

# ŠTAJERIŠ

## Slovenian

Notes by Dick Crum for Aman Institute 94

*Štajeriš* (shtah' -yeh-reesh, from German *Steierisch*, 'Styrian dance') is a couple dance "imported" from Austria into Slovenia in the late 17th century. It was brought to the U.S. and Slovenes in Minnesota, Illinois, Ohio and New York danced it up into the 1930s.

After years of searching for someone who knew the dance, I finally found a married couple, Louis and Elizabeth Jartz, both American-born of Slovenian descent and in their 70s, who had danced it in Cleveland, Ohio, during their late teens.

It was a favorite dance of the Jartz's and they regretted that it had fallen out of popularity. They recalled that at dance events in Cleveland in the 1930's very few couples knew *Štajeriš*, and that whenever it was played, the majority of dancers either danced it as a waltz, or left the floor and simply watched the three or four couples who knew it.

Mr. and Mrs. Jartz taught me *Štajeriš* in Cleveland in July, 1990. Their three-figure version, which they danced beautifully and without hesitation, for the first time in 50 years, is described below.

<b>Recording</b>	Special tape cassette, Slovenian Traditional Dances, bd. 1.
<b>Formation</b>	Couples positioned randomly about the dance area. "Skaters position": partners side by side, woman on man's right side, their hands joined in front, L hand in L hand, R hand in R hand, man's R arm crossed over woman's L arm.
<b>Note</b>	<i>Štajeriš</i> is danced "on the spot", i.e., does not move about the dance floor.
<b>Meter</b>	3/4
<b>Basic step</b>	Three flat-footed, light, short, even-paced steps per measure (cf. the Austrian <i>Ländler</i> step). Man begins the dance (and any new phrase) with his Lft, woman begins with Rft. Man sometimes stamps onto Lft as he begins a new 8-measure phrase.

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MEAS	ACTION
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### Figure 1 - Rotate clockwise

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| Meas 1-8  | In "Skaters position" described above, couple rotates clockwise with 8 basic steps. (M moves forward, W backs up.)  |
| Meas 9-16 | On the 1st count of meas 9, without releasing hands, each dancer makes a quick individual half-turn in place (M to R, W to L), thereby reversing the "Skaters position". (This half-turn is propelled by both dancers pulling forcefully with the "stretched" hand [M's R hand, W's L hand]. They end up still side by side, but W is on M's L side, her R arm crossed over his L arm.) In this position, couple continues rotating clockwise (M backing up, W moving forward). |

## Figure 2 - Individual twirls

- Meas 1-8 Partners release L hands and place them on own hips, raising joined R hands, under which W twirls R (clockwise) in place with 8 basic steps (approximately 1 twirl per 2 measures). M does 8 basic steps in place as W does her twirls.
- Meas 9-16 With L hands still on own hips: M twirls L (counterclockwise) in place under joined R hands with 8 basic steps. W circles clockwise around him with 8 basic steps as he twirls.

## Figure 3 - Dishrag turns

- Meas 1-2 Joined R hands are brought down and partners rejoin L hands under joined R hands; M then pushes all joined hands to his L and upward, sending W into 1 dishrag turn R (clockwise) in 2 basic steps under all joined hands. M does 2 basic steps in place as W turns.
- Meas 3-4 Without releasing hands, M does 1 dishrag turn L (counterclockwise) in 2 basic steps under all joined hands. W does 2 basic steps in place as M turns.
- Meas 5-16 Repeat movements of meas 1-4 three more times, for a total of four; partners thus alternating with each other and each doing a total of 4 dishrag turns during the 16 measures.

After the dishrags, couple resumes original "Skaters position" and begins the dance all over again with Figure 1.