

RSCDS Branch: Madison Scottish Country Dancers (Wisconsin, USA)

Number of years established as a branch: 23

Annual Report (July 2025 - June 2026)

Respectfully submitted by Corinna Gries, Secretary

Madison Scottish Country Dancers (MSCD) has had yet another event-filled year. We often had about 20 or more enthusiastic dancers showing up for our weekly Sunday dance sessions.

Membership: Our official membership is currently at 45 active members and many more potential members on our mailing list

MSCR Classes: The Adult Beginner Scottish Country Dancing classes taught through the Madison School and Community Recreation (MSCR) program continue to be a great success and are generally fully booked. A "Try It!" evening precedes the official 8-week class and was well attended. A graduation party with live music followed the Fall class, and the Winter students attended our annual ball for free. Several participants from the Fall and Winter sessions have joined up and have been regularly dancing at our Sunday evening classes. Thanks to Nancy McClements and Janice Lacock for providing enthusiastic and expert instruction and Bethany Wolkoff and Isabella Palange for extra support to beginning dancers.

Teachers: Between the Madison and Milwaukee branches we are very lucky to have several amazing teachers who are regularly traveling to provide excellent instruction to both groups. They regularly take on new and challenging dances and prepare us well for upcoming events. Our teachers have added special beginner friendly and advanced classes some Sundays at 6 pm before the regular dances at Wil-Mar. Bethany Wolkoff, along with dancers from Milwaukee and Chicago, has accomplished intense training and exams, major milestones on the road to becoming a certified Scottish country dance teacher. Congratulations Bethany for passing Units 1 & 2 and Isabella for passing Unit 1! Rebecca Winnie, teacher in Milwaukee and Madison, was instrumental in shepherding the training to its successful completion. Thank you, Rebecca! Many Madison dancers participated in the training as students and dancers, and learned some pointers that aren't usually covered in beginner lessons. We are very happy that a new preliminary certificate teacher, Hugh Dowell, has relocated to Madison and is sharing his teaching and piping skills with us. We cheer for the group of new teachers to finish the remaining units for becoming fully certified.

Dance Parties and Other Events: The annual MSCD picnic was a rousing success at Janice Lacock's new home and pool in August with swimming, good food, games, and fun to be had by everyone. Our annual Winter Dance Party at the Wil-Mar Neighborhood Center was held on January 3rd. We had live music provided by Lochanside and a potluck dinner afterwards. During the summer months we hosted Socials on Sunday evenings with live music by Dave Mullen and dancing was followed by potluck desserts, ice cream sundaes, and other activities.

St. Andrew's Society of Madison: A group of Madison dancers performed at the Society's picnic on very uneven ground. Janice called a few ceilidh dances to round out a beautiful evening at the shores of Lake Mendota. Their Burns dinner in January has become an annual event and dancers from MSCD performed and led several audience participation dances. We were proud to successfully nominate Janice Lacock as the winner of their Charles Snowdon Meritorious Service Award! The Society also held two well-attended ceilidh dances. Both featured the band Lochanside at the Four Winds Farm. Lochanside includes our musicians Dave Mullen and Andy Seevers, and our teachers, Janice and Hugh, were calling the dances.

Annual Ball: Our big event every year is our ball weekend in March in the beautiful Great Hall in the University of Wisconsin-Madison's Memorial Union. This year the 46th annual ball's theme was "Dancing by the Lochs." Lochanside provided the music at the ball, which was preceded by toasts, dinner

and a grand march for which Andy Seevers provided the piping. After an evening of delightful dancing, a party was held at a member's home, as was a Sunday morning brunch. Approximately 70 dancers from several states attended the ball, including a number of beginners from Madison and Milwaukee classes. Another highlight of the ball was a very successful silent auction, which contributed greatly to our scholarship fund.

Midwest Scottish Weekend: In June, the Chicago, Madison, and Milwaukee Scottish Country Dance Groups hosted the 15th annual Midwest Scottish Weekend at Wayland Academy in Beaver Dam, Wisconsin. About 64 participants joined us for a fun-filled weekend of dance, instruction, great food, ceilidh acts, and camaraderie. Beautiful music for the dances and classes was provided by Scottish-Canadian musicians Karen Steven (fiddle) and Alastair MacDonald (accordion). Delightful dance instruction was provided by Jody Kulas and Arthur Baum.

National and International Scottish Dance Workshops: Members of the MSCD are increasingly traveling to other national and international Scottish dance workshops, e.g., the New Zealand branch's Summer School in Christchurch, Pinewoods Camp, the Teachers' Association (Canada) summer school in Sherbrooke, Quebec. Some members traveled out of state for balls (Chicago, the Twin Cities, and Ames, Iowa) and workshops to learn from new teachers and expand their repertoire of dances and friends.

Scholarships: MSCD provided generous scholarships for travel and registration at various events.

Media: Mandar Bhutkar, a new dancer with a penchant for making videos, filmed a ["360 Charli xcx/Bridgerton"](#) version of a set dancing Wild Geese. It was unveiled at the Annual General Meeting.

46th Annual Ball Attendees

