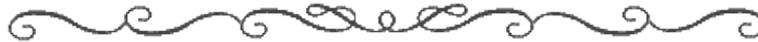




Newsletter

Viola da Gamba Society - New England

Spring 2025



President's Letter

Dear fellow viol players,

Finally, it's looking like we may see spring eventually. I hope some of you were able to spend some time in the last weeks cozing up with a viol at home, or even venturing out in the ice or snow to play with friends. And now with spring coming we have a workshop to look forward to, speaking of playing with friends! Carol Lewis is organizing a Dowland workshop to take place on Saturday April 26 in Lincoln, MA. I hope many of you will be able to enjoy this. There are more details elsewhere in this letter. There will also be many concerts springing forth, including Arcadia Players chamber music at Mount Holyoke College, where we had our October workshop with Will Ayton.

We have three officers as well as three board members up for reelection, and we have had a response to our plea for a treasurer from a brave and able VdGS-NE member. There will be an announcement, probably at the workshop in April, and definitely at our annual meeting, which we will hold on Zoom in May. While in person was always more fun, we can hope to see a larger number of our faces on zoom. We will catch up on business of our Chapter, its activities, and field suggestions for the future.

Especially important in that respect is the planning to celebrate our 50th anniversary as a chapter of the VdGSA. A committee is being formed to spearhead the organization of special events celebrating our community and commemorating our founders. Please offer your help and suggestions to the committee.

Even sooner than that, BEMF will be back in the second week of June. We are coordinating with the VdGSA to provide instruments and volunteers to help out at the viol petting zoo and Gamba Gamut performances on Sat. June 14, and there will also be a concert titled "Extravagamba" the same day at 5pm in Jordan Hall.

Here's to Spring, and happy playing!
—Alice Robbins, President, VdGS-NE

50th Anniversary Plans

Next year is the 50th anniversary of our venerable chapter and we plan to celebrate! We are forming a committee to plan and oversee a number of events for the 2026-27 season and would love to have you join in the planning.

If you'd like to help—either as part of the Planning Committee, or as a volunteer assistant for one of the events—please contact secretary@vdgsne.org by April 1st (no fooling!) and let us know of your interest. We'll be in touch to set up an initial Zoom meeting in early May. If you don't have time to be on the Planning Committee, but would like to suggest a celebratory event, let us know and we'll add it to the discussion.

VdGS-NE Spring Workshop

"Dowland: A World of Music for Viol Consorts"

Directed by Carol Lewis, viol, Chris Henriksen, plucked strings, with coaches Karen Burciaga, Guinevere Fridley, James Perretta, viols, Matthew Wright, plucked strings

Many of us are very familiar with the works of the great John Dowland, who left us with an enormous number of splendid lute solos, songs, and pieces for viol consort. Central among these are the dances that originated as solos for lute (including Dowland's most famous piece, Lachrimae Pavan), and then were reworked by the composer and his peers into part-songs for 2 to 5 voices, as well as into consort music with lute—sometimes even with parts for wire-strung instruments like cittern, bandora, and orpharion. Join us for a day of exploring Dowland's world of 4- and 5-part dances, with wonderful pavans, galliards, and almaines by Dowland himself, and even some arrangements of his music by Thomas Simpson and others. We're fortunate to have with us two fine lutenists who can coach as well as play along with the viols. We'll begin with a demonstration of some of the 4-part music with lutes, and then you will get a chance to experience, hands-on, this great consort repertory. Registration is open!

Saturday, April 26 from 9:30am-4:00pm

St. Anne's Episcopal Church, 147 Concord Rd.
Lincoln, MA

\$80 members / \$100 nonmembers. Reduced fee available for those in need, contact treasurer@vdgsne.org to inquire. Introduction to the Viol \$25. We will also offer Ensemble Skills classes if there is enough interest.
<https://vdgsne.org/workshops/vdgs-ne-april-2025/>

Annual Meeting for All Members

Hear ye, hear ye! Our Annual Meeting for members will be held online in early May, date TBA. Watch for an email this month inviting you to attend. We'll review news of the past year and discuss upcoming items, welcome returning or new Board members, and answer questions from you. The Zoom link will be emailed to members closer to the date, and the meeting will be recorded so you can watch later if needed.

Silbiger Grant 2025

The Gian Lyman Silbiger Grant is awarded annually by our chapter. It supports the performance of music for voices and viols (minimum of three viol players and one vocal soloist) and is open to all! The application period opens very soon—watch for an announcement from VdGS-NE in the next week or two. Apply at <https://vdgsne.org/silbiger-grant/> by Wednesday, May 15. Recipient will be notified by June 23.

Announcing Conclave 2025

Spring is coming, and that means that summer is right around the corner. And summer means... Conclave! And this summer you won't have to wait so long for Conclave to come around, because we are meeting one week earlier than usual: July 13–20 at Miami University, Oxford, OH.



“Dancing with the Stars” This summer our gathering will focus on the many types of dances that dwell at the heart of our music – not just in music for dancing, but in the springing rhythms that enliven many fantasias, as well as the suites that are the core of Baroque literature. And we won't forget the Stars that make up the firmament of our favorite composers!

If you've never attended Conclave before, ask your

VdGS-NE friends about it. It's a one-week workshop held in July in a different part of the country each year. With over 20 teachers on faculty, and as many as 200 participants in a variety of programs (including Beginners), this is a week for making friends, focusing on the instrument we love, and growing as a musician. The VdGSA has hosted this gathering every summer for 63 years; come be a part of this long tradition of American viol playing.

A star-studded faculty will present a special concert on Thursday night, and this year we will also offer an evening of English Country Dance for all, with Dance Leader Graham Christian and Music Master Jack Ashworth. Concerts, events, and reading sessions fill the week. We also feature an Emporium as well as viol and bow doctors to keep your instruments in top shape.

Our new Tindemanns Medieval Program will enter its second year, with classes for both new and experienced *vielle* players and a set of loaner *vielles* for those interested in exploring Medieval music on historical instruments.

Registration opens in March, so check the webpage for updates and a complete list of faculty and classes. <https://www.vdgsa.org/conclave-2025>. I hope to see you in July!

–Sarah Mead, Conclave Music Director

*Logo by our own Alice Johnson!

Absent Friends

We are saddened to share that Martha Gruson passed away on December 5, 2024. The following is drawn from her obituary which can be found at <https://obits.concordfuneral.com/martha-gruson>

Martha, known by many as Twitch, chartered many courses on the water, on land, and in the arts. She was a talented landscape architect, and accomplished sailor, and was proficient in playing the recorder and flute. But it was after hearing an early Renaissance concert in Cambridge that she fell in love with the viola da gamba and dedicated herself to creating its magical sound. She practiced faithfully for decades, attended classes, workshops, made some recordings and played with the same small group of ladies every week for over forty years. When she wasn't practicing her viola da gamba, Martha was often teaching herself about those delightful, feathered creatures, birds, or planning her next major trip to some new part of the world. Her love of nature and the arts took her all over the world. Whether she was riding horseback out west, exploring temples in Japan, birding in Patagonia and Costa Rica, on safari in Kenya, taking in the arts in Italy, or exploring the Galapagos, she excelled at following her own curiosity and at allowing her passions to flourish.

Family and friends will gather to honor and remember Martha on Saturday, March 22, 2025, at 10:00 am at the First Parish in Bedford, 75 Great Road, Bedford, MA.

Welcome to New Members

VdGS-NE is happy to welcome new members David Zarowin, NK Raven Bruce, Jayna Leach, and Enrique Hernández de Tejada! We hope to see them along with lots of current members at our April workshop.

****New Member Spotlight****

Cellist and composer Enrique Hernández de Tejada is a recent graduate of The Boston Conservatory, becoming a Bachelor of Music in Composition in 2022. From his time in school, Enrique has developed an increasing interest in early music/historical performance. For the past year, he's been invited to play with the BU Baroque Orchestra under the direction of Jane Starkman, giving him the opportunity to finally try his hand (or hands) at a Baroque cello and bow. Furthermore, his newly founded string quartet, The DeLorean Quartet, is bringing staple repertoire as well as more obscure and underperformed works on period instruments to the Boston area. Their first concert will be held this Sunday, March 2 at 3PM at the Carriage House Violins Recital Hall in Newton, MA.

Most notably, Enrique was very generously gifted a 6-string, bass viola da gamba, fulfilling yet another facet of his musical journey. He looks forward to exploring the incredibly vast and rich world of gamba music and is eternally grateful to the one who made this possible.



Enrique Hernández de Tejada and his new viol

📅 Upcoming Events 📅

See www.neemcalendar.org for more early music events.

Vermeer's "The Concert"

In 1664 Johannes Vermeer painted a domestic music scene in which a singer is joined by a harpsichordist and a lutenist, with a viola da gamba on the floor and a bandora or a cittern on the table. (The painting was stolen from the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum in 1990 and has never been recovered.) This concert will be a reproduction of the music these musicians might have played, sampling from works widely available in Rotterdam in the 1650s, including then-popular Roman cantatas written for the instruments and voice depicted in the painting. Doug Kelley will be playing a Hacquart sonata, which should be wonderful to hear. The repertoire is what we can imagine might have been performed in Vermeer's painting *The Concert*. Get tickets in advance for this small venue—this program will be performed in the Warbeke Room, an ideal space for such intimate repertoire. Presented in cooperation with the Mount Holyoke College Music Department.

Sophie Michaux, voice, Douglas Kelley, viola da gamba, Nathaniel Cox, lute, cittern, Andrus Madsen, harpsichord

Friday, March 7 at 7:30pm and **Saturday, March 8 at 3pm** in the Warbeke Room, Pratt Hall, Mount Holyoke College, South Hadley, MA

<https://www.arcadiaplayers.org/>

Lachrimae, or Seaven Teares

Masterpieces of English renaissance consort music including pavans, galliards and almains by the famed and melancholy lutenist John Dowland.

El Dorado Ensemble: Carol Lewis, Karen Burciaga, Mai-Lan Broekman, James Peretta, Alice Mroszczyk, viols; Olav Chris Henriksen, lute, orpharion

Friday, March 14 at 8pm

Lindsay Chapel, First Church Congregational, 11 Garden St., Cambridge, MA (N.B.: entrance on Mason St.)

\$35 general admission; \$25 students, seniors, low income
<https://www.duomaresienne.com/music-for-viols-and-friends-2024-25>

Sunday, March 16 at 3pm

Somerville Museum, One Westwood Rd. Somerville, MA
\$30 general, \$25 for students, seniors, Museum members
<https://www.somervillemuseum.org/calendar-events>

Italian Classical Women Composers

This program presents music by Italian 18th-century women composers working at the courts of Frederick the Great in Prussia and the House of Habsburg in Austria. These powerful monarchies sponsored both salon and stage, where passions ran high and the best musicians were hired. The harpsichord concerto in G minor by Frederick the Great's sister Wilhelmine of Prussia and the Divertimento and soprano aria "Astra coeli iam intonate" by Anna Bon are pitted in our concert against the Habsburg-sponsored Camilla de Rossi, with excerpts from her oratorio "Santa Beatrice d'Este", and Maria Teresa Agnesi's harpsichord concerto and excerpts from her opera "Ulisse in Campania". We conclude with an aria by Maria Antonia Walpurgis from her opera "Il trionfo della fedeltà".

La Donna Musicale: Lina Sarmiento, soprano; Daniela Tosic, mezzo-soprano; Fausto Miro, tenor; Danilo Bonina, violin; Amelia Sie, violin; Hanbyeol Lee, harpsichord; Nathaniel Chase, bass; Laury Gutierrez, viola da gamba

Saturday, April 5 at 3:30pm

Church of the Covenant, 67 Newbury St. Boston, MA
\$35 Reserved, \$20 General, \$5 Low income
<https://ladm.org/passionate-enemies/>

Musical Club of Hartford

The Musical Club of Hartford presents works by Platti, Couperin, Donizetti, Morley, and others.

Leo Snow, Baroque flute, Deborah Robin, recorders, Laura Mazza-Dixon, viola da gamba, Anne Mayo, harpsichord, Cynthia Lang, flute, Fred Fenn, bassoon, Sarah Schiener-Redenz, piano, the Greenwoods Consort

Thursday, April 10 at 10am

Westminster Presbyterian Church, 2080 Boulevard, West Hartford, CT. Contact: mazzadixon@gmail.com

A Musical Feast: Chamber Music of J.S. Bach

Les Bostonades presents a lavish all-Bach chamber program featuring the violin, viola, viola da gamba, and harpsichord. In contrast to the large-scale works we performed last season, this program features tasteful arrangements of his trio sonatas as well as select solo sonatas for violin or viola da gamba with obbligato harpsichord. Join us in sampling these musical delicacies!

Les Bostonades: Sarah Darling, violin, Jason Fisher, viola, Emily Walhout, viola da gamba, Akiko Sato, harpsichord

Saturday, April 12 at 7:30pm - Lindsey Chapel at Emmanuel Church, 15 Newbury Street, Boston, MA
<https://www.bostonades.org/concerts>

Music of Fire and Love: An eclectic program of folias, variations, and improvisations

One of the most versatile musical personalities of his generation, Jordi Savall has thrilled millions of Early Music lovers around the world for over half a century. A tireless researcher and an eternally engaging performer, he made his Boston debut with BEMF in 1989 and has remained a friend ever since. Join him and the legendary ensemble for a stunning journey through Baroque music from England, Peru, Mexico, Spain, and more.

Hespèrion XXI: Xavier Díaz-Latorre, vihuela, theorbo & guitar; Jordi Savall, director, treble & bass viols, Andrew Lawrence-King, arpa doppia; Marco Vitale, harpsichord; Xavier Puertas, violone; David Mayoral, percussion; **Sunday, April 13 at 3pm** - NEC's Jordan Hall, Gainsborough St. Boston, MA

Virtual premiere April 27 at 8pm (ET)

Available to watch until May 11 at 11:59pm (ET)

<https://bemf.org/concert-season/jordi-savall/>

Easter Service with Viols

Splendid works for voices and viols by Byrd, Schütz, and Buxtehude.

Choir of First Lutheran (Jonathan Wessler, director, organ) with Karen Burciaga, Guinevere Fridley, Joy Grimes, Carol Lewis, James Perretta, violas da gamba

Sunday, April 20 at 8am and 11am - First Lutheran Church, 299 Berkeley St. Boston, MA

<https://flc-boston.org/>

Fantasies for Consort and Keyboard

Newton Baroque: Emily Walhout, Jane Hershey, Laura Jeppesen, Karen Burciaga, Douglas Kelley, viols; Andrus Madsen, director, organ

Fantasies and in nomines from early 17th-c. England played by viol consort and organ. Featuring the beautiful copy of an English Baroque organ housed at St. Elizabeth's.

Sunday, April 27 at 4pm - St Elizabeth's Church, 1 Morse Rd., Sudbury

\$35 general, \$30 senior, \$10 student & low income

www.newtonbaroque.org

A Health to the Company

17th-century London roars to life in this convivial program of tunes for the tavern including jovial drinking songs, love ballads both naughty and nice, and rustic catches for carousing with friends. We imagine an evening in good company at the tavern, by the fireplace, with a favorite beverage in hand. We share tales of pickpockets and punks, wise maids and goodfellows, the wonders of tobacco, the pitfalls of gambling, and the delights of good ale. Between toasts, we contemplate the meaning of life and reflect on unrequited love. Rounding out the evening's merriment are works by Wilbye, Ravenscroft, and Sumarte, along with our original settings of lively country dances. In this spirit of cheerful musical camaraderie, our program celebrates the joys of gathering with friends.

Seven Times Salt: Elise Groves, soprano; Corey Dalton Hart, tenor; Karen Burciaga, violin, guitar; Dan Meyers, recorders, flutes, bagpipes, percussion; David H. Miller; Matthew Wright, lute, cittern

Tuesday, May 13 at 7:30pm

Church of the Good Shepherd, 9 Russell Ave. Watertown, MA

By donation (\$20 suggested)

<https://www.seventimesalt.com/concerts>

Affetti Musicali

Virtuoso music of the Italian early Baroque, with works of Monteverdi, Frescobaldi, Castello, Saracini, d'India & Bassani, performed by countertenor & cornetist Michael Collever, with Duo Maresienne (Carol Lewis, viola da gamba; Olav Chris Henriksen, archlute & Baroque guitar)

Sunday, May 11 at 3pm

Somerville Museum, One Westwood Rd. Somerville, MA \$30 general, \$25 for students, seniors, Museum members

<https://www.somervillemuseum.org/calendar-events>

Friday, May 16 at 8pm

Lindsay Chapel, First Church Congregational, 11 Garden St., Cambridge, MA (N.B.: entrance on Mason St.) \$35

general admission; \$25 students, seniors, low income

<https://www.duomaresienne.com/music-for-viols-and-friends-2024-25>

Tunes at the Taproom

Join Seven Times Salt for an evening of tunes at Medford Brewing's cozy taproom! We'll play familiar Renaissance tunes and English country dances, and you'll hear all of your favorite 17th-century drinking songs. Raise your glass and voice and sing along! The brewery offers many excellent beers and a limited but tasty array of snacks.

Seven Times Salt: Karen Burciaga, violin, guitar, voice, Corey Dalton Hart, tenor, recorder, Emily O'Brien, recorder, flute, voice, Josh Schreiber, bass viol, voice Matthew Wright, lute, cittern, voice

Wednesday, May 14 at 7pm

[Medford Brewing Company](https://www.medfordbrewing.com), 30 Harvard Ave. Medford, MA. No cover; donations encouraged! Ages 21+ due to brewery rules.

Lady Tarquinia

Italian virtuosa singer and viol player Tarquinia Molza (1542-1617) was one of few women of her time to be gainfully employed as a musician. As if that weren't impressive enough, her employment at the Este Court of Ferrara was prestigious and influential. However, her career was taken away from her over allegations of a romantic relationship with a colleague, which she denied. Despite her banishment, Molza was named a Citizen of Rome in 1600 for her musical and intellectual talents, the first woman in history to receive this honor. Gleaning what we can from the historical sources that still survive, it appears that Molza's fascinating life more or less stopped being documented as soon as her career was taken from her. However, the little that we do know makes clear that she remained musically active in her hometown of Modena, where she regularly hosted musical gatherings. Today, Molza is a relatively unknown figure in music history. In "Lady Tarquinia," Lyraacle celebrates the musicianship that polymath Tarquinia Molza cultivated her whole life, even after she was confined to making music at home. The program will include pieces that we know Tarquinia sang and played and musical settings of her poetry.

Lyraacle: Ashley Mulcahy, mezzo-soprano, James Perretta, viola da gamba, Margaret Carpenter Haigh, soprano, Craig Juricka, baritone

Friday, May 30 at 7:30pm

United First Parish Church (Parish Hall)

1306 Hancock St, Quincy, MA

****Stick around after the concert and join the artists for fun, no-pressure music-making and snacks! We'll play/sing through a few madrigals (in English) together.*

Singers and instrumentalists of all kinds, ages, and levels are welcome.

Saturday, May 31 at 3pm

Somerville Music Spaces, 1060 Broadway,
Somerville, MA

Info & tickets at www.lyraaclemusic.com

Contributions to the Newsletter

Have an announcement? Want to review a concert, recording, music edition? Is your playing group looking for new members or planning a viol event? Consider writing a brief article for the newsletter, where we are always looking for content. Email submissions to secretary@vdgsne.org

Viols for Sale - let us know if you want to post an instrument for sale! Email description and photo to secretary@vdgsne.org.



Kessler 7-string

Sprenger 6-string bass with bow and case. \$6500.
Location: Seacoast NH. See <https://vdgsne.org/classifieds/> for contact info.

1969 German tenor with Seifert bow, Monical bow, hard case. \$4,000. Location: ME.
See <https://vdgsne.org/classifieds/> for contact info.

1973 Stephen treble with Gotz bow, hard case. \$800.
Location: ME.
See <https://vdgsne.org/classifieds/> for contact info.

1961 Kessler 7-string bass, bow by Wm. Salchow, MTM hard case w/wheels. Appraised value \$23,500, price negotiable.
Location: northern VT.
barbara@wannervt.com

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