

# STARODÁVNÝ NECHODIVAJ

(Czech Republic)

Starodávny Nechodivaj (STAH-roh-DAHV-nee NEXH-oh-dee-vai) is a couple dance from the province of Valašsko in northeastern Moravia. "Starodávny" means old traditional dance, but the meaning is more complex in that it refers also to something that recalls a cherished memory. So, the translation is a traditional dance that is fondly remembered. Nechodivaj is from the song that accompanies the dance (see lyrics) and means "Don't come to my house." The dance was taught by Jitka Bonušová at the 2014 Stockton Folk Dance Camp. The same dance with some modifications was taught with the name Valašský Starodávny at the 2000 Stockton Camp by Radek Rejšek and Eva Rejšková (Bill and Louise Lidicker, 2001, Let's Dance! 58(3):9-11). Differences between these two versions of the dance will be annotated in the following description as "(VS: ....)" for the Valašský Starodávny version.

The lyrics for this dance require some comments. The heroine seems to be threatening to reject her lover for being unfaithful, but likely she is begging for a reconciliation. She refers to him plucking a lovely flower from her garden, the "marijanek." In many cultures a pretty flower is a metaphor for virginity in either or both sexes. The marijanek (*Rosmarinus officinalis*) is called rosemary in English. It is also a symbol of virginity, and in the Middle Ages of Europe was considered a love charm and was associated with wedding ceremonies. We acknowledge with thanks Jitka Bonušová and Klement Hartinger for help with translation.

Music: 3/4 meter

CD – Stockton 2014, Czech Folk Dances by Jitka Bonušová and Jan Pumpr, band 4;  
Cassette – Dances from the Czech Republic, Stockton Folk Dance Camp, 2000, band A/6.

Video: 2014 Stockton Folk Dance DVD can be viewed in the library at the University of the Pacific or by contacting a Camp participant who purchased it.

Formation: Couples in circle with hands joined (V-position), W is to M's R.

Steps: **Starodávny step** (1 per meas): Step fwd on R heel (ct 1), close L behind R (ct &), small step fwd on R full ft (ct 2), step L full ft fwd (ct 3). Can also start on L. If done backward, the initial step is on the full ft, and the closing step is done on the heel.

Styling: Flowing and graceful, knees flex on each step. Except for Figs. I, VII, meas 7-8, and VIII, partners maintain an intimate feeling between them.

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Measures 3/4 meter

PATTERN

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1. GLIDING STEP R AND L; FORWARD AND BACK (There is no introductory music so traditionally the dance is started with meas 2.)

- 1-4 Take large swooping step R on R, joined hands move back a little (ct 1); close L to R while swinging arms fwd (ct 2); hold (ct 3). Repeat meas 1 but take no wt on cts 2-3 (meas 2). Repeat meas 1-2 with opp ftwk and dir (meas 3-4). On last step, take wt on L.
- 5-6 Dance 1 **Starodávný step** twd ctr starting with R; arms fwd and parallel with the floor (meas 5); take 3 steps in place (R,L,R) (meas 6).
- 7-8 Moving bkwd, dance 1 **Starodávný step** starting with L, joined hands remain fwd (meas 7); dance 3 steps in place, L,R,L (VS: M turns to R (CW arc) to face ptr on these 3 steps) (meas 8).
- 9 On this interlude meas, W dances 3 steps in place (R,L,R), M drops hand hold on his L, turns to R (CW) to face ptr (R,L,R); cpl joins both hands (VS: cpl holding both hands with arms rounded, make small knee bend and bow heads in acknowledgment).

II. SIDEWARDS, CIRCLING AWAY

- 1-2 Still holding both hands, M steps sideways L on L (ct 1), close R to L (ct &), step L on L (ct 2) and swing R leg in front of L (ct 3); W moves R with opp ftwk (meas 1); repeat with opp ftwk and dir (meas 2).
- 3-4 Circle away from each other and back, dancing 2 **Starodávný steps**, M starts with L to L, W with R to R. On meas 4, ct 3, take no wt on free ft. M places hands behind his back at waist with palms out (VS: M holds arms out to side or slightly in front with palms fwd); W holds hands diagonally low and out to sides with palms down.
- 5-8 Repeat meas 1-4 with opp ftwk and dir (M starts on R to R, W on L to L). On meas 8, ct 3 W takes no wt on last step R. End with ptrs facing, not too close together, M on inside.

III. TURNING WITH ELBOW HOLD

- 1-3 Moving twd each other, with large swooping step, ptrs join in R elbow hold. With eye contact, dance 3 **Starodávný steps** making 2 turns so that M ends on inside of circle. M's arm held straight out to the side, palms down; W's arms down, slightly out to the side.
- 4 Release elbow hold, circle L (CCW) with 3 even walking steps, starting R, end facing ptr.
- 5-8 Repeat meas 1-4 with opp ftwk and dir, L elbows linked. End with ptrs facing, M's back to ctr.
- 9 Holding both hands, arms rounded, make small knee bend and bow head to acknowledge each other.

IV. PROMENADE AND TURNING

- 1-4 Assume semi-open ballroom hold (M's R and W's L hips adjacent, leading arms fully extended, not stiff), dance 4 **Starodávný steps** in LOD, M starts with L, W with R. On meas 4, ct 3 M takes no wt on R while moving W into closed ballroom hold.
- 5-7 Cpl turns CW with 3 **Starodávný steps**, both starting with R.
- 8 W turns R (CW) under M's L arm with 3 small steps (R,L,R); M takes 3 small steps in place (R,L,R). Ptrs end facing, M on inside facing out.

V. CLAPS, GLIDES WITH TURNS

- 1 With ft together, softly clap (VS: silently clap) thighs while bending knees slightly (ct 1), own hands in front (ct 2), and ptr's hands (ct 3).

- 2 Take 3 walking steps in a small circle away from ptr and back (largest step on ct 1), M turns L starting on L, W turns R starting on R. W's hands diagonally low out to the side, palms down. M's hands on back near the waist, palms out.
- 3 Repeat meas 1.
- 4 Repeat meas 2 with opp ftwk and dir (M to R, W to L). End facing ptr.
- 5 W takes 3 steps turning R (R,L,R) and moving slightly R with deep knee bend; M leads W in turn, taking her R hand in his L. M stands in place with R hand at small of back, palm out (VS: W makes larger movement to her R with turn and M makes a gliding step to the L slightly bending knees (ct 1), close R to L straightening knees (ct 2), hold (ct 3). Ptrs join both hands, bend knees slightly, and acknowledge each other.
- 6 Ptrs join both hands, bend knees slightly, and acknowledge each other.
- 7 Repeat meas 5, with opp ftwk and dir.
- 8 Repeat meas 6.
- 9 During this interlude meas, both take 3 steps (L,R,L): W turns to her L, about ¼ turn, and M moves to R then turns to face ptr; M end facing LOD (VS: silently and gently ptrs touch palms together at about head level and hold).

VI. STARODÁVNÝ STEPS SEPARATELY AND TOGETHER

- 1-4 W dances 4 **Starodávny steps** starting with R while turning to R slowly in LOD, making one complete turn per meas, W's arms are held down near sides, palms down. W looks back at ptr when starting turn (ct 1) and does most of turn on R (ct 2). M follows ptr with 4 **Starodávny steps** starting with R and moving in LOD without turns, clapping on ct 1 of each meas. On cts 2 and 3 M's arms are held out to the sides at chest height. As the W completes meas 4, M intercepts her R hand with his L.
- 5-8 W continues to rotate to R (CW) with 4 **Starodávny steps** while moving fwd in LOD, making one complete turn on each meas. M assists by turning ptr with his L hand. There are no claps in this Fig, and M's R arm is held straight out to R side. (VS: a repeat of Fig. II is substituted for this Fig. as described here.)

VII. TURNING IN BALLROOM HOLD AND W SOLO TURNS

- 1-3 In closed ballroom hold, cpl rotates CW in place with 3 **Starodávny steps**, both starting with R. End with M's back to ctr and ptrs facing.
- 4 W turns R under M's L arm with 4 steps (R,L,R,L) (cts 1,2,3,&), while M takes 3 small steps (R,L,R) in place; end with M facing LOD, and W facing RLOD.
- 5-6 W rotates to her R, starting on R with 12 flat double-time buzz steps, making two full turns, arms down (cts 1,&2,&3,&1,&2,&3,&), no wt on last step (L). M claps on first ct 1, and then watches ptr with hands held out to sides, palms up.
- 7-8 W repeats meas 5-6 in opp dir, starting L. M turns 1/2 to L to face W on his L side, and repeats meas 5-6 watching opp W. Again W take no wt on last step (R). Ptrs end side by side facing ctr, Everyone joins hands to form circle. (VS: a repeat of Fig. III is substituted for this Fig. as described here.)

VIII. FINALE

- 1-8 Repeat Fig. 1. At end, with arms down, bow head slightly to acknowledge other dancers.

## STARODÁVNÝ NECHODIVAJ LYRICS

### Czech

Nechodívaj k nám synečku dvorem,  
pošlapeš mě marijánek kolem.  
Najpěknější kvíteček utrhneš,  
řeca si mňa nevezmeš.

Počem si to má milá poznala,  
že ta moja láska není stálá.  
Poznala sem po jednom slovečku,  
žeš falešný synečku.

Zasela sem marijánek tady,  
aby láska věrná vzešla všady.  
Koho já ve svém srdénku nosím,  
tomu já ten kvítek dám.

### Translation

My sweetheart, do not come to my house through the garden  
You will trample my rosemary all around.  
The most pretty flower you will pluck,  
But then will not marry me after all.

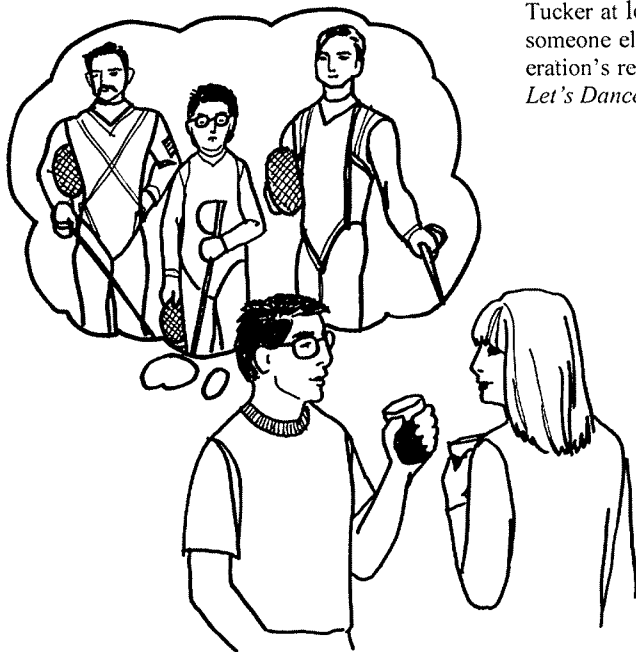
How did you figure it out  
That my love is not sincere?  
I found out after just one word  
That you are unfaithful.

I planted the rosemary here  
To honor a trusting love.  
Whoever is in my heart  
I will give it to him.

## *Why did you start folk dancing?*

Art by Susan Gregory

Dialog by Loui Tucker



### Share your story

If you'd like to share YOUR story, email *Let's Dance!* Associate Editor Loui Tucker at [loui@loutucker.com](mailto:loui@loutucker.com) and tell her YOUR reason. You could also share someone else's story, if you think they might be too shy. Susan Gregory, the Federation's resident artist, will draw the cartoon and it will appear in a future issue of *Let's Dance!* No names will be mentioned, so your story will be safe with us!



The only physical education classes that fit in my college schedule and satisfy my graduation requirements were fencing and folk dance. Folk dancing seemed like the lesser of two evils.

And I've been folk dancing for 35 years.