

Claire Waters



Some fact's at first...

- When and where were you born?

I was born in Newcastle upon Tyne in England on the 5th March 1984.

- Your height?

5''

- What is your favourite food?

My favourite food is definitely Chinese!!!

- Your favourite music?

R'n'B, Funky House

- Your favourite city / place in the world, you have visited so far?

I loved Singapore – it's an amazingly beautiful place I have been to with Lord of the Dance. Other than that my favourite city is my home town Newcastle upon Tyne – I love going back there and probably will never ever leave there.

- What's the most treasured moment in your life, so far?

Sometimes life is too short so I try to treasure everything.



About your family...

- Please tell us something about your parents - what do they do for their living? Do they dance as well?

My dad works on the oil rigs in the middle of the sea and I miss him lots.

My mum works in media advertising – mam used to dance when she was younger, so she got me into it.

They are brilliant parents – love them loads. They're great fun.

- Do you have any brothers or sisters? How old are they? Do they dance, too? What do they do for their living?

I have one sister called Vicki and she's one of my best friends. She dances too in team figure dancing and competes all over the world.

- Is it hard for you, to be apart from your family for such a long time while touring? How often are you able to travel back home again?

Of course – we all miss our families lots!

We're only able to travel back home when it's our breaks so we do miss families very much!

- What do your family think of your job as a Show Dancer? Are they proud of you? How often do they visit you on tour and watch you dancing the Show?

My family and friends think we all have a fantastic job and are so proud.

They visit as often as they can – my mum and best friends love the Show.



- There are a few relationships within the troupe – do you have a boyfriend?

I do have a boyfriend but not within in troupe.

About your beginnings...

- Why did you start Irish Dancing and when? Who taught you during all the time?

I started dancing at the age of four for the Hannon Murphy School – my dancing teachers are called Mrs. Livingstone and Kathleen Hannon.

- How old have you been at your first competition?

4 - class competitons.

A couple of years later major competitons.

- Did you attend many championships as a competition dancer? Have you won?

I attended competitions all over England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales as well others major and weekend competitons.

- What was it like to do competitions?

You got to meet lots of people which is lovely, but personally dancing in competitons always made nervous. It was fun though to compete and receiving medals for your placing then made it more special.

- What do you like more – Show Dancing or doing competitions? Why?

I personally prefer show dancing as its much more enjoyable and you can be yourself – I enjoy show lots. However, I wish looking back now than I took it that bit more seriously and practised as dancing its technicalities are still huge important within show dancing.



- What is – in your opinion – the most important difference between Show dancing and competitions?

Competiton is all about discipline and placement and you have to follow certain lines. Show dancing – although need both, discipline and placement, it has to be adapted to a more relaxed way.

- Did you have any major injuries because of Irish Dancing?

I have broken my foot and also have had ligament and achilles injuries.

- Did you learn other kinds of dance?

No, but love ballet and their discipline.

Becoming a Show Dancer...

- Have you been with another Irish Dance Show, before you joined LotD?

No, Lord of the Dance was the first.



- Have you seen the Show before you applied for auditions for LotD?

I had seen the show in Newcastle and also in Hyde Park in London.

- Do you remember what you have thought or felt during your auditions?

I remember feeling very nervous but excited at the same time. I was trying so hard to keep focused so that I could remember all the steps, as we only had a very short time to learn them.

- When did you do your auditions and do you have to wait a long time until they called you to join the Show?

I did my auditions and got the call to go within a month or two.

- When did you join LotD?

I joined Lord of the Dance September 29th 2003 in Hammersmith in London.

- Have you been called directly to T1 or did you have some training before?

I was called in for troupe one and to train to start up the new troupe – troupe 4!!! So I started with Troupe 1, then moved to Troupe 4 and now I am back with Troupe 1!

- Did you know some of the other troupe members before you joined?

I did – I grew up with Chris Hannon as his mam is/was my dancing teacher alongside his grandmother.

Also I've known Kelly Hendry since I was very young – she is one of my best friends at home. Also knew Des Bailey because of Kelly.



- Please describe the feeling, to join an already existing troupe. Were you nervous or afraid not to meet the requirements?

I still worry I don't meet the requirements! However, both troupes I have been in have been very welcoming; great bunch of people.



- Please describe the first day with your new troupe?

Very exciting but nerve wracking at the same time, but meeting everyone was loveley.

- What was the hardest part to learn?

It was hard remembering all the dances we were learning, but nothing in particular. Although hand movements were hard, as in competition you can't use your arms and you've been trained for years the other way, so that was hard!

- How much time did you get to learn your routines, until you first danced on stage with LotD? What was the first part you were allowed to dance? When was it?

We pretty much learned the routines and were put in straight away because they needed us to be, but that's the best way. The sooner you get on stage, the less nervous you feel. The first part I danced was pick up in Lord of the the Dance in Hammersmith, London.



Getting the Leading Part...

... I had to do "spirit" for a fill in, so I'll tell you a bit about that...

- Did you have to do auditions for your leading part, or did it just happen?

Becky Wilkinson, the Spirit in Troupe 4, hurt her ankle an hour and a half before the show and I had to be put up straight and away that show.

- Was it your idea of doing the lead or have you been suggested by somebody?

Because I'm small people used to joke I should do it, but I've never really been that confident and Becky did a great job.

- When did you start practising the leading part and who taught you to dance the Spirit? How long did it take, to learn the leading part?

In knew bits of it from watching Becky. But knowing the whole routine was entirely different and very daunting.

- What was the hardest part to learn as Spirit?

Just learning the whole routine and direction and positioning on stage was hard at first.

- When and where did you first stepped on stage as the Spirit?

France.

- Do you remember your feelings while doing the lead the very first time? Have you been nervous?

I've never been so nervous everytime I dit it!!! Its very scary being out there by yourself!!

- Who were your partners for this special show?

I did Spirit with Des, Kelly Bailey, Chris Hannon, Paul Devers, James Keegan, Katrina Hesketh, Katie Martin, Alice Reddin.



- Who are your favourite dance partners when you are doing the lead?

All!!!

Through the years with LotD / FoF...

- Please describe your course of day while touring!

Mainly it's just travelling, then hotel for an hour or two. Then straight in to venue to Show.

- Do you like travelling to all those places around the world or is it hard work?

It's hard work but we've been to some beautiful places – sometimes though we don't have a lot of time to look around those places, but we can say we've been.

- How much do you have to practice while touring?

We drill nearly every day – just going over steps and positions.

- What is your memorable moment with LotD / FoF?

My family seeing me dance at the Newcastle's Arena at home . My Dad has never really seen me dance, properly so him seeing me in the Show was my most memorable moment - he was so proud.

- Which Show do you personally like more – LotD or FoF? Why?

I never danced in Feet of Flames. But it was a great Show to watch.

- What is your favourite dance in LotD and in FoF (in Hard-/Softshoes) as a Lead Dancer and as a chorus dancer?

Lord of the Dance – Encore and Finale are good numbers, as the audience always seem to love these.



- How do you prepare for a show?

Warm up for a good 45 minutes after doing our hair and make up.

- Are you nervous before going on stage?

Yes, but sometimes its good to be, as it keeps the job going well.

- Have you ever been with another Troupe? If so – when was it?

I was with Troupe 4 for the whole time Troupe 4 was running.

- Is there a special diet, you have to follow?

Just to eat well.

- How do you get so much energy for a show?

Build it up, but we also get energy from the audience – if they are very entuhustiac, then we do more.

Costumes & other equipment...

- Is it hard to handle the different sizes of stage in different cities?

Just have to remember numbers of different size stages, as you have to adapt.

- How long does it take to get ready before the show?

It takes girls longer, as we have to do our hair and make-up, then warm up so probably an hour alltogether.



- What are your favourite shoes to dance with?

Softshoes

- Your shoe size?

My shoesize is a size 4-5.

Mainly 4, but sometimes 5.

- How often do you need new shoes (heavies and lights)? Do you have a special trick to break in new Heavies?

I love all my old heavy shoes, as they are so comfortable, but when I get new heavies they are horrible to breakt in and my trick that works for me is:

I sit in a hot bath with my heavy shoes on and mould them to my feet and try to bend them, so I can get up on my blocks. Then I just wear them around the house or hotel to break them in.

nowadays & in the future...



- What do the dancers do, when they get a long tour-break? Staying at home or doing another job - maybe dancing in one of the other shows or joining another LotD-Troupe in the meanwhile?

Having a break is a nice thing, because you get to have a good rest and to see family and friends, so when I'm home that's mainly what I do – spend quality time at home.

Other dancers sometimes would work either at home if we have a very long break but most prefer to enjoy the break!

- How long do you plan to stay with LotD? Hopefully a long time!

As long as the show keeps going.

- What are your (dancing and non-dancing) plans for your future?

I'd love to carry on dancing, maybe with my own dancing school.

