

RSCDS John Muir Branch (Wisconsin, USA)

Number of years established as a branch: 9

Annual Report (June 2011-May 2012)

Respectfully Submitted by Nancy McClements, Secretary

The Muir Branch had a productive year, focusing on a special 35th annual ball honoring the long-time teacher and musician duo of Norma and Michael Briggs. We made additional efforts to ensure the weekend's success, including extending outreach to previous members, family, and friends; holding a dinner and ceilidh with acts in their honor; hand-painting souvenir wineglasses; creating a collage of photos throughout the years; and performing a new dance, The Muirland Briggses, a medley written especially for their distinctive personalities. Our efforts paid off with a fun-filled weekend that included more than 90 attendees from six states and Canada. Due to a change in dates, within one year we co-sponsored two residential dance workshops at Beloit College, the [Midwest Scottish Weekend](#), with the Chicago and Milwaukee groups. In an effort to draw in new dancers, we performed twice at the Madison Farmers' Market, wearing shirts with a newly designed embroidered logo. To reach out to the broader Celtic community, we performed at a Robert Burns Dinner and joined a group planning a local Celtic festival for 2013. Our dancers are enjoying learning from our newly-minted teachers, instructing in rotation. A children's class produced both young dancers and budding musicians whom we will want to cultivate into seasoned performers. We instituted a new tradition of providing tea and treats at our weekly dances, resulting in more socializing (and more pounds!) We are pleased that a number of former dancers found us this year, and are enjoying returning to the fold. Apparently Scottish country dancing is just like riding a bike!

