



Viola da Gamba Society--New England

September 2017

President's Letter

Greetings New England viol players! Fall is already approaching, so now it's time to reconnect and gear up for the coming season of viol activities. I hope you all had a wonderful summer full of all good things, including inspiring hours of music making and music listening.

Speaking of summer music activities, we can be thankful that we have a premier early music festival in our back yard every other year! The Boston Early Music Festival 2017 was a magnificent way to start off the summer season with a week full of incredible performances, master classes, symposia, and many interesting concurrent events. The VdGS-NE was involved in three events at BEMF, which you can read about in a brief article posted on the home page of our new website: www.vdgsne.org

Of course, there were many other early music concerts and workshops this summer, which I hope some of you were able to attend, and I hear that the 55th VdGSA Conclave in Oxford, Ohio was, once again, a wonderful experience for all who attended. Reflections on this year's Conclave can be found elsewhere in this newsletter.

Looking ahead to the 2017-18 season, our fall workshop will take place on Saturday, October 28 at Trinity Episcopal Church in Concord, MA. This venue proved to work very well for us last spring, so we are looking forward to enjoying it once again. Roland Hutchinson will be the music director, assisted by Hannah Davidson as local coordinator. He is keeping us in suspense as to the topic, so stay tuned!

It's hard to think of winter at this point in time, but it will be here sooner than we know. At Brandeis on Saturday, January 27, we can look forward to a lively and interesting workshop entitled "Coprario's Music," organized by Patricia Ann Neely. This will include music by composers who were active during the reign of Charles, Prince of Wales - - Alfonso Ferrabosco, Thomas Lupo, Orlando Gibbons, and John Coprario, to name a few. Coprario was so respected by Prince Charles that the household string ensemble bore his name, "Coprario's Music" - hence, the title of this workshop.

On to spring -- I am delighted that members of the Long and Away Consort of Viols will be directing our spring workshop. Anne Legêne and Karen Burciaga are the organizers, and the faculty will include James Williamson and Jane Hershey. The workshop will take place at Brandeis on Sunday, April 29, and the theme of the day will be "Music at the Württemberg Court and beyond - German music of the 16th and 17th centuries for voices and viols."

Just a note about our new website: it is still under construction, but will be finished some time this fall. Thank you for being patient! If you have any high-resolution photos that you think will enhance the website, please send them to: secretary@vdgsne.org. If you do so, be sure that whoever is depicted in the photograph has given us permission to publish the photo online. Thanks for supporting the viol in New England!

Best wishes for an enjoyable rest of summer,

Rosalind Brooks Stowe

Summer Workshop Roundup

This was my second **Conclave**, and I enjoyed it very much. I took part in the Seasoned Players, and did not take any classes. Highlight of the Seasoned Players for me was Loren Ludwig's special project, which consisted of reading Ortiz motets in the original notation, and trying to add Ortiz's ornaments, which we played through together each morning. It was fun to do something akin to practicing together, struggling with unfamiliar clefs, ligatures, etc., and memorizing the ornaments for different intervals. Having Gene Murrow's "air viol" (concertina) there was fun, too! I brought a special project of music from the VdGS-NE workshop "Beggars' Songbook," but there was no time for giving the background lecture. Without the historical background information and understanding of the Valerius connection the point of playing the music was somewhat lost, which was disappointing to me, but it was nice to introduce people to the music.

Some highlights for me were a mini concert of the newly discovered Telemann pieces, played by different gambists. It was great to hear these pieces performed all together, and made me want to explore them for myself. Performances by Alice Robbins, Lisa Terry, James Williamson and Sarah Cunningham stood out. Another mini concert of Sarah Cunningham singing and accompanying herself on Lyra viol was also wonderful. I also spent a lovely hour playing music for two basses with Lisa Terry, and had a great lesson on Couperin with Sarah Cunningham. And we heard some phenomenal Pardessus playing by Joanna Blendulf and Annalisa Pappano at the official evening concert.

Being in the seasoned players, after a few days playing through but never practicing music from early morning to late at night got to be less satisfying to me. The last day I suggested practicing a piece, which we did, and came up with a collaborative interpretation and understanding of it, which

was in a way a healing experience after all the music touched on but never perfected or truly penetrated. It felt like for the first time we really connected.

The best thing of being at the Conclave is to be together with so many people who all share this crazy passion for the viola da gamba. I was struck by the warmth and spirit of the society, which was so pervasive everywhere throughout the week, but especially on the last evening of the banquet. The society functions as a sort of family for its members, and I am happy to count myself among them. Many thanks to the VdGSA for making going there a little more affordable for me through the chapter grant.
Anne Legêne

The 55th VdGSA **Conclave** returned to Miami University in Oxford, Ohio.

As a participant in the Seasoned Players program, in addition to our self-directed study of the consort literature, I participated in special projects involving Martha Bishop's barless Lawes and Loren Ludwig's use of Ortiz motets as a medium for using Ortiz's many ornaments.

The faculty concert came in two parts: the Oberlin Consort in a survey of the *In Nomine* literature and the Catacoustic Concert showcasing music involving the pardessus.

There was an ad hoc concert featuring all 12 of the newly discovered Telemann fantasias for solo viol featuring various faculty and students.

As all those who've attended conclave have come to expect and enjoy, there was much consorting late into the night, frequently continuing into the 'morning.'

See you at the 56th Conclave July 22-29, 2018 somewhere in the 'East,' venue not yet announced.
Joan Boorstein

World Fellowship Center, in Conway, New Hampshire, held its Early Music Week Retreat from 6/22/17 to 6/29/17. The Theme was 'Tis Nature's Voice!' and The Peregrine Players performed a beautiful concert, "Images of Nature in Music, from Hildegard Von Bingen to George Frideric Handel." The performers were: Pamela Dellal, voice; Heloise Degrugillier, recorders; Jane Hershey, viols, recorder, voice; Anne Legêne, viols; Roy Sansom, recorders; Joshua Schreiber-Shalem, viols, hurdy-gurdy & tambourine; Larry Wallach, harpsichord, recorder, voice; and Yi-Li Chang, violin and viol. Early Music Week was joined by guest Dancer/Choreographer Ken Pierce, who taught and performed historical dance. Christopher Greenleaf, guest lecturer and founder of Early Music Week, gave a lecture on "The Glory of The Organ," and Larry Wallach presented "A Philosophical Inquiry into Music and Nature." There was an English Country Dancing evening led by Chris Rua, and Ken Pierce introduced "Historical Dance for all." Participants came from all over New England and beyond, and a wonderful time was had by all!

Alexandra Hawley

To be at **Pinewoods** for a week is itself a refreshing experience. Once you have carried your instruments, clothing and bedding to your cabin and parked your car, you step into an unpaved world of dirt paths, pines, oaks and beeches, and the water of two swimmable ponds. Delicious meals are served in a broad, open wood cafeteria; concerts take place in the commodious camp house. Being primarily a dance camp for most of its summer-long session, Pinewoods is well-provided with spacious open-air pavilions suitable for English country dancing (as well as other kinds); even the Early Music week has two daily dance sessions, one part of the class schedule and the other optional in the evenings.

For viol players this year, two choices were offered. It was possible to participate in the regular class sessions, where classes mixed

with other instruments were also available. The viol consort, under the care of Lisa Terry, ambitiously and successfully presented Robert Parsons' "Ave Maria" at the end-of-week concert. Another group of five viol players were part of the Academia, an intensive week-long session. The viol players had the privilege of playing on Sarah Mead's Renaissance viols; the instruments are modeled on a viol from 1580s Brescia, Italy. They also had the opportunity to explore a different bow grip using Renaissance bows, underhand but with fingers not touching the hair. The viol players were joined by five recorder players also playing Renaissance instruments, and five singers. The three daily classes concentrated on music from Brescia and environs circa 1580, to go with the viols. At the end of a week of coaching by Michael Barrett, Sarah Mead, Emily O'Brien and Lisa Terry, the Academia performed a short program of instrumental, vocal and combined music that they had worked on during the week.

Pinewoods Early Music Week provides a fine faculty teaching a range of instruments, voice and dance. At week's end the student concert featured interesting ensembles, many mixed, some not. A group of experienced dancers presented two dances; a consort of harps performed dance music; the advanced recorder ensemble presented Tye's "In Nomine Crye;" a loud band of mixed shawms, cornetto, and dulcian gave an accomplished sampler of their music; and a large collegium of mixed voices and instruments sang and played Tudor church music. Dancing each day, along with early morning Tai Chi and other warm-ups, lots of walking between classes, and swimming when possible kept us all vigorous and cheerful. A challenging and rewarding week, Pinewoods is well worth considering among the many summer workshop options.

Hannah Davidson

Peter Kyvelos

We will miss trips to Unique Strings, the dusty shop on Belmont Street where we took bows for rehairing and viols for minor repairs. Oud maker Peter Kyvelos took care of the early string community as well as selling and repairing the modern instruments of the violin family which lined the walls of his shop. We enjoyed chatting with him about his gigs with a middle eastern band and about fishing, his favorite pastime. Peter died in April at the age of 73 and his former shop is now a hair salon.

Shortridge Organ Leaves New England

In June, the “Jenkins” organ left the Broekman’s house in Wayland for Oberlin, where Cathy Meints will give it a home among her fabulous collection of instruments. It was made by John Shortridge from specifications of an organ once used by John Jenkins and now in Smithfield VA. Some of us had a chance to play consorts with this beautiful instrument, and found that it blended magically with the sound of viols.

Viol activities at Powers

Powers Music School remains a center for Boston-area viol activities, offering lessons and consorts with Jane Hershey, and a mixed Baroque ensemble with Carol Epple. In addition, the Powers Viol Collection currently has all sizes of viol available for rent for 3, 6 or 12 month terms. Rentals are available to players in New England, with preference given to Powers students.

For more information about private lessons and openings in viol consorts, contact Jane through the School at office@powersmusic.org, or by calling 617-484-4696. The School is located on

Concord Ave. in Belmont Center, and the fall term begins Sept. 6.

Jane Hershey

Concert Announcements

“Le Petit Concert”

French music for pardessus & bass viols plus theorbo & baroque guitar) performed by **Duo Maresienne** (Carol Lewis, viols; Olav Chris Henriksen, theorbo & baroque guitar), with works by Marais, Hugard, Dollé, Caix d’Hervelois, de Visée & Campion.

Two performances:

Friday, October 6, 2017 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 or go to www.duomaresienne.com

Sunday, October 8, 2017 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 or go to www.somervillemuseum.org

“Balli e Lamenti”

Italian dances, florid music & laments for voice, viols & percussion performed by **Burcu Gulec**, mezzo-soprano & **George Lernis**, percussion, plus **El Dorado Ensemble** (Carol Lewis, Janet Haas, Paul Johnson, Mai-Lan Broekman & Alice Mroszczyk, viols; Olav Chris Henriksen, lute & theorbo), with music by Striggio, Kapsperger & Piccinini, and a special performance of Monteverdi’s “Lamento d’Arianna.”

Two performances:

Friday, January 26, 2018 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 or go to www.duomaresienne.com

Sunday, January 28, 2018 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 or go to www.somervillemuseum.org