



McKeever School of Irish Dance Newsletter

JANUARY - APRIL 2020

Kennelly Feis



We had a beautiful day competing at the John Kennelly Memorial Feis in Sacramento on January 19th. McKeever Dancers showed up strong and did such an outstanding job. This is the 6th year McKeever dancers have competed at the Kennelly Feis! Congrats to each and every McKeever dancer who competed. I know I say this every time but you make me so proud!

Highlights included

- First Feis - Avery N.
- 1st Competition- Sarah L., Valentina E., Eliana S., Brooklyn A., Owen H.
- Morgan Martin - First in Open Champ Special
- Prelim Champs - Savannah C. (First Prelim Champ Debut)
 - 1st - Amy D. (Perfect Score)
 - 2nd - Sophia T.
 - 3rd - Kailey G.
 - 3rd - Millie K.
 - 5th - Olive K. (First in Prelim Special)
 - 6th - Madilyn W.

McKeever Dancers Compete Around North America



Dancer Estela G. Competing In Arizona and getting even closer to her goal of champion!

McKeever dancers competed in San Francisco at the start of February at the Fog City Feis and Feis San Francisco hosted by the Whelan School. As always our dancers represented the school with great sportsmanship and beautiful dancing!! Congratulations to dancer Emilina R. who competed as a McKeever for the first time. Great work to our Preliminary Champions Arabelle J. - 2nd place 15&O, Savannah C. - 6th place U15, Olive K. - 5th place U10, and Amy D. 2nd place U10.

On the second day of competition champion Amy D. earned her third and final 1st place win and is now an Open Champion level dancer. This is such a huge accomplishment for such a young dancer!! She is the school's youngest Open Champion to date. Congratulations Amy!

Dancers Sherry T., Natalie M., and Harkin M. represented the McKeever School at the Rose-Ritchie feis in San Diego and all walked away with medals. Congrats girls! This month Natalie M. Also passed Grade Exam 11 at the Rose and Shamrock Festival in PA. Only one more until she can sit the TCRG Exam!



Champion Sophia T. competed in Mexico at the Mexico City Feis and placed 4th in a difficult U12 competition. This little U9 Champion has now competed in Canada, USA, and Mexico! We can't wait to see where you bring your dancing next. Sophia also competed at Valerie's Feis and Pacific Northwest Championships in Seattle at the beginning of March and placed 4th and 3rd in her Championship competitions. Amazing!



Irishpalooza at Harlow's



Irishpalooza was on January 11th this year and at one of our favorite venues on J Street, Harlow's. This annual event brings together local Irish Music bands and we are so honored to dance alongside the band Stepping Stone to kick off the show. We put on a 20 min high energy performance to live music and our dancers were a hit! Great job and thank you to everyone who participated!

Continuing a Collaboration



Our Thursday night Performative Choreography class got to finalize their collaboration with an Indian Dance School led by Khurshid Dastur. These new friends in dance came to our studio from Davis and helped our dancers with some of the traditional Indian arm movements. Together we created a jig routine that combined both traditions. Working with Khurshid has reminded me how precious and valuable ancient folk dance traditions are. There are so many similarities between the two cultures, one being that both Ireland and India were occupied by Britain but eventually gained their freedom. Preserving these ancient traditions is truly an honor.

Champions Become Professionals with Kerry Productions



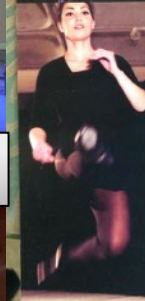
Spot your teacher in the advertisement :)



SEAMUS EGAN

Spend St. Patrick's Day with a true prodigy — he won four All-Ireland Championships on four different instruments at 14 — and the founding member of Solas.

TUE, MAR 17; 7:30 pm

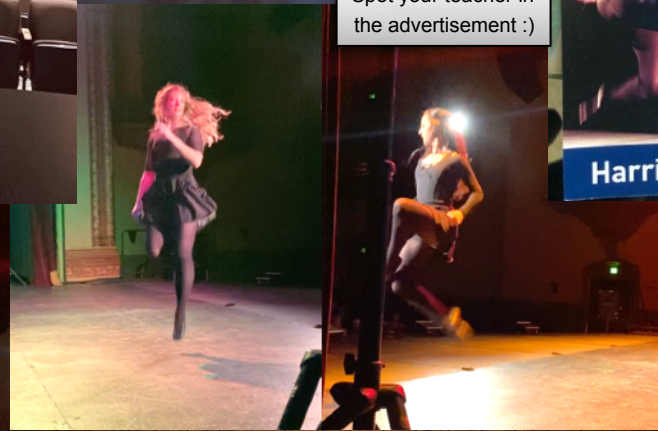


ST. PATRICK'S DAY IN IRELAND

The "great celebration of Ireland and its rich culture!" (Irish News and Entertainment) returns, featuring principal dancer Connor Reidler (The Chieftains, Celtic Fyre) and four brilliant multi-instrumentalists.

SUN, MAR 15; 2 pm

HarrisCenter.net 916.608.6888



St. Patrick's Day in Ireland




Love being leads with @moriahdances

Since 2014 we have worked with Kerry Productions, which has given us the chance to allow our dancers to grace the stage professionally and even get paid! This year Champions Morgan M., Moriah P., Ana P., Eva S., and Audrey P. Had the chance to perform in the production "Saint Patrick's Day in Ireland". They performed in Vacaville and Stockton at the start of March. Part of being a professional level performer, especially in the Irish Dance world means sometimes learning routines literally back stage before the performance. The girls knew the basic outline of the show but were not able to prepare until they were rehearsing with the other cast members the night of the show! This takes a very calm, collected and professional dancer! The McKeever School was set for even more performances at the Harris Center and in San Francisco. Unfortunately those performances were cancelled due to Covid-19 along with essentially 25 other performances. We are happy that these girls had a chance to grace the stage before our performances were cancelled. We know there will be more opportunities next year and we are so proud of you all.

Fun Extras



mock feis :) 

Since this past September Miss McKeever has been studying for her ADCRG exam to become a Judge. At the end of January she went down to the Tamora School of Irish Dance in LA to practice judging dancers alongside fellow teacher Tara Reid from Las Vegas. The teachers from Scoil Rince Daryl Goldes and the Tamora School were so kind to help her practice this nerve-wracking section of the test. The ADCRG exam is multi-day event that has a multiple sections including a math test, music test, practical judging exam, interview and a two hour written exam on historical dance material. Miss McKeever took this at the end of February in Hamilton NJ...which just by chance is the very town she began learning Irish Dance in! She passed all sections except the written exam and just missed passing by a few points. This section will be easy to resit in 6 months and then you will have a teacher who is also a judge!!

Riverdance was all set to tour the USA celebrating its 25 anniversary. Part of these celebrations included a one time Cinematic experience of the show. Originally the McKeever School had a performance at the Harris Center that day, but when it was cancelled, it was the perfect once in a lifetime chance to go see the current cast of Riverdance on the big screen. Many cast members toured with Miss McKeever so this was such a unique experience to share with a few students who were able to come watch. This was the last "hooray" in many ways before non-essential establishments were shut down. Hopefully this experience comes back in theaters or on DVD, it was beautifully filmed and definitely brought a tear to our eyes. Thank you Riverdance, the original and the best!!



Fun fact, one of the people on Miss McKeever's interview panel was an esteemed examiner from Australia who took a boat all the way from Australia in the 1950's to study for her teaching exam. (Her name is Cathrine Cosgriff)



feisfitness

As Oireachtas season, for most, draws to a close and we all enjoy a short festive break, before we set new goals for the next year ahead I had the pleasure of interviewing Morgan Martin, Open Championship dancer from Nevada, United States and the dancer behind Instagram account [irish_dance_fitness](#).

Tell us a little bit about what you do, we all love your Instagram videos, how did that come about?

I am an Open Championship dancer competing with the McKeever school of Irish dance in Sacramento, California. Originally I started making training videos to send to our adult dancers in the school, as they would ask me for advice on cross-training. It got to a point where more and more dancers were asking me to send them advice and such, so I started experimenting different methods of accomplishing this. And that's when I made my Irish Dance Fitness account!

What was the driving force behind documenting your training?

Originally, I started it as a way to help some dancers while my school cross-train. But then it became so much more than that. I soon realized how motivated I was to work out, and because I was recording myself I pushed myself even harder in the gym. And it totally prompted me to explore different types of exercises and training methods.

I also wanted to create an outlet for dancers, geared towards cross training, that costs NOTHING. Not every dancer has the money to pay for training programs, and that's why I created this account. In order to share all of my cross training in hopes that it helps other dancers whom also cross train on their own. It's also opened a window for collaboration where I have been able to ask for advice and learn from other dancers through Instagram. I've learned so much through talking with other personal trainers as well as my own research.



I think in most sports, and dancing in particular, the main focus has been pushing through and getting the win - but I am seeing a shift in attitudes. Dancers are adopting different training methods, looking outside of the dance community for advice and coaching. Have you seen a change in the attitudes towards training?

I totally agree and see a change in this as well. I believe that if you're solely concentrating on winning your next competition, this deflects from your passion and love for dance. But when you ground yourself, and focus on the actual dancing itself (technique, musicality, presence, gracefulness, etc) the win will come naturally.

Our dance school doesn't focus on wins, more the progress of individual dancers. Our teacher is very good at staying humble and grounding us as dancers and having "check-in" moments where we focus on how much we have grown as a dancer in comparison to weeks, or months, or even a year ago. Of course, it feels great to win competitions and place well, but it feels even better knowing you have accomplished and a trick you weren't able to do a year ago, or that your kids are way higher than a few months ago. That's the progress and personal wins that truly show and matter.

Congrats to our champion Morgan Martin for getting a huge multipage interview in Rince Magazine! You can follow her Instagram page where she has fun workouts and cross training methods for Irish dancers. [@irish_dance_fitness](#)



We had fun decorating the classroom for Saint Patrick's Day. Students enjoyed naming this funny leprechaun...I think his final name was Jumpy McJumperson?

Making the News Before Classes Were Closed

As we geared up for almost 25 performances back in March we had no idea what was about to happen. Luckily dancers had two chances to perform on LIVE tv! The first was on Studio 40 Live to help promote the Saint Patrick's Day parade in Old Sac. The second was on Saint Patrick's day at the studio with GoodDay Sacramento reporter Sabrina Silva. By then we were following the new guidelines and keeping dancers 6 feet apart as we danced! Thank you to everyone who got up early and performed. You no doubt brought a smile to many faces in our community.

here me
in a minute

Cutest ever!!

McKeever School of Irish Da...
gooddaysac

Thank you

@TVSABRINASILVA



ST. PATRICK'S DAY PARADE
OLD SACRAMENTO WATERFRONT



ST. PATRICK'S DAY PARADE
OLD SACRAMENTO WATERFRONT



Our cute dancers performing early on Studio40 Live! We lined ourselves up for the A Capella Routine (No Music) and then producers accidentally pressed go for our music track! So we managed to create a routine on LIVE tv on the spot! Dancers listened to directions and pulled it off! Miss McKeever was SO PROUD!!!

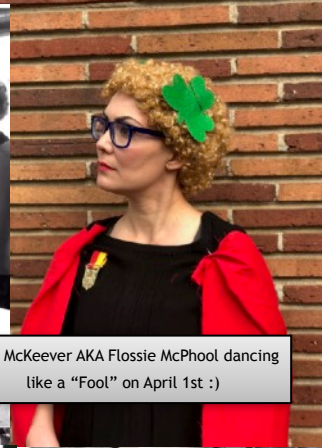
Adapting to a Digital Learning

What a whirlwind it's been these past 6 weeks for us all. We cancelled classes on March 16th and had our Digital Platform up by March 19th! Thanks to the amazing editing skills of Miss Natalie who has an MFA in Digital Video Art. It's been wonderful seeing our students maintaining their love of dance during this time. Thank you for continuing to support the school if you have been able to.

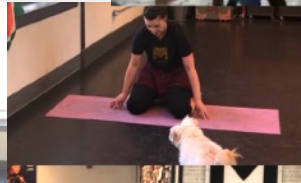
Images below of our pre-recorded classes and our successful FREE Facebook Live classes. We are also offering Thursday Zoom Dance Parties where students can see their friends and run their dances.

On April fool's Day we created a fake documentary of the lost set dance "The Winded Windbag". Music was provided by fiddle player Katie Grennan from Gaelic Storm and the outstanding voiceover was from teacher, adjudicator and former Riverdancer John Grimes!

We don't know who that weird lady in the wig was.



Miss McKeever AKA Flossie McPhool dancing like a "Fool" on April 1st :)



McKeever School of Irish Dance was live...
Published by Nicole McKeever
2 hrs · 📺
Free Irish Dance Lesson on Saint Patrick's Day! Have fun Everyone 🍀
WE GOT CUT OFF AND STARTED ANOTHER VIDEO SO PLEASE WATCH BOTH 🙏



👍👍 Rod Ortiz and 57 others
40 Comments 25 Shares



kavanaghporterwarrenacademyusa
Liked by harpirishdanceco and 102 others
kavanaghporterwarrenacademyusa
#coloringcompetition in full swing! Thank you @nicmcclintock
#wearinthistogether #irishdance 🍀

Liked by kishward and 34 others
#standforacademyirishdance Thanks to our students for brightening up our day with these lovely pieces of art! Thank you @nicmcclintock #irishdance for your art work!

On the left images of Miss McKeever's coloring pages bringing joy to dancers across the world! Above a picture of dancer June C. And her sister Claire putting on a digital show for their family on Saint Patrick's Day. To the right dancer Devin P. Keeps practicing and doesn't let anything stop her from her goals!

