

OUR WINTER NEWSLETTER BRINGING UPDATES TO YOU

IN THIS ISSUE

**UPCOMING WORLD IRISH DANCE CHAMPIONSHIPS IN LONDON, ENGLAND**

Once a year, the best Irish dancers from around the world come together to compete in the World Irish Dance Championships. Dancers from the UK, North America, Europe and Australia, to name a few will descend on London, England for 7 spectacular days of Irish Dancing from April 13 – 19.

Many dancers will watch the event unfold through live streaming available through the website for a small fee. This allows dancers from around the world to share in the excitement, see photos and comment as each day of competition unfolds. This is also an exciting time to watch our club message board as well as the Eastern Canada message board to stay updated on how our Canadian contingent is fairing at the competition.

**CLADDAGH BALL**

Each year, several dancers from the Goggin-Carroll school qualify to compete at the world championships. This year, there will be 20 dancers from Oakville's Goggin-Carroll school attending Worlds.

As you can imagine, attending events such as these are very costly, so the parents of the

qualified dancers, with the support of the OIDA, often choose to work together to put on a fundraising event called "The Claddagh Ball". Claddagh is an Irish symbol of friendship, loyalty and love which is a perfect symbol of each dancers' connection with Irish Dancing as well as the support being offered by our dance community.

The 2014 Ball will be held on Saturday February 22, 2014 at the Burlington Convention Centre (1120 Burloak Drive, Burlington, Ontario). Tickets are \$80 and can be purchased from any World parent or from Barb McVittie [blmcvittie@cogeco.ca](mailto:blmcvittie@cogeco.ca). **It's not too late to purchase tickets.** Bring your friends or come and make new friends, either way, be sure to join us for a wonderful Ball including a dinner/dance, silent auction and dance exhibition by the dancers attending Worlds. You won't be disappointed!



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Your 2014 OIDA membership fee is now due. Contact any OIDA Exec with any questions. Please take five minutes to send us your updated information.  
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# Grade Dancer's Corner

## EVERYTHING YOU WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT WIGS... BUT WERE AFRAID TO ASK!!

Believe it or not, wigs were intended to be a convenience, not an object of mockery by husbands, hotel staff and general passers-by. Only a few years ago, mothers would battle with dancers to put rollers in their hair the night before competitions to create the "curly Irish look". Mothers and dancers alike hated having their hair in rags, rollers or multi-colored fluorescent spikes whilst dining at Denny's somewhere in Upstate New York on the eve of a Feis. While some saw the process as wonderful mother-daughter bonding time, most will agree that dancers are far better off nowadays with a fake head of curls that can go on and come off in a few minutes.

There are three main styles of wigs – curly hair wigs, bun wigs and the "Annabelle" straight-hair type. The bun wig has its advantages, but it is not for everyone. It is ideal for young dancers, dancers with amazing posture/carriage/shoulders and is ideal on hot summer days or for dance shows such as on St. Patrick's Day (allowing the more expensive curly wig to save some wear and tear). It needs to be put on the TOP of the head and match the dancer's natural hair colour. There needs to be a soft look to it and suitable accessories are needed too. Barb decides which style suits each dancer.

There are many brands and styles of curly wigs available at a wide range of prices. A good wig, taken care of properly, can last a few seasons. Any wig must ideally look like it could actually be real hair on the dancer wearing it, so a properly fitted wig that is the right color and size suited to the dancer is a must. Putting on a wig gets easier with practice but it is not something to try without direction from more experienced dance families. You do not want your dancer's wig to fall off while they are dancing on stage at a competition. The wigs need to be really, really secure – so use plenty of bobby pins – small and large.

Beginner dancers may not wear wigs. They should have hair that is neat and tidy, kept

back out of the face with a head band (preferably navy blue or white to match with our school colors). Advanced Beginners do not need wigs, but may start to look for second-hand wigs available at the school. **Before** buying any Irish dance accessory such as a wig, talk to your dancer's teacher first for guidance and approval. For your first wig, parents in the school usually have a small supply of gently used wigs for sale. The dancers of Goggin-Carroll maintain a specific look which requires the wig and headband to be put on in a very specific way. As a dancer progresses through the levels, they may be eligible to purchase a brand new wig. We get most of our wigs from a company called Melaine Murphy in the UK. There are local vendors which carry her line of wigs, but the selection is best when ordering directly from Melaine ([www.worldofirishdancing.com](http://www.worldofirishdancing.com)).

A wig won't help a dancer earn extra marks, nor will the lack of one reduce one's chances, but a properly fitted wig will complement a dancers' overall look, which does have a positive impact on a dancers' presentation and their confidence to perform on stage. Please don't buy or change anything without talking to Barb and don't change a look that works well "just to change things up".

## WHAT DO DANCERS KEEP IN THEIR DANCE BAG ON FEIS DAYS?

Being prepared on feis day by having a well packed dance bag can reduce the stress of feis day for dancers and parents. Here are some common items you may want to keep in your feis bag:

- Hard shoes, soft shoes (may sound obvious, but often they can be left in your dance bag used for classes)
- Socks and sock glue (sock glue is available for purchase at all feises and is used to keep your socks in place while you dance)
- Safety pins (of all sizes – may be needed to pin on your competitor number, pin on your shawl, repair part of your dress/vest, or come to a fellow competitor's rescue)
- Bobby pins, hair elastics
- Electrical tape, gaffers tape (many dancers use electrical tape to tape down their shoe laces on hard shoes, and use gaffers tape on the bottom of their hard shoes if the stages are slippery on the day of competition)

- Makeup bag (for those dancers over 10 years of age) including foundation, blush, eye liner, eye shadow, mascara, lip stick/gloss.
- Band aids, Instant ice pack – just in case of an injury
- Extra shoe laces for hard shoe and soft shoe in case one breaks
- At our Oireachtas or other majors, dancers are often under lights and the use of tanner on legs is recommended (Rimmel Instant Tan is commonly used and available for purchase at feises)
- Snacks and water – feises involve wait time and keeping your dancer well fed makes for a happy dancer

## UPDATES TO THE RECOGNITION WALL

Every dancer who has been with our school at least 6 months will have a dancer page on our recognition wall – Beginner, Advanced Beginner, Novice and Open Prizewinner. We do our best to keep all dancer information up to date with the support of you, the parents. **If your dancer's info on the recognition wall needs to be updated, please forward updates to Tracy Hennessy at [thennessy1120@gmail.com](mailto:thennessy1120@gmail.com)**

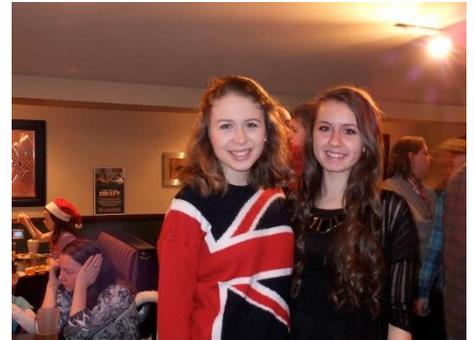
After each feis, please email Tracy your dancer's results including the feis name, dancer level, dance and placement. For Beginner and Advanced Beginner send 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> results and for Novice and Prizewinner send 1<sup>st</sup> place results. All dancers receive stickers for results in each distinct dance on their dancer page on the wall. Advance Beginner through to Prizewinner dancers will also receive a badge to bring home.

### UPCOMING FEIS DATES

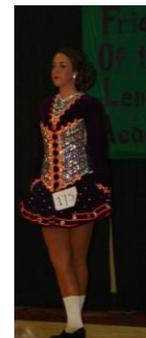
- Mar 22/23 – West Virginia Feis, Pittsburgh, PA
- March 30 – Goggin Carroll School Feis (for our school dancers only – not an official feis)
- April 26 – Bob Gabor Feis Syracuse, NY
- May 3 – Forest City Feis, London, ON
- May 10 – Mae Paddy Feis, Scarborough, ON
- May 17 – Feis Montreal, Montreal, QC
- May 18 – Capital Feis, Ottawa, ON
- May 24 – Akron Feis, Akron, OH
- May 25 – Cleveland Feis, Cleveland, OH

# RECENT OIDA EVENTS

## OIDA Christmas Party



## North Coast Feis Bus Trip



# Preliminary and Open Champ Corner

## Tell me more about the Majors

- by Lauren Stewart, TCRG

One of the huge benefits of competing in such a sport like Irish dancing is the opportunity to travel around the world and compete in different cities. I have had the chance to travel places I never thought possible or would have thought to travel. To clarify to all the readers out there, I consider a major event where there are people gathering from different parts of the world, could be across the regions of Canada, North American or Worldwide. Throughout my 14 years of dancing I attended almost every major possible. The higher level, more prestigious events, of which I would consider Worlds the most prestigious, took sacrifice and determination to come out of the event as a better dancer.

The three most common major events that the families of Goggin-Carroll may be familiar are the North American Championships (Nationals), Great Britain Championships (GBs) and World Championships (Worlds). Fortunately I have been able to attend each event several times starting in Chicago 1999 (That was a while ago!). Even though these three events are completely different in structure, size and environment- they all taught me lessons and kept me wanting more.

Each region is allowed to have two qualifying events where dancers compete to earn a World's qualifying spot which enables them to attend Worlds. Our first qualifier is our Oireachtas. Nationals for most, is the first 'major' most Canadian dancers will get the chance to compete in. This is a second qualifier for North American dancers to qualify for Worlds the following year; even though there are dancers who come from overseas- they are not included in the qualifying spots. Nationals takes place the first week July, with locations throughout the US and Canada (this year in Montreal!). Dancers are combined by age (not level of dancing) and this is usually one of the biggest competitions- some age groups can be split if there are over 150 dancers. Often each split

can have an entry of roughly 100 competitors!

My absolute favourite event was and still remains, as a teacher, GBs. The Great Britain Championships take place in England. For the last 5 years the competition has taken place on the grounds of Butlins Resort near Bognor Regis. The grounds are completely sold out to Irish dancers (for the very few others that are there that weekend, they are always in for a surprise by the Irish crowd). This is the first experience many have at an overseas competition. I always found it inspiring to get the chance to see some of the world's best dancers competing at this three-day event. This event is in a full entertaining atmosphere, the outcome of my dancing became the bonus because it was such a fun filled event.

The World Championship is the most prestigious event known to all Irish Dancers. It is the event in which we work to be a part of and a few dancers will earn the title of World Champion. Competitors from all over the world, North America, Ireland, Italy, Russia, Japan and Australia to just name a few gather together for a week of intense competition. To even be a part of this competition for ten years was an honor and my goal was to become a world medalist, which I achieved at my last Worlds in 2010. Medals holders are determined by the number of dancers entered. A maximum of 50 dancers get the chance to come back for a third recall dance, often only 30% of the dancers.

Each year I left these events feeling inspired and motivated to work harder and achieve new goals. These majors brought out school spirit, allowed me to build friendships not only within the school but all around the world and most of all, created memories that I will cherish forever.

## Tell me more about the Grades Dances

### WHAT ARE GRADE EXAMS?

Much like piano or tae-kwon-do, Irish Dancing also has Grade Exams. These Grade exams are an excellent way for dancers to mark their progress and prepare for their teacher certifications. Grade exams may be taken by dancers at all levels however dancers must be 7 years or older to take a grade exam. The exams are all practical or oral (no written sections – this test is a dancing test).

### WHAT HAPPENS IN A GRADE EXAM?

Each grade has 2-4 specific dances that must be danced – often a soft shoe, a hard shoe and a ceili dance (8 person dance). A dancer will dance each dance and is individually assessed by the examiner or examiners and receives final grade as well as a written report giving them feedback on how they performed, highlighting their good points as well as things they need to improve.

### HOW MANY GRADES ARE THERE?

All dancers must start with the Grade 1 exam. Each grade must be passed before moving to the next grade. There are 12 grades plus a preliminary grade. Grade 1 to Grade 5 examinations can be taken at the rate of two per calendar year and Grade 6 to Grade 9 at the rate of one per calendar year. A certificate is awarded for each grade passed. A dancer who passes all twelve grades receives "The Diploma of the Irish Dancing Commission."

The credits a dancer receives each time they pass a grade can be applied toward the solo dance portion of the TCRG and ADCRG examinations (these are the exams to become teachers/adjudicators). If you are interested in learning more, information can also be found on the An Coimisiun site: <http://www.clrg.ie/documents/Grade%20Syllabus%202013.pdf>

### WEBSITES

[www.goggin-carroll.com](http://www.goggin-carroll.com) GC Dance School Site

[www.voy.com/135666/](http://www.voy.com/135666/) GC School Message Board

<https://www.facebook.com/TheOIDACladdaghBall> OIDA Claddagh Ball

<http://naidc2014.wordpress.com/> North American Irish Dance Championships 2014, Montreal

[www.clrg.ie](http://www.clrg.ie) World Irish Dance Championships

### SPECIAL EVENTS

Feb 22, 2014 – Claddagh Ball, Burlington

March 30, 2014 – School Feis, Oakville

April 13 – 19 – World Irish Dance Championships, London, England

July 2 - 6 – North American Irish Dance Championships, Montreal, QC

# 2014 OIDA FEES ARE NOW DUE

For the past couple of years, the OIDA has collected an annual fee of \$80 per dancer rather than run various fundraising approaches throughout the year. These fees are used to fund the various events the OIDA runs throughout the year, all of which are to enhance each family's experience at Goggin-Carroll as outlined below:

- Co-ordinates events including the Summer BBQ, Christmas Party, Oireachtas Send Off Party, Post School Feis Ceili/Social, pub nights
- Maintains the dancer recognition wall at the studio and rewards grades dancers with badges
- Supports school bus trips
- Co-ordinates a dress rental program for dancers beginning to feis
- Provides a spirit wear program allowing dancers and parents to purchase Goggin-Carroll logo'd wear
- Organizes and runs a school feis for Goggin-Carroll dancers only to provide a unique competitive opportunity for our dancers

Fees were due January 31. An envelope was sent home with every dancer at an Advanced Beginner and above level during the first week of January. If you have not yet paid your annual fee, please submit \$80 payable to "OIDA" in envelope to Barb, as soon as possible.

## Who is your OIDA Executive?

Chairperson	Brian Cousins	bcousins4@cogeco.ca
Secretary	Tracy Hennessy	thennessy1120@gmail.com
Treasurer	Aideen Hennessy	ahennessy@cogeco.ca
Communications Co-ordinator	Michelle Micuda	mmicuda@outlook.com
School Feis Co-ordinator	Carolyn Murray	cegm@rogers.com
Inventory/Costume Committee	Anne Hill	annechocohill@hotmail.com
Merchandising Co-ordinator	James Fletcher	jfletcher@arbormemorial.com
Member At Larger	Sue Henry	shenry10@cogeco.ca
Teacher Liaisons	Barb Goggin, Ryan Carroll	

## MEMBER DATABASE UPDATE

In order to ensure our database of dancers and contact information is current and complete, we would ask each dancer family to complete the attached form. With a complete database we will be able to ensure good communication. **Please return the attached form to the OIDA mailbox in the studio or email it to Michelle Micuda ([mmicuda@outlook.com](mailto:mmicuda@outlook.com)).** Please note, that for privacy reasons, Barb does not share dancer family contact information with the OIDA. You must provide this information to the OIDA in order for the OIDA to communicate directly with you.

DANCER NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

DANCER LEVEL (Circle One): BEGINNER, ADVANCED BEGINNER, NOVICE, OPEN PRIZEWINNER,  
PRELIMANRY CHAMP, OPEN CHAMPIONSHIP

DANCER NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

DANCER LEVEL (Circle One): BEGINNER, ADVANCED BEGINNER, NOVICE, OPEN  
PRIZEWINNER,  
PRELIMANRY CHAMP, OPEN CHAMPIONSHIP

PARENT/GUARDIAN NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

PARENT/GUARDIAN EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

