



VdGS-NE Fall Weekend

Consorts & Conversations with New England's Luthiers

November 14, 12:30-4:30pm

November 15, 9am-2:00pm
in Richmond, VT

Sat. at the Congregational Church

Sun. at the Richmond Free Library

Jane Hershey, director

Registration deadline: November 1

☞ *Don't let your viol look like this guy's! Come to the workshop and meet your friendly local luthier today.*

Join us in Vermont for a two-day workshop offering the unique opportunity to hear from (and perhaps even play with!) seven esteemed viol makers and bowmakers based in New England. On Saturday, play in two coached sessions; on Sunday, play in one coached session and then gather for a special panel discussion.

Our coaches for the weekend are Sarah Mead, Laurie Rabut, Alice Robbins, James Williamson, and Jane Hershey. Together we'll look at consort music favored by early 17th-c. viol players including madrigals by Marenzio and Monteverdi and consorts by Coperario, Ward and others.

The builders taking part in the panel discussion are Warren Ellison, Harry Grabenstein, Timothy G. Johnson, Thomas Jocks, Martin Macica, Peter Tourin, and Shirley White. Award-winning media producer Fran Stoddard will serve as our moderator for the Sunday panel discussion. She'll invite the luthiers to share their expertise on how builders make bows and viols that work for players, and historically-based designs.

Saturday Schedule

12:30-1:00pm	Check-in
1:00-2:30pm	Coached Session 1
3:00pm-4:30pm	Coached Session 2 & Intro to Viol

Sunday Schedule

9:30-11:00am	Coached Session
11:00-11:30am	Brunch break
11:30am-12:20pm	Panel part 1
12:30-1:20pm	Panel part 2
1:20-2:00pm	Meet the builders

- Pitch is A=415.
- Bring a music stand.
- No need to select specific classes; participants will be grouped into varying consorts with different coaches.
- Beginning players are welcome. We will offer Intro to the Viol if there is enough interest.
- Some music PDFs will be emailed to print at home or download to your tablet ahead of time.
- Don't attend if you feel unwell! Your payment will be refunded or applied to a future event, or you may make it a donation to VdGS-NE.

Panel Topics

- Bows: What are the historical models, and what are the factors involved in how a bow sounds and feels?
- Copying old instruments: Comparison of 2 bass viols, Gregor Karpp (c.1700) and copy by Peter Tourin (1990), with a musical demonstration by Doug Kelley and Jane Hershey.
- Choosing a viol: Players must often navigate a confusing lack of historical standardization in finding an appropriate instrument for their interests.
- Setting up viols for best sound and response: What are the factors that luthiers work with?

Meals

Saturday dinner is on your own. Within walking distance, Richmond offers several casual restaurants, two pizzerias, and a bakery. The grocery store Richmond Market and Beverage is open from 7am to 8pm every day. On Sunday, light brunch snacks and coffee will be provided during the break, or you can bring your own meal.

Housing

La Quinta Inn in Williston, VT is holding a block of 10 rooms for us **until October 13** priced at \$120 per room. Options are one king bed or two queen beds. To reserve yours, call La Quinta at 802-216-0892 and give the group name "VdGS-NE". If you have any trouble making the reservation, contact VdGS-NE member Elizabeth Newman at enewman@gmavt.net.

Register by Nov. 1 to reserve your spot! Late registrants will be accepted only if space is available. You can pay online at <https://vdgsne.org/> (preferred) or by mail and check with the form below.

REGISTRATION FORM

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

Email _____

Please circle your level for the instrument(s) you wish to play and the clefs that you are cheerfully willing to read for each instrument. *A self-rating guide is available on the national website, vdgsa.org.*

<i>Treble:</i>	B	LI	I	HI	A	<i>Clefs:</i>	Treble	Treble8	Alto	
<i>Tenor:</i>	B	LI	I	HI	A	<i>Clefs:</i>	Treble	Treble8	Alto	Tenor
<i>Bass:</i>	B	LI	I	HI	A	<i>Clefs:</i>	Treble	Treble8	Alto	Tenor

☐ I am currently studying viol. Teacher(s) _____

☐ I would like to play in Introduction to the Viol (one session; no viol experience expected. You can audit the other sessions as you wish.)

☐ I enjoy someone doubling my part. ☐ I enjoy being challenged.

☐ I will help with morning set-up ☐ Sat. ☐ Sun. ☐ I will help clean up at the end of the day ☐ Sat. ☐ Sun.

Fees

Full Weekend ☐ Member (\$90) ☐ Non-member (\$110, includes dues!) ☐ H.S./College student (FREE)

Saturday Only ☐ Member (\$50) ☐ Non-member (\$60) ☐ H.S./College student (FREE)

Sunday Only ☐ Member (\$40) ☐ Non-member (\$50) ☐ H.S./College student (FREE)

☐ Reduced fee for those in need: contact treasurer@vdgsne.org to inquire.

☐ Introduction to the Viol (1 session \$25, free for high school and college students. includes dues!) Beginners—pay only this fee. Viols will be available for class; let us know if you need an instrument and what size you prefer.

☐ Dues only (2026-2027) (\$20)

☐ I want to support the VdGS-NE's 50th anniversary season with a contribution:

☐ \$25 Friend

☐ \$50 Sponsor

☐ \$100 Patron

☐ \$250 Donor

\$_____ **TOTAL ENCLOSED** Mail this form & check payable to VdGS-NE to P.O. Box 192, Belmont, MA 02478.

👉 **Registration deadline: November 1, 2026** 👈

The Coaches and Builders

Warren Ellison lives in Jericho, Vermont where he has been making and repairing stringed instruments for nearly 40 years. After graduating from the Chicago School of Violin Making in the 1980's, he moved to the area to work with Peter Tourin and Harry Grabenstein at the Tourin Musica. There, he learned to build viols and continues to work on modern and baroque instruments in the former Tourin Musica wood shop. You can see his work in the hands of players or by visiting warrenellison.com.

H. F. Grabenstein began his life in craft as a guitar maker in Washington D.C. in 1973. Arriving in VT that year, he met and began working with Viola da Gamba maker Peter Tourin. In addition to making viols, he studied bowmaking with Wm. Salchow at the University of New Hampshire in 1982 and 1983 and was Bowmaker at the Tourin Musica from 1983 to 1990. Grabenstein continues to build a full range of historical bows for the viol and violin families of string instruments. Using snakewood, pernambuco, ebony and other hardwoods he creates beautifully detailed bows that play expressively and are secure on the string. Clients include: members of Fretwork, Acronym, A Far Cry, The Kings Noyse, the Van Swieten Quartet, the Baltimore Consort, Ensemble Galilei, Tempesta di Mare, The Diderot Quartet, Les Barocudas, Chatham Baroque, The Orchestra of the 18th Century, The Boston Symphony, The Chicago Symphony, and The Cleveland Orchestra. hfgbowmaker.com

Jane Hershey After studies at Royal Conservatory in The Hague, and the Longy School of Music, Jane Hershey has spent her professional life in New England. She first performed, toured and recorded with the Boston Camerata, and has since performed with Emmanuel Music, the Aston Magna Festival and Hesperus, among others. She played violone with Arcadia Players of Western Mass for many years, and viol with Trio Charivary, the Carthage Consort and Long & Away. She currently plays with Arcadia Viols. Active with the VdGSA, Jane also has served on the faculties of the Longy School of Music of Bard College, the Powers Music School and Tufts University.

Thomas Jocks is a violin maker, cellist, and viol player from Montreal. He studied music at Oberlin Conservatory and McGill University, and violin making at Newark School of Violin Making in the UK.

Timothy G. Johnson has been making and restoring string instruments for over 40 years and instruments of the violin and viol families since 1990. A specialist in historical performance, he has created Medieval, Renaissance, and Baroque instruments for professionals worldwide. After earning degrees from Harvard and Longy School of Music, he received a degree in violin making and restoration from the Jacobs School of Music at Indiana University in 1993. He has done extensive research into string instrument design, acoustics, and ergonomics, applying them in practical ways to benefit performers. His modern ergonomic viola won prizes in tone and playability from the 2022 International Viola Society Competition. He welcomes clients by appointment at his studios in Connecticut and Mid-Coast Maine. Services include: commissioned instruments tailored to the needs of the performer, expert restorations for modern and historical performance, acoustical analysis, and sound adjustments. timothyjohnsonluthier.com

Doug Kelley lives in southern Vermont, where he toils as a corporate drone, avid athlete, and occasional gambist. He studied at Oberlin and, in past lives, has been active as a performer and teacher in Europe and Asia.

Martin Macica, owner of Macica Violins in Schuylerville, New York, has been making and repairing fine stringed instruments for over 30 years. He also shares a love and passion for his craft, as well as his knowledge of the principles and practice of instrument making, in classes that lead students through the entire process of making an instrument from scratch using hand tools. Martin's instruments are used by orchestral, early period, and bluegrass musicians throughout the United States and the world. macica.com

Sarah Mead is a professor emerita of Brandeis University, where she taught historical performance and music history for four decades. She currently serves as Music Director for the VdGSA Conclave. As editor of "News Music" for the VdGSA News, she provides a quarterly selection of music and commentary on both recent and historical works for viols. Her performing editions of historical and original works for viols were published by PRB Productions, and her handbook on Renaissance theory is used in historical music programs around the country. Overseas she has performed and taught in Brazil, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, and the UK. She is a founding member and music director of Nota Bene Viol Consort.

Laurie Rabut performs and teaches renaissance, baroque, and classical repertoire on period string instruments. Having received her formal training/degree from the Boston University School of Music, she launched her music teaching career while pursuing historical performance studies with numerous professionals in several venues, including baroque violin and viola da gamba at the Oberlin Baroque Performance Institute and viola da gamba and classical orchestral performance with John Hsu at Cornell. Laurie currently performs period music with many New England ensembles including the Arcadia Players, the Winchendon Players, the Albany Cathedral baroque orchestra, Cameo Baroque and for Williams College. She has served on the string faculty of the Amherst MA Public Schools and The Five College Early Music Program and has taught workshops for many organizations, including Amherst Early Music, Pinewoods, the Viola da Gamba Society of America, and VdGS-New England.

Alice Robbins, a performer on both baroque cello and viola da gamba with Early Music ensembles world-wide, is a founding member of Arcadia Players of western Massachusetts. A graduate of Indiana University and the Schola Cantorum of Basel, Switzerland, she taught at Smith and Mount Holyoke Colleges in the Five College Early Music Program for 45 years. Alice has also taught at many workshops, including those sponsored by VdGS-NE and the annual Conclave of the Viola da Gamba Society of America. She now is exploring other musical activities along with serving on the boards of Arcadia Players, Viola da Gamba Society of America, and as president of the VdGS-New England.

Fran Stoddard is a communications consultant who has been involved in higher education, public relations, media production, facilitation, and strategy development for over 30 years. She has served as a media producer and interview program host for Vermont Public Television, Vermont Public Radio, WCAX-TV, WVNY-TV and numerous institutions. A lifelong student, Fran looks forward to facilitating this distinguished panel.

Peter Tourin began his career as a harpsichord apprentice with Frank Hubbard, then worked with luthier Donald Warnock. By the 1990s he had built a world-wide reputation as a renowned builder of beautiful Renaissance and Baroque stringed instruments. Funded by the grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, Peter researched historic viol da gamba in museums and private collections in North America and Europe in the 1980s, which enabled him to develop a body of fine instruments that reflected the historic designs of various cultures and centuries. These 125 instruments are prized by performing musicians in many countries today. As a performer, Peter is a bowed string player and has appeared with The Boston Viol Consort and The Oberlin Consort of Viols. He and Jean Twombly were co-directors of Ensemble Soleil, a New England-based early music group.

Shirley White is a luthier whose fascination with woodworking began at an early age in her father's carving studio. She attended the furniture-making school Leeds Design Workshops in Easthampton, MA, a program focused on one-of-a-kind art furniture, made primarily with hand tools and traditional joinery. In 1994 she had the good fortune of being offered a job in a violin shop where she served a five-year apprenticeship in both new making and restoration with two fine French Luthiers. Over the course of her career Shirley has focused on restoration and continues to pursue information on evolving best practices. In 2008 she established her own workshop, Shirley White Violins, in Greenfield, MA, where she repairs, restores and sells violin family instruments. Shirley's involvement with the national VDGSa began in 2018 when she served as viol doctor at the annual summer Conclave, a position she's now held for three summers. shirleywhiteviolins.com

James Williamson enjoys an eclectic musical life, performing as both a singer and on viols. Now based in Montreal, he is one of the tenor soloists at Christ Church Cathedral, plays viol and cello with Trio Ponté, and has performed with Arion Baroque Orchestra, Studio Musique Ancienne de Montréal, and the choir of the Orchestre Symphonique de Montréal. As a soloist, he has played recitals of French Baroque solo music for the viol and a number of programs of unaccompanied repertoire. He has served on the faculty of the VdGSA Conclave and Pinewoods Early Music Week and has directed and taught for several workshops of the Viola da Gamba Society of New England. James lived for many years in the Boston area where he sang in the professional choir at the Church of the Advent and was a core member of the viol consort Long & Away. He holds a Master of Music in Early Music Performance from the Longy School of Music in Cambridge, Massachusetts, where his mentors included Phoebe Carrai and Jane Hershey.