

VELAKHODNA HAILKA

Velakhodna (Great Easter or Spring) Hailka (Dance) is usually done on the church lawn or "green" at Easter time.

The Easter ritual goes generally as follows (differs slightly from area to area or village to village):

Sunday morning all go to church.

Eggs and food are brought to be blessed.

After services, all go home and the traditional dinner is prepared.

Sunday afternoon all go back to church.

At the end of the service, when all have filed out of the church, "Velakhodna Hailka" is begun.

On Monday after Easter "Ob livaney Ponedyelok" is observed (Translation: Poured, or watered Monday)

Boys visit girls with containers of water. As girls hold their hands out, water is spilled on them by the boys, three times, (with each girl present). Each time the water is poured the boy says "Christos Vosres" (Christ has risen).

Girls then give boys Pisanki (Ukrainian Easter eggs).

In some villages the variation of this ritual has the boys pouring water on the necks of the girls instead of their hands.

This whole ritual many times goes to extremes, and ends in a water fight.

As this dance is done on Easter Sunday, the mood while doing it is generally majestic and dignified.

MUSIC: 6/8 time, 5 measures per melody, one melody repeats throughout dance. NATIONAL 4527-8 RECORD

FORMATION: In couples, holding inside hands which are raised to shoulder height. Outside hands are on hips with fingers extended.

BASIC STEP OF DANCE: A lilting run, with small steps and feet kept close to the floor.

STEPS:

1. CIRCLE RUN

Dance begins in a circle with couples facing c.c.w. Girl is on the man's right with inside hands held, and raised to shoulder height. Outside hands on hips. All couples on sound of bells BREAK HANDS, KNEEL DOWN AND TOUCH HEADS TO THE FLOOR, THEN GET UP AGAIN AND RESUME THEIR COUPLE FORMATION. At the beginning of the first melody all run c.c.w. for 4 measures. On 5th measure swing inside hands back and turn $\frac{1}{2}$ turn toward each other, woman facing inside circle, man facing outside.

Continued.

After the 1/4 turn, all couples raise both hands and form an arch. THE FEET ARE STILL.

II. UNDER THE ARCHES

One cpl (usually chosen before the dance begins) breaks the circle of arches by again taking inside hands, and with M leading W by L hand begins running through arch in front of him, and through all other arches all the way around the circle. They are followed immediately by the cpl that was directly in front of them. M # 2 taking R hand of W # 1 as she passes him. This second cpl do exactly as 1st cpl, then, the 3rd cpl, and so on until all have gone under the arches, taking hands as they go. One by one, as each cpl returns to place in circle, they reform the arch. After returning to place, all keep moving feet in time to music. As last cpl moves through arches and finishes the pattern, all keep time in place until the END OF THE MELODY. This will vary in time depending upon how many people are in the dance.

At the beginning of a new melody, the same couple repeats FIG 2, but this time, one by one, the cpls find no one passing through arches, their arms drop to shoulder hgt, still holding hands. Feet keep time in place. Chain ends with all hands down to shoulder height. As the last couple finishes arches, use last beats of ending melody (will vary in time) to raise arms (all) above heads, palms down, fingers closed.

III DOUBLE CHAIN

At the beg of next melody, W, who are facing ctr, run to ctr of circle with arms still raised and then drop into outside basket hold. (2 meas)

At the same time M make 1/2 turn in place CW and move twd ctr slightly and hook elbows, forming a chain facing ctr, just outside the W circle. (2 meas)

On Meas 3, W run circling L (CW) and M run R (CCW) till end of melody. Repeat on next melody in reverse direction.

IV THREAD THE NEEDLE

Same head cpl begin this step. M circle break elbows and hold hands. (Beg of melody)

W: Break basket hold and take 1 step bwd, taking hands and raising them "ear high" W keep time in place. (Beg melody)

M: Lead M breaks elbow chain and all M take hands with leader breaking circle with L hand free. Leader weaves in and out of W raised hands in circle moving CW. He moves completely around circle, weaving in and out of each arch. When he returns to his place, he comes out of the circle completely, pulling his line out with him, and does some free weaving of his line till he he ends up at the end of a melody in a straight line. (If done on a stage, it would be a line on stage L, with leader down stage)

W: When last M has gone through arches and has left the circle, all of the W arms come down to the sides and the lead W breaks the circle. (Her R hand free)

As the M line is ^{free} weaving and moving into place, the W line is led CCW around in circle, until the lead W is in pos to move down and form a line facing M (on opp side of stage)

passing to shoulders

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NOTE: M WEAVING IS DONE TO MARK TIME UNTIL ALL M HAVE LEFT W ARCHES. THE LINES OF BOTH M AND W SHOULD FORM AT APPROX SAME TIMES.

V DOUBLE CIRCLES

When lead M and W have their lines on each side at the beginning of a new melody, they run toward each other, pulling their lines, meet, and turn up stage, making individual circles, then back to place. (See floor pattern diagram).



VI THREE FORWARD BOWS

Bow heads only

When lines have reformed, M and W drop hands and put them on their hips. Both lines face each other.

At the beginning of a melody - both lines run to each other and bow for one meas (count of ~~si~~ x). Bow begins on last 3 beats (4,5,6). While still moving fwd (on count 1,2,3,) drop hands to sides as you ~~bow from the waist~~ bow. As the run backward begins, hands are placed back on hips.

Both lines then run backwards (back out) for six counts.
(no bow at end of step.)

Both lines repeat running in toward each other, this time for nine counts ($1\frac{1}{2}$ measures) then back out for 9 counts ($1\frac{1}{2}$ measures). The bow is executed on the last three beats (this time on 7,8,9) of the running in sequence only.

On the third time the lines meet, smaller steps are taken and the lines meet after 2 measures (two counts of 6). As lines move toward each other, arms are extended in front as if pleading with each other. No bow.

When the two lines meet, hook right elbows with partner and do a right elbow swing, until the end of the melody.

VII UNDER THE ARCHES

At the beginning of a melody arches are formed as in figure #2 of the dance. This time in a line instead of a circle and with the last woman in the line leading through to the front.

All stand still until time for going through!

As leading woman comes through from the rear to the front and goes under the last arch she begins "free weaving" until all have gone under the arches.

The "under the arches" step is done through only once.

VIII WEAVING THE BOWING LINE

When all couples have gone under the arches, lead woman steps the free weaving and begins moving the line back and forth in a shuttle fashion (see diagram) until vertical lines are formed. The number of vertical lines as well as how many melodies it will take will again depend on the number of people involved in the dance.

When all lines are formed, mark time in place till the end of a melody.

At the beginning of a melody, the bows are executed. Feet stop marking time.

Bow #1

Hands out to sides (shoulder height) palms up, head drops and then raises. (this bow should suggest the Christ figure)

Bow #2

Hands cross on breast and head bows again (down and up)

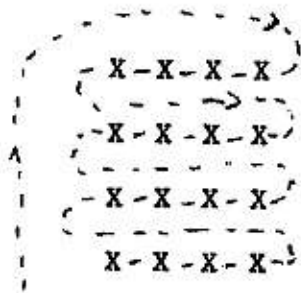
Bow #3

Hands open out and come slowly down to the sides and head bows again.

Head then raises with eyes straight front, hands come up to a little higher than shoulder height with palms out to side.

*continued ..
(ERRATA)*

P 8 FIG 8 WEAVING THE BOWING LINE Diagram for this fig is:



x represents one dancer
As line moves from R to L
dancers drop off.

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Downstage