

GAMBA NEWS

Volume 16, No. 8

Viola da Gamba Society-Pacifica

April 2003

There once was a limerick contest ...

By Ellen Farwell

Huzzah! Ye who play on the viol,
Your limericks here we compile.
The Bard would be proud,
And would shout it aloud:
So clever! Such brilliance! Such style!

We're overwhelmed by your responses to our request for limericks issued last month. In addition to being clever, brilliant, stylish, etc., they're downright silly, which is just what we need for celebrating April Fools' Day.

How to pick a winner? They're all so wonderful. Why don't we put it to a vote?

Please tell us which you like best, and notify *Gamba News* editor **Lyle York** via email, phone or regular mail (see page 2).

The winner gets a free subscription to *Gamba News* for a person of his or her choice, not to mention everlasting acclaim.

The limericks begin at top right.

**SPECIAL
APRIL
FOOLS'
SOUVENIR
EDITION**

THE ENTRIES

A great-looking gal, Mary Lou,
An expert upon pardessus,
One night at her place
Consorted with a bass,
And now a young tenor is due.

— Don Groves

A consort that played on the Nile
Was attacked by a big crocodile.
The beast got entangled
And ended up strangled
By the guts of a seven-string viol.

— Monika Schrag

If you fly with a seven-string bass
in a sturdy and reinforced case,
You still cannot tell
If all will be well —
It may vanish, not leaving a trace.

— David Dreyfuss

When Phoebe was learning the treble,
She became quite a boisterous rebel.
Up to then she'd been meek,
But at the first shriek,
She said, "Now I'm the queen of the
dec'bel."

— Mary Elliott

There once was a viol in the attic
Left behind in the new age of static.
But now we've gone digital
With lots of new widgets — it'll
Be great to play something chromatic!

— David Dreyfuss

(Continued on page 2)

INSIDE



- **Travelers with viols, your troubles are over!**

See Page 6 (and shop our advertisers!)

- **Inside Viol Players' Brains** *See Page 2*
- **Lonely-Heart Classifieds** *See Page 3*

Viol students are from Mars, viol teachers are from Venus

By Anonymous

*A student and a teacher are
listening to some viol music:*

STUDENT'S BRAIN

Ooh, nice melody. Wow! What was that? That was a nice transition of some sort . . . Hey, that was very effective and beautiful. Oh, yeah, something very cool is going on with the rhythm. Oops, that got a little cliché-ish, but whoa, now, that sure worked, whatever it was. That



whatchamacallit was really pretty. Something just changed there, I'm not sure what.

What makes that harmony sound so interesting? I wonder how they did that? Oh, yeah, that is lovely, but no, now it's getting boring . . .

TEACHER'S BRAIN

Excellent use of Phrygid mode, which was popular during the 15th century, and now, we are progressing to the key of Z major with subtle hints of its relative minor, Q. And now, hemiolas, hematomas and gladiolas are accelerating the tempo from 77 beats per second to 77.5 beats per second. Oh! Nice modulation! Good thing they ascended on a melodic minor instead of a harmonic minor — that was a close call!

This is clearly performed on a partially well-tempered keyboard, designed by Hans Harold Hella Haute, c. 1779, instead of a completely well-tempered one; I just heard a little weirdness in that last inversion of the P subdominant chord.

The square root of the dominatrix chord sounded fine, though . . .

Limerick contest / continued

A viol belonging to Mary
Was left with the airline to carry.
En route from Seattle,
They gave it a rattle
So bad it was ready to bury!

She took it to a friend named Herb,
A man very slow to perturb.
He calmly surveyed it
Then fixed it and played it
And now you should hear its reverb!
— Don Groves

There was a young violist from Gaul
Who really gave it her all,
But her fingered vibrato
Drove me nearly blotto —
I now study tunes from Nepal.
— David Dreyfuss

A neophyte playing Susato
Did not get the notes that she ought to.
She remembered in time
Her teacher's best line:
"When in doubt, ornament and
vibrato."
— Lyle York and Mary Elliott

There once was a thin gut of cat
That created a top string so flat
I thought it was me,
But that couldn't be,
For my ear sure knows where G's at!
— Rosemary Lombard

Reefer Madness

There once was a consort who played
And far from the Renaissance strayed.
But rock and roll viols
Bring their own trials
Of feedback from pick-ups inlaid.
— Julie Morrisett

Viva L'Italia

A consort who played in a grotto
Was troubled by a glut of gelato.
Though the bass player's addiction
Caused lots of friction
Keeping him was *molto obbligato*.
— Julie Morrisett

There once was a consort of viols
That played in two disparate styles:
The treble played Dufay,
The bass Forqueray,
And the audience leapt for the aisles!
— David Dreyfuss

VOTE FOR A WINNER!

Send your vote to
Gamba News editor Lyle York.
Polls close April 20, 2003.

Email: lyleYork@earthlink.net
Mail: 1932 Thousand Oaks Blvd.
Berkeley, CA 94707-1638
Phone: (510) 559-9273

While practicing scales in a grotto,
A nymph met a shepherd named Otto.
He messed with her frets
— That's as bad as it gets.
So she ditched him for Max, a castrato.
— Ellen Farwell

These players of gambas may seem
okay.
They're always in churches when they
play.
But let us be candid:
They bow underhanded,
And think viol thoughts all the day.
— Jim Davis

Deus ex Machina

Said tenor to bass, "You're a tad slow."
"Or fast," said the treble, *sotto*.
The bass said magnanimously,
"Let's all decide unanimously,"
But the metronome cried, "Goodness,
no!"
— Julie Morrisett

I picked up my viol today
And started to play Marais.
Could not *flattement*,
My *plainte*, non *plaisant*.
I even messed up the *enflé*.
— Don Groves

"Oh, would I were only a singer,"
I moan when I can't tell which finger
Should go on which fret
(Or which string, worse yet!) —
Perhaps I should be a bell ringer!
— David Dreyfuss

PLAYERS' PERSONALS

Desperately seeking consort

In response to our promise of utter discretion, several lonely players wish to advertise for playmates in Gamba News.

Please reply in writing to the PO boxes cited. No phone calls, please.



LOVE MARAIS? Walks on the beach? Candlelit dinners? GN PO Box 1

FOXY TREBLE ready for high notes. GN PO Box 2

7-STRING BOTTOM seeks 6-string top. GN PO Box 3

GOT A SECRET DESIRE to play Marvin Hamlisch? Discreet. GN PO Box 4

LOVELY, GENTLE TREBLE viol seeks sensitive bow for mutually rewarding contact. Must appreciate being stroked with rosin. Take your time. GN PO Box 5

PASSIONATE about Gibbons, Locke, Hume? English only, please. GN PO Box 6

HIGH-STRUNG treble seeks daring pardessus. Pitch no object. GN PO Box 7

TYE ME UP! How many Weelkes do I have to wait? GN PO Box 8

NOT SURE you want to play? OK just to tune. GN PO Box 9

FEMME TREBLE seeks butch tenor for clef experimentation. Be sure you know who you are. GN PO Box 10

G STRING seeks five or six other strings of various sizes for group experience. No rough stuff. GN PO Box 11

BARYTON eager for good plucking fingers. GN PO Box 12

SHY TREBLE seeks validation. GN PO Box 13

BASS BEGINNER seeks *any* contact. Hurry! GN PO Box 14

SWM seeks adventurous SWF for mean tone tuning experiences. No electric tuners. GN PO Box 15



VIOLA D'AMORE (with sympathetic strings!) wants to hear your story. Non-judgmental. GN PO Box 16

SIZE DOES MATTER! I've got a 30-inch Ashmead bow. GN PO Box 17

TRANSITIONAL tenor-bass up for clef changes. GN PO Box 18

SOUND POST ADJUSTMENTS. Discreet. GN PO Box 19

DON'T FRET! Knots tied! Contact John Mark, GN PO Box 20

CUTE AUSTRIAN TENOR seeks American bass for music and/or green card. Will supply picture. GN PO Box 21

I AM A TREBLE IN A BASS BODY. Seek treble or bass—not sure. Help! GN PO Box 22

BARBIE A LITTLE TIRED OF KEN. Plays violone. Who'd like to play with me? GN PO Box 23

Thanks to Ellen Farwell, Marilyn Becker, Mary Elliott, Helen Tyrrell, Lyle York

ALERT! Everything that follows — except for pages 6 and 7 — is true as far as we know.

Still time to register for the Fresno Viol Meet

There's absolutely no late fee!

By Ellen Farwell

April is a bonus month for us this year, with both a play day April 12 and the annual North/South Viol Meet in Fresno April 25-27.

The North/South Meet, a joint gathering of the Pacifica and Viols West (Southern California) chapters, is an opportunity to meet and play with our gamba friends from down south for a weekend of coached and uncoached

consorts.

The Piccadilly Inn on West Shaw Avenue, Fresno, is again the location for the meet.

Coaches are **Julie Jeffrey** and **Pat O'Scannell**, old friends from Riverside who knew each other in high school and played together in the UC-Riverside Collegium Musicum.

Julie is well known to us not only as our chapter president, but as an esteemed teacher and performer in the

Bay Area and beyond.

She appears regularly with the Sex Chordae Consort of Viols, Magnificat, Distant Oaks and Hausmusik, among other ensembles.

Pat is a musician (viols, winds and voice) and director for the "Green Show" of early music preceding the plays at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival in Ashland, and for the Terra Nova Consort, which has toured and recorded

(Continued on page 5)

VIOLA DA GAMBA SOCIETY-PACIFICA

GAMBA NEWS

GAMBA NEWS is published 10 times a year by the Pacifica chapter of the Viola da Gamba Society. It vacations in July and August.

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Contributions welcome: Send concert listings and reviews, opinions, workshop experiences, CD reviews, drawings, or photos to **Lyle York**, Editor, 1932 Thousand Oaks Boulevard, Berkeley, CA 94707, or via e-mail: lyleyork@earthlink.net. Phone (510) 559-9273. Associate editors are **Ellen Farwell** and **Mary Elliott**. Designer: **Matthew Wilson**.

Classified ads: Short classified advertisements in *Gamba News* are free to VdGS-Pacifica members. For non-members, ads are \$5 per issue. Please mail your check to **Lyle York** (address above), made out to VdGS-Pacifica.

Newsletters by email: Since few members are requesting email delivery, we are going to mail all copies regular mail until further notice.

Web site: Our VdGS-Pacifica chapter Web site, <http://home.pacbell.net/hesuome>, is maintained and regularly updated by **Helen Tyrrell**. It contains the Viol Players' Calendar, which is often more up to date than the *Gamba News* calendar — along with a list of local teachers, sources for music, supplies, inexpensive viols, repairs, and travel tips. The VdGSA (national) Web site is: www.vdgsa.org.

Rent a viol: Pacifica has trebles, tenors and basses to rent. Donations of viols and bows to our rental program are extremely welcome — we'll accept them in any condition. Rental fees range from \$10 to \$25 per month. In charge of rentals is **John Mark**, at 10 Holyrood Manor, Oakland, CA 94611; (510) 531-1471; mark_bach8@hotmail.com.

The VdGSA, Pacifica's parent organization, also rents viols. For VdGSA members, rates are \$250 per year for trebles and tenors, \$300 for basses, and \$750 for a complete consort. For more information, contact **Stephen Morris**, 2615 Tanglewood Road, Decatur, GA 30033-2729; (404) 325-2709; smmorris@mindspring.com.

The VdGSA has instituted a Rent-To-Own program. If interested, contact **John Mark**, address above.

George Houle will coach April 12

George Houle of Palo Alto is a student of the viola da gamba, an enthusiastic consort player, and an editor and publisher of music for the viol. He has studied with **John Dornenburg** and **Margriet Tindemans**.

He was born and raised in Pasadena, California. George's passion for his first instrument, the oboe, began when he realized that he could be the only oboist in his school orchestra instead of one of six clarinetists.

With the support of his diligent and determined mother, Florence Wells Houle, he studied with Henri de Busscher, the principal oboist of the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra, and played in the Pasadena Civic Orchestra, conducted by Richard Lert.

This immensely rich introduction to the glories of music included the performance of a concerto with the orchestra at the age of 15 and set him on a lifelong musical path.

After a brief time in the U.S. Army, he studied at Stanford University where he encountered Leonard Ratner, Loran Crosten, and finally Putnam Aldrich, at that time one of very few harpsichordists and a scholar who believed that musical scholarship and performance belonged together.

The combination was irresistible, and George went on to complete a

Ph.D. in historical musicology.

He taught music history and theory at Mills College and the University of Colorado, and music history and literature at the University of Minnesota, where he also conducted the orchestra.

In 1962 he returned to Stanford, where he taught a broad range of courses and established a program for the performance of Renaissance and baroque music.

He taught himself to play baroque oboe, recorders, shawms, and other double reed instruments, and then taught these to his students.

George encouraged everyone to discover and learn historical singing technique as well as instrumental techniques to recreate the formal structures and esthetic frameworks of early music.

He also learned and taught Renaissance and baroque dancing as an integral part of the early music program, the better to perform music made to their measures.

His first scholarly studies centered on the nature of musical meter and rhythm and culminated in *Meter in Music 1600-1800*. Seventeenth century notation, meter, and tempo continue to be scholarly interests.

He was music director of the New York Pro Musica in 1972-74, on leave

PACIFICA PLAY DAY SCHEDULE, 2003

All play days except those at Stanford are held at Zion Lutheran Church, 5201 Park Boulevard, Oakland.

The church is just west of the Park Boulevard exit off Highway 13. We meet at 9:15 a.m. for the coached session.

Sheet music, coffee and tea will be supplied. Please bring a music stand and any music of your own you'd like to play.

"Potluck" lunches have been working well this year. Please either bring a sack lunch for yourself or a dish or drink to share. The church kitchen has a microwave we can use.

Consorts are formed based on the information you provide on the enclosed postcard.

Please mail it immediately!

Or email your data to John Mark, mark_bach8@hotmail.com.

Newcomers and rank beginners are welcome.

If you're coming for the first time, please phone ahead: (510) 531-1471.

DATE	COACH
April 12	GEORGE HOULE
May 17	STEVE LEHNING
June 14	ELISABETH REED

Fresno Viol Meet / continued

(Continued from page 4)
extensively.

The Viols West Chapter, which is in charge of arrangements this year, has recently mailed out the brochure with information and registration form.

Although the brochure states that the early registration fee (before March 24) is \$40, and the fee after that is \$45, Viols West co-president **Stuart Elliott** says that since the brochure was mailed

rather late, the "early bird" deadline will be waived, and the registration fee will be \$40 for everyone who registers. Lodging is \$44.24 per night double occupancy.

The meet begins at 8:00 p.m. Friday, and continues about halfway through Sunday afternoon. For more information, contact Stu, (626) 798-2912; **Gwen Rodman**, (909) 981-1633; or **Ed Harris**, (562) 596-4892.

from Stanford, and led the ensemble in concerts and operas on three continents.

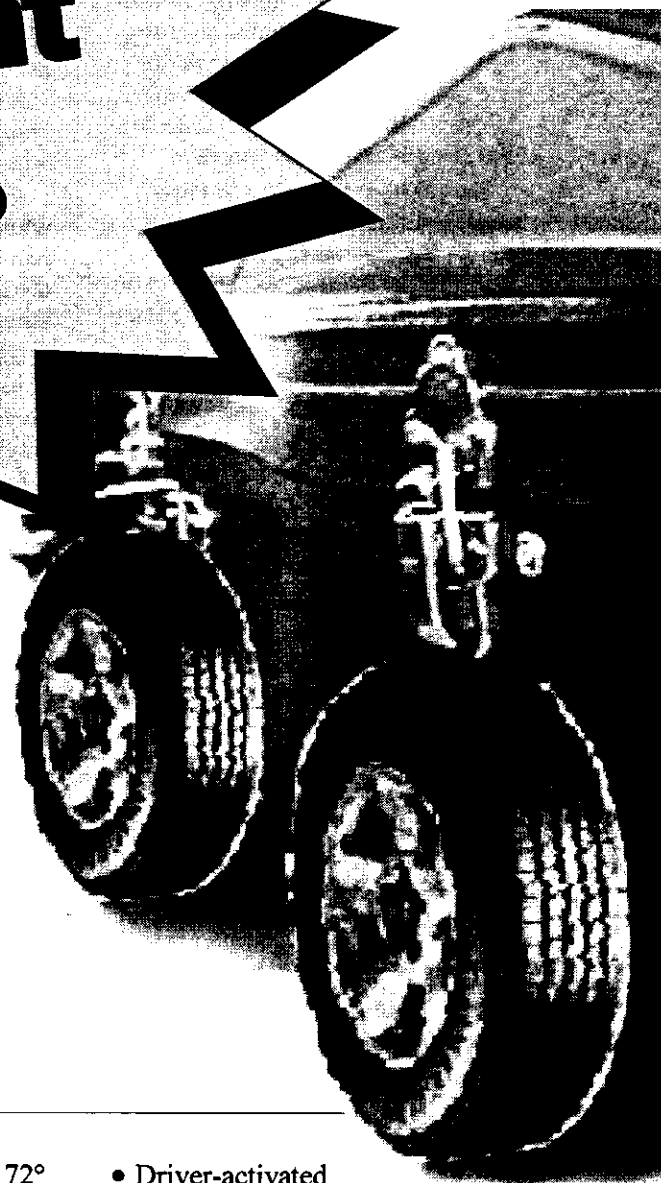
During his tenure at Stanford he presented innumerable concerts in which he performed with his students. Due to the excellent and versatile musicians with whom he worked, these concerts ranged from medieval through 18th-century music. He retired from full-time teaching in 1992.

Playing the viol and acquainting his students at the Fromm Institute at the University of San Francisco with its music is a continuing pleasure.

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Members' opinions on play day coaching

Between December 2002 and January 2003, Pacifica members were asked to respond to a questionnaire assessing their degree of satisfaction with the coaching at our Saturday play days.

Mary Elliott, Pacifica's coaching liaison, wrote the survey questions and distributed the questionnaires.

Out of 50 distributed, Mary received 14 responses. Respondents did not answer all the questions.

In sum, members said they are usually satisfied with their coaching, and are most satisfied with those coaches who provide them with technical and stylistic suggestions for improvement of their individual and ensemble playing.

Here are the questions asked, and some representative responses.

1. Have you been satisfied with the quality of coaching offered at Pacifica play days?

Three players responded, "Always." Ten responded, "Usually."

2. What do you hope to gain from the coaching sessions?

"A greater understanding of phrasing, how to play in an ensemble, how to listen to others, how to interpret a certain composer"

"Tips on technique"

"Help with group dynamics"

"New ideas for bowing, articulation"

"More confidence in performance"

"To sight read more challenging music each time"

"Techniques for improving tuning, ensemble playing, balance, articulation, phrasing, bowing"

3. What do you value most in Pacifica play days?

"A day of gamba immersion... being with good people... learning new repertoire"

"Seeing and playing with people outside of my usual musical circle"

"Getting to play in various groups, being 'pushed' musically"

"Playing, playing, playing!"

"Learning a variety of wisdom from the coaches"

"The opportunities to learn ensemble technique, chances to play music I haven't played before, meet new players, and socialize (in that order)"

"Getting together with everyone. Playing in groups with different personalities. Learning how to ad-

just to different styles, etc."

4. What suggestions would you offer for improvement?

"I like the new format but wish we didn't have to start quite so early."

"More mixing in the assigned groups—some better players with less experienced." [This is the usual practice with the afternoon groups.]

"If no group offers to play in the open session, how about a short (mass) play session?" [A recent innovation has been encouraging morning groups to volunteer off-the-cuff—unprepared or semi-prepared—to be coached in the open session.]

"Like the new format! Hope you can attract more players."

"Some of the coaches seem to lack a clear idea of what to do with a group. Some seem inexperienced. It might help to ask them to address certain aspects of playing so they know better what we expect."

"Have three coaches so we can all get more time with them."

"Let's have more master classes with everybody watching."

Martha McGaughey will teach at SFEMS workshop

By Ellen Farwell

Martha McGaughey will return for her second year as viol faculty at this year's Baroque Music and Dance Workshop in San Rafael June 22-28. The annual workshop, held at Dominican University, is sponsored by the San Francisco Early Music Society.

Martha teaches at the Mannes College of Music in New York. She is a frequent performer on the East Coast, as well as a recording artist. She has studied with Jordi Savall and Wieland Kuijken.

The workshop offers master classes,

coached ensembles, chorus, orchestra, baroque dance, and faculty and student performances. It has been condensed to one week, in contrast to the two weeks offered in previous years.

Of interest to viol players, in addition to Martha's morning master class and opportunities to play continuo in baroque ensembles, is a plan to combine a few of the masterclass sessions for gamba, cello and harpsichord into a "continuo clinic," with emphasis on shaping lines for expressive playing and providing rhythmic impetus.

Phebe Craig takes over this year as workshop director from Anna Carol

Dudley, who has retired after many years of service. Phebe will also teach harpsichord, and Anna Carol will continue on the faculty as voice instructor.

Other faculty are Marion Verbruggen and Frances Blaker, recorder; Arthur Haas, harpsichord; Sand Dalton, oboe and double reeds; Angene Feves, baroque dance; Paul Flight, voice and chorus; Kathleen Kraft, flute; Michael Sand, violin and orchestra; and Marc Vanscheeuwijck, cello.

May 1 is the deadline for the early registration discount. For more information, contact Phebe at phebec@aol.com or (510)540-7415.

Peter Hütmannsberger on European viol models

By Mary Elliott

In February's *Gamba News*, we described the portion of Peter Hütmannsberger's January 11 presentation that dealt with the materials of viol building (wood, varnish, and soundpost placement). Here, we present a summary of his remarks describing some differences between French, English, and Austrian viol makers.

FRENCH VIOLS

Peter models his seven-string French Bertrand viols after several originals produced by Nicolas Bertrand (fl. ca. 1687; d. 1725). These models include small versions owned by Larry Dreyfus and Wieland Kuijken, as well as a large version owned by Catharina Meints of Oberlin College. The French makers' craftsmanship could be hurried. Bertrand, for example, claimed he could make a viol in a couple of weeks! Although Bertrand seemed to make a secret of his varnish, Peter conjectures that the varnish may have been most useful in covering up blemishes in workmanship. Michel Collichon (1666-1697), who built viols modeled on Bertrand's, was a cleaner craftsman than Bertrand. These differences in workmanship may be attributed to the clientele the makers were serving. It seems that Bertrand had to supply instruments quickly to the "ordinary" viol players, while Collichon made his instruments for the nobility. In any case, what the Bertrands lacked in fine workmanship, they made up for in the richness, warmth, and projection of their sound.

Initially, French players preferred English-made instruments (to which they added a seventh string), which often displayed more focus and clarity than the French-made viols. This may be caused by a number of differences in construction. French soundpost plates tend to be thick and narrow, English



**AUSTRIAN MAKER
JAKOB STAINER**
had immense stature in the 1600s. This Hütmannsberger copy has a scroll head.

*Photos are from
Peter's web site:
www.violine.at.*



soundpost plates thinner and wider. French and English ribs tend to be thick, while those of Stainer's instru-

ments and those of German makers are thinner.

ENGLISH VIOLS

English makers include Richard Meares (d. 1722), whose work may have inspired the work of Barak Norman (1651-1724). Although Meares and Norman produced bent fronts, divisions composer Christopher Simpson (ca. 1605-1669) preferred carved tops. Simpson never offered a reason for this, but he must have been familiar with the violin family at the time. Viols had hardly ever been made with bent tops, and he may have just preferred the "sweeter" sound that carved tops produce.

AUSTRIAN VIOLS

Austrian makers include Jakob Stainer (ca. 1617-1683). Stainer probably worked for a while in Cremona, later moving back to Austria. His stature as a maker of stringed instruments was immense, and his work was more prized than that of the Cremona builders. He had heard of Simpson and of eight-string viols and copied some English viols. However, he did not copy the bent-top system of construction, and he added fluting, a normal procedure in Italian and German violin construction of the time. The bellies of Stainer's instruments are thick in the middle and thin at the fluting on the edges. This produces less resistance because it permits the belly to vibrate like a spring, creating a focused sound. Peter models his Stainer copies on an original owned by August Wenzinger. Stainer's workmanship is very clean, compared with that of some English and French instruments.

With all of these known distinctions between viol-building styles and the sounds they produce, the player is faced with many choices. Peter advises that viol players choose "the right kind of instrument" for the music being played.

Mark your calendar

APRIL 4, 5, 6

MAGNIFICAT presents *Membra Iesu Nostri* by Dietrich Buxtehude, a cycle of cantatas revealing the sincerity of spirituality in deceptively simple melodies and sublime polyphony. With Julie Jeffrey and John Dornenburg, viola da gamba. Tickets \$25/18/12. www.magnificatsf.com.

8:00 p.m., April 4, First Lutheran Church, Palo Alto

8:00 p.m., April 5, St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Berkeley

4:00 p.m., April 6, St. Gregory Nyssen Episcopal Church, San Francisco

APRIL 2, 16, 30; MAY 7, 15, 21, 28

MID-PENINSULA RECORDER ORCHESTRA regular meetings. Early strings and winds are invited to join the recorders. Please bring a music stand. For information: Frederic Palmer, (650) 591-3648.

8:00 p.m., J.L. Stanford Middle School, Music Room 2, 480 East Meadow Drive, Palo Alto.

APRIL 10

LA FOOLIA: ANNUAL BENEFIT FOR SFEMS EDUCATION PROGRAMS. Shira Kammen, Katherine Westine, Phebe Craig, Susan Rode Morris. Tickets \$30, partially tax deductible. For information or to order tickets held at the door, contact Karen Nebelkopf, 6641 Simson Street, Oakland, CA 94605, or knebelkopf@earthlink.net. (510) 540-7415.

7:00 p.m., hors d'oeuvres and wine;

8:00 p.m., performance. Oakland Museum, Oak and 10th streets, Oakland.

APRIL 13

HESPERION XXI, JORDI SAVALL, DIRECTOR AND VIOLA DA GAMBA: Presented by Cal Performances: a program of folias and pasacalles by Ortiz, Marin, Sanz, de Ribayaz, and Hidalgo. Tickets \$42. (510) 642-9988.

7:00 p.m., First Congregational Church, Dana and Durant streets, Berkeley.

APRIL 13-19

HIDDEN VALLEY MUSIC SEMINAR FOR RECORDER, VIOLA DA GAMBA AND HARPSICHORD WORKSHOP: Features master classes for recorder, viola da gamba and harpsichord, coached Baroque chamber ensembles, separate Renaissance consort classes for recorder and viols, and continuo classes for harpsichordists. For advanced amateurs and pre-professionals. Enrollment limited; inquire early.

In Carmel Valley, CA. For information contact: Letitia Berlin, (510) 559-4670; tish-feb@mindspring.com. To register or to inquire about fees and accommodations, Peter Meckel, (831) 659-3115.

APRIL 18

SANTA CRUZ BAROQUE FESTIVAL presents "A Bach Celebration." Monica Huggett, baroque violin; Linda Burman-Hall, harpsichord; Amy Brodo, viola da gamba. 8:00 p.m., Music Recital Hall, UC Santa Cruz campus. Pre-concert talk at 7:30 p.m. (831) 457-9693.

APRIL 21

HEATHER VORWERCK, VIOLA DA GAMBA, AND JONATHAN LEE, HARPSICHORD: Recital featuring the music of Schenk, Marais (including L'operation), Simpson, and Bach.

8:00 p.m., Mills College, Music Building: 5000 MacArthur Blvd., Oakland.

APRIL 25-27

ANNUAL NORTH-SOUTH VIOL MEET, Fresno. See page 4.

For information contact: Stu Elliott, (626) 798-2912; selliott625@earthlink.net.

MAY 9-11

MARIN HEADLANDS EAST BAY-AMERICAN RECORDER SOCIETY WORKSHOP FOR RECORDERS AND VIOLS

For information contact Britt Ascher: brittascher@attbi.com.

JUNE 22-29

SFEMS BAROQUE WORKSHOP: Martha McGaughey, viol (among others). Dominican University, San Rafael (see page 8).

For information contact: Phebe Craig, (510) 540-7415, or phebec@aol.com.

JULY 13-19

SFEMS MEDIEVAL-RENAISSANCE WORKSHOP: John Dornenburg, Julie Jeffrey and Elisabeth Reed, viols (among others). Dominican University, San Rafael.

Contact: Hanneke van Proosdij, (510) 236-9808, or medren@lanset.com.

JULY 27 - AUGUST 3

VDGSA CONCLAVE: St. Olaf College, Northfield, MN. Details at www.vdgsa.org.

Contact: Alice Renken, (760) 729-6679, fax (760) 729-6680; arenken@sandwich.net.

AUGUST 10-16

VIOLS WEST WORKSHOP, CalPoly campus, San Luis Obispo. Directed by Rosamund Morley. Details at www.vdgsa.org.

Contact: Alice Renken, (760) 729-6679, fax (760) 729-6680; arenken@sandwich.net.

Classifieds

SEEKING CONSORT

BASS PLAYER, hemidemi beginner, fairly good at sight-reading, seeks to play in consorts of any size. Could play in my home (Rockridge) or willing to go to others' homes in the Bay Area. Flexible schedule, days or evenings. **Ricardo Hofer**, (510) 428-1430; hofermr@earthlink.net.

FOR SALE

VIOLS MADE by **Alexandra Saur**. Beautiful copies of Bertrand, Jaye, and Hoskins masterpieces. (510) 558-6927, (510) 559-9563.

TREBLE VIOL by Higgins; neck replacement by him; viol in excellent condition. Early ratchet bow by Neil Hendricks and hard case "arranged" by Herb Myers. \$1,500 for viol, bow, and case. Contact **Kris Montague**, (650) 969-1668.

BASS VIOL FOR SALE: Bass viol, 6 string, German-made in the 1970s. With bow and hard case. \$3500. Contact **Helen Tyrrell**, (925) 253-1782; hesuome@pacbell.net.

THREE LOVELY 20TH-CENTURY VIOLS:

These instruments were purchased in the 1970s, and have been used infrequently over the last 25 years. **TREBLE**: This instrument is branded with a stylized "AH," and the scroll features a unique carving of a woman's head. It comes in a soft case with a Lothar Seifert bow. Asking \$2,500. **TENOR**: This was possibly made by Karl Roy, and comes with hard case. Asking \$2,000. **BASS**: A 1966 instrument made by J. M. Samann in Dresden, it comes with a Lothar Seifert bow and hard case. Asking \$4,000. Contact **Richard Berman**, (510) 536-8457, or rjberman@hotmail.com.

BASS VIOL BOW FOR SALE: Figured snakewood, made by Linda Shortridge. \$495. Contact **Don Groves**, (503) 631-7806, dgroves@ccwebster.net.

BASS VIOL BOW FOR SALE: I purchased this bow from Ralph Ashmead for \$1650 at the 2002 Berkeley Early Music Festival Exhibition. Asking \$1500, as I am in need of new camera equipment! This snakewood bow sits very firmly on the string and is beautifully made, which is typical of Ralph. Contact **Karen Ande**, (415) 586-5285 or kande@igc.org.

OFFERS

WANT TO TRY AN ALTO? Pacifica has an alto viol available for short-term loan, not rental, to any of our experienced members wanting to try such an unusual instrument. It is tuned A to a, one step up from a tenor. Contact **John Mark**, (510) 531-1471 or mark_bach8@hotmail.com

HOW TO PLACE A CLASSIFIED AD

Short classified advertisements in **GAMBA NEWS** are free to VdGS-Pacific members.

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VdGS-Pacific
P.O. Box 188
Orinda, CA 94563

\$ _____ **Playing Member (\$25):** You can attend monthly consort meetings for free, you get a free subscription to *Gamba News*, and you get a discount on consort-coaching sessions.

\$ _____ **Two-Person Membership (\$35):** Two playing members in the same household. You share all the rights and privileges of a Playing Member.

\$ _____ **Newsletter-Only Membership (\$10)**

\$ _____ **Donation to VdGS-Pacific** will help us buy sheet music and rental instruments and fatten our scholarship fund.

\$ _____ **TOTAL ENCLOSED**

David Morris proves that counting counts

By Lyle York

Our old friend **David Morris** returned March 8 to coach us after too long an absence. He's still making people count out loud, and it still works.

When players count aloud while playing simple passages and during rests, group concentration is maintained, no one gets permanently lost, no time is wasted, and everyone can count on this "scaffolding" for support in a moment of confusion. Within that scaffolding players can build and refine their musical shapes. Keeping a steady pulse is the heart of David's method for successful musicianship.

In my small consort group, David coached us in some Ward fantasias that contained many cadences. He recommended creating tension with full sound on the dominant note of a cadence, but backing off on the final note to make way for the next statement.

After the small consort sessions, David gave a short lecture on bowing in dynamic patterns, an exercise to explore the infinite range of possible bow speeds, lengths and positions.

He drew shapes representing four patterns: Four bows starting on a strong push bow and tapering in volume; four bows starting on a pull and increasing in volume; four bows starting on a push and gradually increasing volume and then dropping off suddenly; and four bows starting on a pull and increasing

suddenly, tapering off gradually. You can do a C scale (for example) in each of these four-bow patterns: CDEF, DEFG, EFGA, etc.

The public coaching session was a departure. At our last board meeting, **Elisabeth Reed** had suggested that if no group had prepared a piece for public coaching we could ask for volunteers among the morning consort groups to present a piece they had worked on that morning.

One of the morning consort groups did volunteer, and went even further. They would read a piece cold, deciding among themselves how to approach it without help from David, and be coached on the result.

Five players (**P.J. Savage, Marilyn Becker, Lee McRae, Helen Tyrrell, and Alice Benedict**) volunteered to demonstrate sightreading strategies for the benefit of the rest of us by playing a Simmes five-part fantasia.

The first steps were mental: Note the key and time signatures, note tempo changes within the piece — this one went from 4/2 to 3/2 and back to 4/2 — and decide on a tempo to start. One player suggested finding a comfortable triple tempo and then working back to an ideal duple. On the first read-through, the players counted aloud, called out measure numbers, and kept a good steady pulse.

The transitions from 3 to 2 were, as predicted, the trickiest area, so the sec-

ond step was to practice those.

As would have also been predicted by David, when players got off it was from failing to count through rests. The next step was a "noodling" break, for all to practice tricky passages.

Next they went over a rough spot three times. Finally, they did a last read-through from the top — which was assured and musical. It was an inspiring demonstration of grace under pressure.

"It would be hard to find a more supportive environment for a public sightreading," said Helen Tyrrell. "I personally felt more relaxed than when we have prepared a piece for public coaching, since there was no time to agonize and worry in advance."

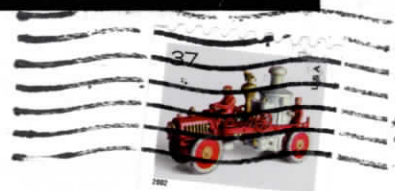
Marilyn Becker agreed, and both she and Helen felt that David's positive, encouraging attitude helped overcome anxieties that can hold one back from playing in front of others.

In the remaining time before lunch, everyone doubled up and played Jenkins' Fantasia No. 8 for six, aiming for clean rhythms.

No one had planned a potluck, but several people brought their lunch. **Mary Elliott** brought a big artichoke tart that fed quite a few, and **John Mark** brought cookies. So we all stayed in the church kitchen to eat and gave ourselves more afternoon playing time.

Gamba NEWS

c/o Becker, 3049 23rd Avenue, Oakland, CA 94602



Play

Mary Elliott
920 Ventura Avenue
Albany, CA 94707

