



## NEWSLETTER

### Viola da Gamba Society

#### New England

September 2019

#### PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Greetings, dear viol players and friends,

Here we are, at the beginning of a brand-new VdGS-NE year, looking eagerly forward to new workshops and lots of good playing, and looking back with gratitude to many good things that happened in the past. I hope this finds you well, soaking in some late summer sunshine while it lasts!

How about that Spring workshop! Titled "*Comme femme desconfortée*", it featured the fifteenth century song by Binchois around which gorgeous music by Isaac, Josquin, Senfl, and Agricola was composed. Director Wendy Gillespie introduced this great subject in a lucid and interesting talk, and faculty members Alice Robbins, Jane Hershey, Emily Walhout, Sarah Mead and Rosalind Brooks-Stowe presented us with beautiful musical examples. The fun thing about this workshop was that the Tune "*Comme Femme*" was heard throughout the day coming out of all the rooms, and allowed for people of all playing levels to mingle and join forces. I felt that the poor discomforted woman was granted great solace through the beauty of the music and the dedication of the participants as they brought the intricate interweaving of voices to life. Many thanks to Wendy for bringing us this fantastic subject, traveling from Indiana to be with us; and thanks to Wendy and Sarah Mead for spending many days and hours preparing the scores and classes for us. Many thanks also to the Trinity Church in Concord, MA for allowing us the use of their fine space.

We held the annual VdGS-NE members meeting during the lunch break of the workshop. I was happy to announce the election to the board of new member Glen Legere and returning board members Karen Burciaga and Alexandra Hawley. The election by the board of Ros Stowe as vice president and me as president of the society was officially announced. Our yearly financial report was approved, and there were announcements, and discussions of several topics.

I want to thank our volunteers for helping out at the VdGSA booth at the Boston Early Music Festival exhibit, and at the Gamut concert. The VdGSA depends on us locals to help out, and year after year we come through. While I couldn't attend it this year, I heard the Gamut was very successful. The VdGSA decided to skip the Gamba Garden, but Lisa Terry's viol was at the booth for adventurous people to try out, with expert help of the volunteers and David Ellis, the VdGSA representative. One of the main organizers of the Gamut, Karen Burciaga, writes about it elsewhere in this newsletter. Thank you for making it happen year after year, Karen!

At the VdGSA Conclave our dear departed Janet Haas was remembered, honored, and celebrated with a beautiful concert. I am sorry to say that I was not there... Thankfully, James Williamson was, and writes about it elsewhere in this newsletter. I heard that that the tribute to Janet was very moving, and that Conclave was wonderful as always. I just saw lots of pictures on Facebook of happy people playing, having fun at the banquet, showing off their auction

winnings, etc. and felt a pang for not being there.

Looking ahead to our Fall workshop: honoring the fact that we are the VdGS of New England, we escape on Sunday, October 20 from our Boston headquarters to a more central location, Mount Holyoke College in South Hadley, MA, to spend the day with the Arcadia Viols playing “Mostly Maximillian”, German music from the 16<sup>th</sup> century. We hope to welcome more members from Connecticut, western Massachusetts, Vermont, New Hampshire, and eastern New York to this workshop, and encourage members from the Boston area to carpool for the approximately 1 hr. and 20 min. drive. Participants who would like help being matched with drivers and drivers who can offer rides can sign up on the registration form. All the information about this workshop you will find in the accompanying flyer and online at VdGSNE.org.

Looking further forward... save the dates for our January and May workshops!  
January 25 at Brandeis University: James Williamson will come down from Montreal to direct “Englishmen abroad”. And on May 2 at Trinity Church in Concord we are excited to welcome back Parthenia! Under consideration is the repertoire for viols in the Venetian Republic of the 16th century.

That ends my tale. Enjoy reading all the news in viol world, and see you on October 20!  
And remember.....sign up BEFORE the deadline!  
Say hi to your viol for me!

Anne Legêne

## REPORT FROM THE GAMUT

The 2019 Gamba Gamut at BEMF was a wonderful showcase of performers from across New England, New York and even Texas! Local

consort Long & Away and friends performed works of Dowland for voices, viols and lute using Original Pronunciation, the way English sounded around the year 1600. The Harper and The Minstrel (Jay and Abby Michaels) presented a feast of cantigas, villancicos, and dance tunes on tenor viol with flute, recorder, hammered dulcimer and voice. Next up, New York's Viola da Gamba Dojo, led by John Mark Rozendaal, along with soprano Sarah Pillow, performed luscious madrigals by Verdelot, Cipriano da Rore, and Monteverdi. James Perretta of Lyraclé rose to the occasion



David Ellis and James Perretta in Gordon Chapel

when his colleague mezzo Ashley Mulcahy became too ill to sing; he performed Simpson divisions (joined at the last minute by Gamut coordinator David Ellis) and accompanied his own singing in effortless lyra viol style. Following that was the Texas high school ensemble Aquila di Guerra of twelve players, coached by Pedro Antonio Funes and Stephanie Raby, who presented madrigals, improvisations on la Folia, Elgar's "Nimrod" and even a Disney soundtrack. Wrapping up the Gamut in splendid style were Arnie Tanimoto accompanied by Parker Ramsay on baroque harp, whose exquisite rendition of a Marais suite held the audience spellbound. Thank you to the VdGSA for organizing another successful Gamut, and we all look forward to BEMF 2021!

Karen Burciaga

## CONCLAVE REPORT

The last week of July, the VdGSA held its annual Conclave at Pacific University in Forest Grove Oregon. The west coast location meant that representation from New England was fairly sparse. Nevertheless, there were over 200 attendees from all parts of the US and Canada with a strong contingent of younger players. The faculty was a nice mix of familiar faces from past Conclaves and younger professional players introducing themselves and their teaching to the society. This year also marked the first Conclave since Janet Haas's sudden passing in January. She was much on everyone's minds the whole week. The faculty concert was dedicated to her and concluded with a viol orchestra performance of her husband Eric's "Five Variants on Wondrous Love."

There were also many mementos of her in the auction.

This year also marked the faculty debut of Erin Headley. She gave a number of very popular classes on early seventeenth century Italy with a focus on the lirone. In fact there were four of these instruments there. Since her classes were so popular New England lutenist Cathy Liddell was brought in to help Erin teach. The two of them were also joined by soprano Nell Snaidas to give the first part of the faculty concert. Finally Erin gave a lecture on the history of the lirone the day after playing it for everyone on the concert.

These special events served to make this year stand out from other years but the most important aspects of Conclave carry over from year to year: the wonderful late night social playing, the inspiring classes, and of course the camaraderie of the nationwide viol community and the chance to spend time with friends you only see once a year.

Next year's Conclave will be July 26-August 2

at Miami University in Oxford Ohio (about an hour from both Cincinnati and Dayton). Regular attendees will surely be glad to see a strong New England contingent there.

James Williamson

## SILBINGER GRANT AWARDED

Schola Cantorum of Boston, led by Fred Jodry, is our VdGS-NE 2019-2020 Gian Lyman Silbiger Grant winner, with Sarah Mead as viol player/organizer. There will be two performances of their program for viols and voices, at First Lutheran Church in Boston, and at Saint Joseph's Church in Providence in March, 2020. Repertoire will include Byrd, Gibbons and Ferrabosco, with viol players Alice Robbins, Emily Walhout, Hannah Davidson and Sarah Mead. Schola Cantorum is one of Boston's most venerable and beloved small vocal ensembles dedicated to the performance of Renaissance and early Baroque music. Please check the [vdgsne.org](http://vdgsne.org) website for complete details on these extraordinary concerts supported by our chapter.

## CONCERT ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR FALL 2019

"Hunts, Bagpipes & Scotts Tunes"  
Music of the Scottish renaissance & baroque.  
**Duo Maresienne** (Carol Lewis, viola da gamba; Olav Chris Henriksen, lute & citterns) perform ports, lilt, battles and jigs from Caledonia, including some of the anonymous scordatura "bagpipes" tunes for viola da gamba, plus duos for English guitar and bass viol by Geminiani, and "Pibroch, a Highland Battel" by Oswald.

One performance:

**Sunday, October 13, 2019 at 2:00 pm** at Grace Note Farm, 969 Jackson Schoolhouse Road, Pascoag, RI. 02859. For information, call (401)567-0354 or go to [gracenotefarmweb.com](http://gracenotefarmweb.com)

“The Venice of the North”  
17<sup>th</sup>-century music from the Netherlands,  
with music by Schenck, Hacquart, Schop,  
Vallet, Riehman and others,  
performed by **Duo Maresienne** (Carol Lewis,  
viola da gamba; Olav Chris Henriksen, lute &  
theorbo).

Two performances:

**Friday, November 1, 2019 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](http://www.duomaresienne.com)

**Sunday, November 3, 2019 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](http://www.somervillemuseum.org)

## CLASSES AT POWERS

Powers Music School offers a comprehensive  
viola da gamba program for players at all levels,  
with lessons, consort classes, Ensemble Skills  
classes for beginning players, and viol rentals.  
There are openings in all these classes which  
meet weekly, monthly or for half the semester.  
Placement is by audition with Jane Hershey,  
instructor. With the arrival of a new viol  
teacher, James Perretta, scheduling will be more  
flexible and new offerings will be available.  
James has moved to the Boston area from the  
University of Michigan, where he studied  
gamba and Baroque cello with Enid Sutherland,  
and he is looking forward to teaching at Powers.

In addition, there are openings in the Baroque  
Ensemble, coached by Carol Epple and Jane  
Hershey. This class meets eight times per  
semester on Weds. and Thurs. evenings (TBD),  
assisted by Hannah Davidson, harpsichord.

For more information, contact the Powers  
Registrar, Killian, at 616-484-5750 or  
(powersmusic.org), look under Instruction,  
Adult programs, then viol consorts or email Jane  
Hershey directly at [janelhershey@gmail.com](mailto:janelhershey@gmail.com).

## VdGS-NE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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## CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE NEWSLETTER

Could you review a viol concert, recording,  
music edition? Is your playing group looking  
for new members or planning a viol event?  
Consider writing a brief article for this  
newsletter, where we are always looking for  
content. Contact [hrdavidson39@gmail.com](mailto:hrdavidson39@gmail.com)