



De Danaan School of Irish Dance



What are Scoil Rince De Danaan's roots?

Scoil Rince De Danaan, directed by Leslie Wilson, T.C.R.G, began as an Irish dancing school in 2000 with approximately 100 dancers enrolled in classes in Burnaby and Abbotsford.

The name Scoil Rince De Danaan is Irish for "De Danaan School of Dance." De Danaan means "of the goddess Danu." Danu was the mythological creator goddess of the Tuatha De Danaan race who we know as the "little folk" or leprechauns.

Who is Leslie Wilson?

Leslie is a 30-year Irish dance veteran and is the artistic director of the school. She began her dance career at the age of six when she started dancing with the Violet Moore School of Irish Dancing and went from student to teacher under the tutelage of Vi Moore before establishing De Danaan in 2000. Over the years Leslie has participated in numerous festivals, performances and competitions, including the World Championships in 1985.



Leslie has combined her love of dancing and teaching, along with her background in cultural anthropology, by forming her own school. A student of indigenous cultures, Irish history and lore, Leslie introduces her students to Celtic mythology, Irish history, and language.

Leslie successfully completed the Irish Dancing Commission's teacher's exam (T.C.R.G) in California in January 2000. She's registered with the Western Canadian Irish Dancing Teachers' Association, the North American Irish Dance Teachers' Association, and with An Coimisiun le Rince Gaeleacha (The Irish Dancing Commission) in Ireland.

Tell me more about the school

Irish Dance classes are offered to children and adults, beginner through advanced, in solo step dancing (reels, jigs, slip jigs, hornpipes), and ceili dancing. Each class is organized by age and ability and the dancers follow a progression from elementary steps to more intricate ones.

Story time is an integral part of group dance where the children learn about the tales, characters, and events in Irish history and mythology that will later be portrayed in dance dramas.

Competitive and Non-competitive Dancing

Although some students opt not to compete, Scoil Rince De Danaan is a competitive school and encourages competition that promotes a healthy attitude towards personal goal setting and life skills through the art form of Irish dancing. Dancers are encouraged to compete in local and out-of-town Feiseanna. There are approximately five beginner to open championship level Feiseanna held locally each year, and more available if students are eligible and willing to travel to Victoria, Calgary, Edmonton, Seattle and further.

Leslie's dancers achieved top Western Canadian placings at the North American championships in Boston 2002 as well as 1st and 2nd placings at the Western Canadian Regionals (Oireachtas).

Non-competitive opportunities exist within the school with events such as Ceili Music and Dance Camp, local performances, and Ceilis for students to enjoy Irish culture and participate in a fun, social, rich cultural environment.

What's a Feis?

Feis [*fesh*] is Irish for competition or festival. At a Feis there are solo categories, group categories, trophy dance-offs, championships and often music competitions, poetry and soda bread contests. They are the starting off point towards international championships.

There are seven Feis levels: 1st Feis, Beginner, Advanced Beginner, Novice, Prizewinner, Preliminary Championship, and Open Championship. Detailed written information about Feisanna rules are available from Leslie.

What to wear to a Feis

Beginner girls wear a black skirt and knickers, a white long sleeved blouse with a Peter Pan collar (\$20 from Neat Uniforms), poodle socks, a green hairband, and a shawl. These items can be obtained by contacting Jennifer Moore at 604 294-0650.

Beginner boys wear black pants, a white dress shirt, black socks, a vest and tie.

Intermediate dancers require traditional Irish dance dresses (class costumes). These are provided by the De Danaan Irish Cultural Society.

Novice level dancers and above may wish to purchase a solo costume, although it is not required until they reach the championship level. The cost of a solo dress ranges from \$500 to \$2000. All solo dresses must be vetted through Leslie.



Class costumes

Hair

Aren't those wigs something else! The current trend in Irish dance hairstyles is curly hair. If you're not prepared to curl hair the night before a performance (and this has sometimes meant wearing rollers to school or missing swimming lessons), you may wish to purchase a wig. Wigs should be the ringlet style (not split curls) and can be purchased from Mairead Michniewski of "Brogs" in Edmonton. Her phone number is 780 449-4462. She often has a vendor table at local feiseanna.

Class Attire

Students are required to wear socks, De Danaan black shorts, and a De Danaan T-shirt to class. Long hair must be tied back.

Custom black and gold De Danaan workout wear (sweats, shorts, hoodies) are available to students of the school. For purchasing information and to view our workout wear, please visit our website at www.dedanaan.ca



Class attire

Shoes

Shoes are a very important tool for an Irish dancer. The De Danaan Society organizes a used shoe swap in September of each year. New shoes can be purchased at a feis or ordered through Bob Steele in Calgary at 403 686-3514.

Performance Attire

Red show dresses for the performance group are \$50 and can be obtained by contacting Pat Yaremovich at 604 299-7670.



Senior performance group

Missed a class?

When classes are cancelled or missed due to family holiday, competition, illness, or other reasons, you're welcome to make up classes at any other scheduled time during the term, although one-week notice is required. Fees may not be deducted for missed classes.

Under certain circumstances, dancers may be entitled to fee deductions for prolonged absences.

What is the De Danaan Irish Cultural Society?

The Society is a non-profit organization consisting of parents and members of Scoil Rince De Danaan. Its purpose is to promote Irish culture in our community and support De Danaan dancers in their quest for excellence. All dancers are required to be members of the Society.

Historically, the Society's main activities have involved fundraising for class costumes, which can cost between \$450-\$600 each, depending on the volume of costumes made at a time. The De Danaan Irish Cultural Society plans to expand its activities to support travel, workshops, and cultural events.

Society Fees

Annual \$25 family membership fee

Each year in the meeting following the AGM, it is determined how the Society wishes to meet its financial obligations. Some years fundraising activities are carried out and others people vote to implement a fee. These fees are payable to the De Danaan Irish Cultural Society and are due each September.

How much will it cost to dance?

The Fee Schedule is listed on the Registration Form. A \$25. per family registration fee and postdated cheques for the monthly fee dated the 1st of each month from September to June are due on registration day in June.

Cheques can be made out to Scoil Rince De Danaan.

The effectiveness of the Society is dependent upon the participation of its members. Meetings are not frequent but they are important and attendance is encouraged. If you're interested in becoming active on the Board of Directors, please contact Society Director, Jennifer Moore, at 604 294-0650. Elections for the Executive are held after the AGM in the fall.

Ceili Camp

Come and join us in the beautiful West Coast setting of Sumas Mountain for a fun-filled, educational week of music and dance taught by some of North America's biggest names in Irish music and dance. This camp is held annually the third week in August and is hosted by De Danaan School of Irish Dance.



How do I get more information?

Burnaby classes 604 290-4129

Abbotsford classes 778 808-2252 (Aldergrove)

Email: de_danaan@shaw.ca

Visit the De Danaan website at
<http://www.dedanaan.ca/>

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