

Sandra McGee

Sandra saw her first ballet at the age of three and began dancing that same year at the studio of Mlle. Zina Torchina in Burbank, California. Mlle. Torchina, a Russian ballerina who carried the title “prima ballerina” with the original Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo, chose Sandra to be her protégé. At age five, Sandra made her professional debut at UCLA’s Royce Hall in the Chopin Centennial and performed the “Waltz” and “Nocturne” from Chopin’s “Les Sylphides.” A reviewer wrote, “little Alexandra Konecskova is a child genius destined for an artistic and creative future.”



At the University of California, Berkeley, Sandra studied piano with the esteemed Bernhard Abramowitsch, performed with local chamber music groups, and earned the Bachelor of Arts degree with a major in Music.

However, at age 25, believing a performing career on the stage was not her destiny, Sandra made the difficult decision to give up piano and ballet. A chance meeting led to an opportunity to refurbish and lease a 1906 office building in San Francisco’s Financial District. This led to a career in commercial real estate. Sandra designed, leased and managed office space both for a large corporation and later for her own company. She found this work to be creative. She also found she had a talent for business.

After her father’s unexpected death in 1983, Sandra visited a psychic in the Hollywood Hills. The psychic told her, “In your later years, you will be a writer.” Sandra found this hard to believe as she took only the required English course in college.

In 1986, Sandra married Bill McGee and the psychic’s prediction began to come true. It started with typing her husband’s manuscripts and then making some careful editing suggestions.

In 1994, she was one of six co-founders of the professional State Street Ballet in Santa Barbara, California. She volunteered to serve as the Company’s publicist, writing press releases, program notes, and other marketing materials. She also belonged to the Women’s Auxiliary of the Music Academy of the West in Santa Barbara and did publicity for the Auxiliary’s fundraising events.

In 2001, Sandra and Bill collaborated on their first book, *The Divorce Seekers: A Photo Memoir of a Nevada Dude Wrangler* (2004). This was followed by *Pacific Express: The Critical Role of Military Logistics in World War II* (2009) and *Learning to Cope with Sight Loss: Six Weeks at a VA Blind Rehabilitation Center* (2010).

Today Sandra McGee is Vice President/ Director of Marketing for BMC Publications, an imprint of BMC Communications. She is a member of Western Writers of America. Sandra is currently working on a screenplay based on *The Divorce Seekers* and a semi-biographical story of her husband’s life growing up in the American West during the Great Depression.

Sandra has always kept ballet a part of her life ever since seeing her first performance. Today she appreciates the art from the audience as a patron of the San Francisco Ballet and other major companies.