

PAT FINNEGAN (nee Crocker) – PRINCIPAL

Pat founded Danceworld in 1982 after moving to Laindon with her family. She trained at the Finch Stage School in Chadwell Heath, where at a very young age she showed a passionate love for teaching. Having qualified at the unusually young age of 15, she became an Associate of the British Association of Teachers of Dancing. She also studied work from the RAD, and ISTD.

From the age of 3, Pat enjoyed her dancing and singing lessons, and started solo work at the age of 5, when she was entered for many competitions, including the British Arts Awards, All England and many others, where she soon became British Champion, winning trophies for all her dance studies, and was especially known for her tap dancing skills. Her championship status was upheld until she retired from amateur competitive work at the age of 18.

Pat was discovered at a young age by Carrol Leviss Discoveries, which was THE talent show on TV at the current time. She danced through her teenage years in many London Theatres, including the Royal Albert Hall, and the famous Scala Theatre, alongside such celebrities as Roy Hudd, Brian Blessed, and even danced accompanied by the famous Russ Conway. Pat also had the pleasure of working with Billy J. Kramer and the Dakotas, whilst performing for the Queen Mother. She also worked professionally as a model, in London, with the current Miss World.

Knowing that her calling was for teaching, Pat decided to turn down many offers of professional work to teach, and eventually turned that dream into the reality of owning her own dance school. Furthering her own professional qualifications has been something that Pat found a necessary part of keeping up with current trends in dance, and fulfilling her own ambition to become an Examiner. She has lectured for many dance associations throughout the years, and has adjudicated and examined for the British Arts Association with whom she holds an Honours Membership, and now examines for the BATD, with whom she holds her Fellowship and Examiners qualifications. In 2002 Pat was awarded her Life Membership of the BATD, and now enjoys travelling throughout Great Britain, examining for the Association. For several years, Pat has been a Committee Member for the BATD London District, Stage and Ballet Committee where she works on behalf of other London District teachers (The London District covering over 400 teachers who teach anywhere between the Midlands, and Wales right down to Cornwall). In 2006 Pat was elected Vice-Chair of the BATD London District Committee.

One of her greatest joys, professionally, has been watching her students progress, passing their exams, winning competitions, qualifying as teachers, and seeing them go in the wonderful world of

showbiz. Where possible, Pat goes to see her past students in their shows, both in Great Britain, and overseas, and looks forward to their visits when they come back home to England.

Pat's daughter, Kerry, has followed in her footsteps, and Pat is very proud that Kerry is now her business partner, and is as passionate about Danceworld as she is. Knowing that Danceworld will continue for many years to come, with Kerry at the helm, has given Pat great pleasure. Her grandchildren, Niamh and Cal, are now studying dance, drama and singing at the school, and little Dylan will be joining us soon, so watch this space!!