30 years

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Welcome 2017 Canadian Ultimate Championships players – Pages 2, 10



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Manotick's Deirdre Barnes, standing, left, dances on stage with Britney Spears on her Las Vegas show. Barnes, who was previously part of Justin Bieber's "Believe" tour, was home last week and visited her old school, the Denise Smith School of Dance, where she worked with PHOTO COURTESY OF DEIRDRE BARNES local children and students. For the full story, see page 8.



Edward **Jones** MAKING SENSE OF INVESTING



The MessengerFEATURE

Dancing with the stars

Manotick's Dierdre Barnes is loving every minute of being on stage with Britney Spears in one of Las Vegas' biggest and most popular shows.

By Jeffrey Morris

It's a long way from Manotick Main Street to the strip in Las Vegas.

Geographically, the mileage will never change between the two destinations.

But figuratively, the live show capital of the world seems a little bit closer for local girls at the Denise Smith School of Dance.

Barnes, a Dierdre Manotick native who grew up in the school, took a week off from her exhausting schedule to come home to Manotick last week. One of her first stops was the Denise Smith School of Dance, where she caught up with her former teachers and many old friends, and also worked with many of the students in the school.

"It was so good to be back," said Barnes, who divides her time between Las Vegas and Los Angeles. "This school and this community was supportive of me when I left to follow my dreams, and I love being able to come home and give back."

Barnes performs on stage as a dancer beside Britney Spears in her "Piece of Me" show, which takes place at Planet Hollywood in Las Vegas three nights a week. In between shows, she usually flies

to Los Angeles to do other projects, such as appearances and music videos. She was part of Spears' Asian tour, and was also on stage for Justin Bieber's "Believe" Tour.

While growing up in Manotick, Barnes called the Denise Smith School of Dance her second home. She attended St. Leonard Catholic Elementary School and then moved on to St. Mark High School. She was accepted into the Canterbury High School dance program for Grade 9, and attended high school at the Ottawa school.

She continued to dance with the Denise Smith School Dance while training and studying at Canterbury, building a long list of awards and accomplishments. She graduated from Canterbury with a Fine Arts Certificate of Distinction. She also was awarded a Modern and Company Award with an Overall Excellence Award for the four years she attended.

After graduating, Barnes headed to Las Vegas to perform in Cirque de Soleil's "Believe" show starring illusionist Criss Angel. In addition to that, she has performed with the ground breaking Los Angeles entertainment company the "Aqualillies." She has been

featured as a guest performer on Americas Got Talent and was part of a 2008 Finale Guest Performance on So You Think You Can Dance.

She moved to Los Angeles and has worked extensively in film and TV. She has appeared on Dancing With the Stars, Disney Descendants, the Ellen Show, Glee, Shake it Up, The Voice, Black Eyes Peas-Ubisoft, American Idol and multiple award shows. In addition to Britney Spears and Justin Bieber, she has danced alongside artists such as Nicki Minaj, Nick Jonas, Pitbull, Jennifer Lopez, Gloria Estefan, the Backstreet Boys and Prince Rovce. She was featured in Justin Bieber's film, "Believe," as well as his instructional dance DVD. On her off days from the Britney Spears show, she choreographs for the Aqualillies synchronized swimming entertainment show, and has also choreographed for Cody Simpson, Empire of the Sun world tour, Betty Who's New, Now, Next Awards performance, and Alli Simpson.

Despite her hectic schedule, coming home is always something that rejuvenates her.

"It's always refreshing to come home and see my family and friends and go to the studio," she said. "I look at the kids and I tell them that not that long ago, I was doing the same routines and I was in the same studio as they were. I was just like them. I want them to know that it is possible to pursue your dreams and have a career in dancing. I want them to know that I was one of them. If I can do it, they can do it, too."

No one is more proud of Barnes than Denise Smith and her daughter, Chemay Forrester, who both taught Barnes when she was young. They still have the pictures on their phones of seeing Barnes dance with Bieber at Canadian Tire Centre (then Scotiabank Place) in 2012. Although by that point she had toured the world, that show was her first in Ottawa in front of family and friends.

"We are so incredibly proud of her," said Forrester. "She started taking lessons with us when she was three years old and was a part of the studio for years. She is like a part of our family. It's so exciting for all of us to see her do so well."

Seeing a big concert was what prompted Barnes' dream to become a dancer.

"I remember the moment when I realized that I wanted to be on the stage as a dancer,"

Manotick dancer Deirdre Barnes has worked with Justin Bieber, the Backstreet Boys, Britney Spears, and a host of

other big name acts and shows. having as a young adult.

she said. "I was at a Justin Timberlake concert. It wasn't in Ottawa. I saw him in Montreal and Toronto."

Being part of the Bieber tour was not just a career changer, but a life changer for Barnes. The tour taught her a lot about the ins and outs of the business, as well as the commitment level that performers must have. She was with Bieber during a difficult stretch in his career, but is thrilled to see him enjoy the success he is

"He is incredibly

talented - more than most people might realize - and he is down to earth and a really nice guy," she said of Bieber. We're not in touch a lot but we are still friends. I saw him recently and he was like, 'Hey, how come you're not on my tour with me this time?' It's great to see how he has grown as a person and an artist. He treats everyone around him well and is incredibly driven."

BARNES continues on page 16





Last week, Deirdre Barnes visited her old school in Manotick to work with local students. Barnes said that while growing up in Manotick, the Denise Smith School of Dance was like her second home.

The MessengerFEATURE

BARNES continues from page 8

Like Bieber, Spears went through a rough patch of time and had to redefine herself and her image. Barnes says she "is the sweetest person in the world and is wonderful to work with," adding that her talent and attention to detail are both off the charts.

"She's amazing," says Barnes. "She will come in some days and tell us she thought of a move or some choreography in the middle of the night, and she will want to see what it looks like. She is focused on the show and making every aspect of it perfect."

Barnes said she is enjoying the experience of working with Spears.

"The one thing about her is that her family comes first," she said. "She is always surrounded by her family and treats everyone around her like family. As hard as we work, she will come in and do things like have us play a game together just to bond or to have some fun before we get down to the hard work.'

Aside from being on Spears' stage show in Las Vegas, she has also been a part of her world tour. Most recently, Barnes travelled throughout Asia with the show.

"It was incredible," Barnes said. "I am very fortunate that I have been able to go on tours and see different parts of the world and meet different people from different cultures."

Barnes said that in her travels, there are three places that stand out to her.

"Capetown, South Africa was beautiful because of the people and the scenery," she said. "I also loved Rio de Janeiro in Brazil because of the beaches. The other place I loved was Thailand. On the last tour, we got a chance to visit some of the islands. Everyone thinks of Bangkok, but the islands in Thailand are amazing."

Barnes will be on the show through the end of 2017. After that, she said there is a chance the show will be renewed and that she will stay on. In the meantime, she will continue to travel to Los Angeles to work on other projects. One of those projects she worked on earlier in the year was with the Backstreet Boys.

"That was a lot of fun," she said. "I was a huge fan when I was younger, so it was really exciting," she said.

And just as she had favourite places to visit, did she have a favourite Backstreet Boy?

"When I was younger, Nick was my favourite because he was the youngest one," she said. "But after working with them, I really liked Kevin. He is really sweet and he's handsome. They were all so nice and great to work with. We had a lot of fun."

As busy and as exciting as her life and career are, Barnes said she is thrilled when she gets to come back to Manotick.

"It's great to work with the kids, especially at the same school I grew up in," Barnes said. "If this was 10 or 15 years ago, I would have been one of those girls. I am just like them, and it's important that they know that. Working with them is a great way for me to give back to Manotick and to help Denise and Chemay, because they have done so much for me."

Manotick dancer Deirdre Barnes divides her time between performing on stage in Britney Spears' Las Vegas show and a number of side projects in Los Angeles.



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Comunity Calendar

- Friday Night Country Music & Dance Club The Greely Legion hosts a Friday Night Music and Dance Club, the fourth Friday of each month. Bring along an instrument to play, or come in to sing, listen and dance. Admission is FREE. Greely Legion, 8021 Mitch Owens Road, ON. Information: 613-822-1451 or 613-826-6128
- Dickinson House in Manotick open for the season. Visitors are welcome to come and get a glimpse of how life was lived over the past 150 years. This year's special exhibit is entitled "A Walk Through the Decades". As always, admission is free, and donations are welcome.

based curriculum of preschool activities including circle time, creative art, dramatic play, and pre-math activities all in a nurturing environment. Please visit our website (www. manoticknurseryschool.com) or call 613-692-2188 for further details.

- Tuesday Dance Party The Greely Legion hosts live music on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of each month from 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm. Bring along an instrument to play, or come in to sing, listen and dance. Admission is FREE. Greely Legion, 8021 Mitch Owens Road, ON. Information: 613-822-1451 or 613-826-6128.
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