



## NEWSLETTER

### Viola da Gamba Society

### New England

March 2016



#### President's Letter

It's almost spring. Can you believe it? I really hope we can count on it this time. After all the snow last winter, it looks as if we may escape the worst this year.... Knock on wood!

Our winter workshop was enjoyed by all. Chris Henriksen gave a fascinating lecture on music for viols in France through the reigns of seven different kings, and afterwards we played examples of the music. At the end of the day we all gathered in a big room at the Hancock Church and played a suite of dances that were originally written for a horse ballet.

For our spring workshop on Saturday, April 23, we'll return to Brandeis to play viol consort music that is modeled after Italian vocal music. James Williamson is directing this one. Please sign up early! The sooner we know who will be there, the easier it will be for James and his helpers to put together a wonderful program for all of the groups.

Watch our website for news of the Gian Lyman Silbiger Grant, a competitive award which supports New England viol players and vocal ensembles who wish to present music appropriate for viol consort and voices. Guidelines and the application itself will be on the website very soon.

At our recent VdGS-NE board meeting, Ed Fleming announced that he is hoping to step down from his longtime post as volunteer webmaster of our website. He has offered to keep at the job until we find a replacement. We

are currently searching for a motivated individual with knowledge of both website construction and management (as well as some familiarity with violas da gamba!). If you would like to volunteer to help, please let me or any member of the board know. We are so grateful to Ed for his many years of service to our organization, and we know that he's looking forward to having a little more time to do other things that he'd like to do (such as play the viol, and come to some workshops!)

I have a bit of sad news: Beverly Antonitis wrote to say that Jane Ann Cooper passed away last October 2. Jane Ann was a long-time member of the Viola da Gamba Society-New England and came to many workshops. She was 94.

Please make sure to pay your VdGS-NE dues. If you're not sure whether or not you've paid, please check with Sybil Kevy (thebarbate@gmail.com). We need your dues and contributions in order to keep offering our programs. Not only that, we welcome any questions or suggestions at any time.

This will be my last President's letter. Thank you for all of your support for the past six years (has it really been six years??). Above all, keep playing and coming to concerts and supporting our Society. Happy spring to all, and stay healthy.

*Carol Lewis*

## “Chowse”

Have you ever played the six-part Fantasias and Almains of Martin Peerson and wondered about the jowly title of Fantasia #3? It turns out that this is an obsolete spelling of a word still seen in Scrabble dictionaries as “chouse,” with a meaning of trick or deceit.

Trick or deceit is the exact definition of the Italian word “inganno.” Musical “inganni” were a delight of the court at Ferrara in the sixteenth century, where many composers wrote madrigals or other pieces containing hidden passages, often using syllables of the hexachord in witty puzzles. Sometimes they went so far as to set the whole hexachord, “ut, re, mi, fa, sol, la,” in the text of their songs. The English fascination with Italian music extended to such devices; a look at the Peerson fantasia is rewarded with a fine example. In the first bass part there is a descending hexachord on A, followed by an ascending one on Bb. As announced in his title, Peerson has hidden an “inganno” in Fantasia #3.

### *Martha Davidson*

#### **Concert announcements for Spring 2016:**

“Sonate e Cantate: Italian Baroque Music for Voice and Viols”

Mezzo-soprano **Pamela Dellal** joins **El Dorado Ensemble** (Carol Lewis, Janet Haas, Paul Johnson, Mai-Lan Broekman & Alice Mroszczyk, viols; Olav Chris Henriksen, archlute & theorbo) in music by Vivaldi, Stradella, Marcello, Handel, Legrenzi & G. Strozzi.

Two performances:

**Friday, May 6, 2016 at 8:00 pm** in Lindsay Chapel, First Church in Cambridge, Congregational, 11 Garden St. (entrance on Mason St.), Cambridge, MA. For information, call (617)776-0692.

**Sunday, May 8, 2016 at 3:00 pm** at the Somerville Museum, Central St. at Westwood Road (entrance

on Westwood Road), Somerville, MA. For information, call (617)666-9810.

### **Viol Recitals at Longy**

**Thursday, April 7, 7:30 PM** in Wolfensohn Room, Zabriskie House, Longy School of Music. Viola da gamba recital by **Yi-Li Chang**, with Hannah Davidson, viol and Alastair Thompson, harpsichord. Works of Simpson, Marais, and Bach.

**Sunday, April 24, 2016, 2 PM** in Room N-1, Rey-Waldstein Building, Longy School of Music. Graduate Recital, **Hannah Davidson**, viola da gamba, with Christien Beeuwkes, voice and viol, Yi-Li Chang, violin and viola da gamba, John Ott and Benjamin Rechel, viols, and Alastair Thompson, harpsichord and organ. Works of Ortiz, Dowland, Hume, Lassus, Lawes, Schenck and Marais.

**Tuesday, May 3, 2016, 8 PM** in Wolfensohn Room, Zabriskie House, Longy School of Music. Duets for Viola da Gamba by Hume, Jenkins, Ste. Colombe, Schenck, and Marais, performed by **Yi-Li Chang, Hannah Davidson, John Ott** and **Christopher Grills**.

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