

Janice Currie-Henderson SDCRG

This year marks 50 years of continuous service to Irish dancing in Australia by 2018 World Championship Honouree, Janice Currie-Henderson SDCRG. A foundation member of the Australian Irish Dancing Association, Janice is a recognised teacher, adjudicator and examiner. She has been a past President of AIDA and a former Vice President of An Coimisiún le Rinci Gaelacha.

Janice, whose family originated in County Offaly, was introduced to the world of Irish dancing at the convent school in Dulwich Hill, Sydney, by Miss Thelma Harris. It took little time for Janice to develop her long-tasting love of Irish dancing and culture.

Janice successfully competed in many dancing championships and competitions, including the St. Patrick's Day Sports held in Sydney. Along the way, Janice competed with other girls who also went on to make their careers in Irish dancing. Many of them became life long friends, including the late Maureen Dwyer-Whelan SDCRG and Yvonne O'Brien-Camilleri ADCRG.

After a fine dancing career, and with Australia in need of teachers, Janice fulfilled her wish of becoming an Irish dancing teacher. In 1959 the Jan Currie Academy of Irish Dancing was founded. "Miss Jan", as she became widely known, began a significant and successful career, ably assisted by sisters Patsy and Marie on piano.

In April 1960, Jan married Bob Henderson and the team of "Miss Jan" and "Mr Bob" moved to Narwee where they started a family, having five sons, Robert, Michael, Peter (dec), Andrew and Craig.

In 1969, Jan and Joy Ransley went to Ireland to gain further accreditation, with each of them obtaining their TCRG qualification. Jan continued to develop her skills, returning to Ireland many times as teacher, adjudicator and examiner. She also visited America and other parts of the world.

The arrival of Irish dance shows ensured that Irish dancing provided many opportunities for international dancers and Jan's family was no exception.

After a successful competitive career her son, Craig was selected to perform in Riverdance and became Dance Captain of the Liffey Company. Many of Jan's champion dancers went on to perform in shows and others have become teachers and adjudicators.

In recognition of a long and rewarding career, Jan was honoured as Patron of the Australian Irish Dancing Association. In 2017, Jan was the recipient of the Brigid Award, a Lifetime Achievement Award, for her contribution to Irish dancing and Irish culture in Australia for over 50 years. Congratulations Jan.

