

VIOLADA GAMBA SOCIETY PACIFICA VOLUME 19, NO. 1 SEPTEMBER 2005

GAMMA NEWS

The 2005-2006 Season

Renew Your Membership **Now!**

Make your check out to Viola da Gamba Society-Pacifica and mail it to:

Pj Savage, Treasurer VdGS-Pacifica
436 Hudson St.
Oakland, CA 94618

Now is your chance to show off all the new tricks you've learned over the summer! Shira Kammen will kick off the 2005-2006 coaching season this September 10, at Zion Lutheran Church. This season promises some new faces as well as old (in the

familiar sense) favorites, and will conclude with a Chapter Concert at St. Alban's. The concert will be a low-key event strictly for our own pleasure—a chance to hear one another in the context of the small group settings many of us play in regularly.

Below are the when, where and who for upcoming play days, including RSVP details. *RSVP early and consistently.* This information facilitates on-time starts for play day, as well as minimizing inconvenience and confusion for our organizers.

Pacifica Play Day Schedule, 2005-2006

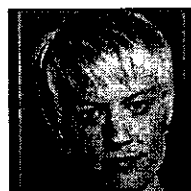
DATE	COACH
September 10	Shira Kammen
October 8	Amy Brodo
November 12	Joanna Blendulf
January 14	William Skeen
February 11 (Date to be confirmed)	John Dornenberg at Stanford
March 11	Lisa Terry (coaching and master class)
April 8	Julie Jeffrey
May 4 - 6	Fresno North/South Meet (Coaches TBA)
June 3	Pacifica Chapter Concert for Friends/ Family/Each Other, 3-5 pm at St. Alban's

Each month, as soon as you receive your Gamba News (or before), please call or email John Mark, our peerless consort arranger, to tell him you will attend the upcoming play day and what size(s) you will bring. (510) 531-1471; mark_bach8@hotmail.com.

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 am for the coached session.

Sheet music, coffee and tea will be supplied. Please bring either a sack lunch for yourself or a dish or drinks to share at our customary potluck. The church has a microwave we can use. There is also a Mexican restaurant close by.

Please bring a music stand and any consort music of your own you'd like to play. Consorts are formed based on the information you provide to John Mark. Newcomers and rank beginners are welcome.



For Sale

Bass Viola da Gamba bow by Ralph Ashmead; \$1,500 or best offer. Contact **Elisabeth Reed**, (510) 482-1684.

Visit Your Local Viol Builder! 7-string bass, Bertrand model, rich sound. 6-string bass, Jaye model, bright and delightful to play. Treble, Hoskins model. Tenors and other bass models also available. Soft and hard cases custom-fitted to your instrument. Repairs. Come by to try an instrument, take a shop tour and learn about building viols, or for idle chit-chat. **Alexandra Saur**, (510) 558-6927; (510) 559-9563, in Albany.

Bow Repair Alexandra Saur is now offering rehairing for both modern and early bows. Top quality hair and quick turnaround! 510-559-9563, bowrehair@alexandrasaur.com.

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

Lazar's Early Music

Moeck (recorders and early winds), Kueng, Mollenhauer, Yamaha, Aesthe, Dolmetsch Millenium Recorders, and others in the near future. Competitive prices, instruments sent on approval, personalized service and advice. **Bill Lazar**, (408) 737-8228.

Bass viol, Peter Tourin, Jericho, VT. English division bass after Henry Jaye; no. 49, 1983. With decorated fingerboard and tail-piece, carved rose. 67.3 cm free string length. Very nice condition with a few chips to the finish on the edges. It sold in 1983 for \$3225 for the decorative work. The viol would sell now for about \$9-10,000, according to Peter Tourin. Comes with a nice custom-fitted hard case and bow. Asking \$7000.

Bass viol, Wolfgang Uebel, Celle, Germany, 1977. With carved rose on sound board; 64 cm free string length. Very nice condition. Asking \$6000 with unpadding soft case. Bows available separately.

Treble viol, Neil Hendricks, Reno, CA, 1973. With gear tuning machines. Suitable for a beginner. Asking \$450, with Hendricks 'ratchet' bow, no case.

Bows (4): Chris English, octagonal/round stick, 60 cm free hair length, 74 gms., asking \$1000; **Harry Grabenstein/Tourin bow** (1983), ebony frog/nut, 60 cm free hair length, 68 gms., new hair, asking \$1000; **William Monical,** octagonal stick, ebony frog/nut, 60.5 cm free hair length, 59 gms., new hair, asking \$800; **H.R. Pfretzschner,** 61 cm free hair length, 59 gms., new hair, asking \$700.

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GAMBA NEWS

VIOLADA GAMBA SOCIETY, PACIFICA VOLUME 18, NO. 1 SEPTEMBER 2005

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 Julie Morrisett, Editor, 1148 Norwood Ave. #1, Oakland, CA, 94610, or jmorrisett@gmail.com; (510) 444-2380.

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 made out to VdGS-Pacifica to Julie Morrisett, Editor, 412 Arkansas Street, San Francisco, CA 94107.

www.pacificaviols.org

Our VdGS-Pacifica chapter website is maintained and regularly updated by Helen Tyrrell. It contains the Viol Player's Calendar, along with a list of local teachers, sources for music, supplies, inexpensive viols, repairs, and travel tips. The VdGSA (national) website 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 \$15 to \$30 per month. In charge of rentals is John Mark, 10 Holyrood Manor, Oakland, CA 94611; (510) 531-1471; mark_bach8@hotmail.com.

Donating to VdGS-Pacifica

The Pacifica Chapter is an affiliate of the San Francisco Early Music Society (SFEMS), and along with other privileges this affiliation confers, we can receive tax-deductible donations. These include not only cash but viols, bows, musical scores, method books, tuners, stands and other viol paraphernalia. Especially since we now have a Youth Project working to teach young people the viol, please remember the chapter when you are cleaning out your music room.

Cash donations can be used for new rental instruments and bows, new music for the chapter playing library, the Pacifica Youth Project, or our scholarship fund.

To ensure that your donation will be tax-deductible, please make out the check to SFEMS with a note on the lower left corner: "for VdGS-Pacifica." Then send your donation check to Penni Savage, Treasurer, VdGS-Pacifica, 436 Hudson Street, Oakland, CA 94618. She will forward your check to SFEMS.

SFEMS will accept and record the donation, then transfer the funds to us. You will receive an acknowledgment letter from SFEMS for your tax records.

When you donate a viol or other materials, you will receive a letter citing the estimated value of the instrument or materials for your tax records.

Viol Talk

New Music for Our Chapter Library

While at the VdGSA Conclave in Worcester, MA, in August, Julie Jeffrey and I perused the Boulder Early Music Shop offerings and enjoyed spending the \$300 which the board authorized last spring for new music. We had with us Mary Elliott's catalog (updated by Ricardo Hofer) of what the Chapter already owns, and checked potential purchases against that. Here's what we came up with:

Coprario Fantasies, 4-part

Purcell Fantazias, 4-part

Ferrabosco Pavans and Almans, 5-part

Leonora Duarte Sinfonie a 5

Okeover Consort Music for 5

Lupo Consort Music Vol. I and II (Fretwork), 5-part

Byrd 6-part Consort Music

Ward 6-part Consort Music

Dowland 5-part Lachrymaes (Fretwork)

Boulder Early Music very kindly hand-delivered all of the above to Julie Jeffrey at the Viols West workshop in San Luis Obispo, saving us shipping and handling charges.

Many thanks to Julie for her help and advice in augmenting our music collection.—*Ellen Farwell*

Membership Updates

Be sure to contact **Roy Whelden**, our Membership List Coordinator, with any updates to your address, phone or email.

Treble Viol Available to Rent

High-quality treble viol available for rent at reasonable price. Contact **Lee McRae**, (510) 848-5591, LmcR@aol.com.

For Sale, cont'd

Pictures of all are available on my website (www.bill-lazar.com) on the 'used instruments' page. Contact **Bill Lazar**, jblazar@aol.com, (408) 730-2238 for more information.

Ruby Instruments

The world's first production model of a 7-string solid body electric viola da gamba! Play traditional and crossover music on one instrument! To hear and play the Ruby, contact **Kirby**, (510) 317-0834 or (510) 332-0834 (24-hour message); gambaguy@msn.com.



Back From the Conclave

Ellen Farwell

As of this writing, I've been back a week from the VdGSA Conclave in Worcester, just about long enough to recover from the physical and mental bombardment, but still retaining some of the glow. It's not easy for a person of retirement age, fallen into somewhat slothful and self-indulgent ways, to get up at 6:30 a.m. and keep going furiously all day and evening for a week. But what a time I had! Great classes, wonderful concerts, and playing, playing, playing.

As usual, I'm on Cape Cod for the summer, so Worcester is only a couple of hours away by car. Believe it or not, I've found several other viol players on Cape Cod, and I drove with two of them, Fred Lawrence and Janet Gage, to the Conclave. Even harder to believe, though I couldn't bring any instruments of my own from home, I've managed to borrow three beautiful John Pringle viols for the whole summer from Molly Johnston, who lives here in Falmouth but is off sailing for the season. I took Molly's treble and tenor viols with me to the Conclave. I would have taken her bass, too, but there was a limit to how much "schlepping" I could handle, and how many instruments we could fit into Fred's car.

The Conclave was at the College of the Holy Cross, built on a rather steep terraced hillside. I had to do some climbing to get to concerts and other events, but classrooms and the dining hall were more or less on the same level. Hauling of instruments was manageable. The dormitory was air-conditioned and comfortable, though the bed was so high that I had to climb on a chair to get into it. We shared the dining room with what seemed like hundreds of boys attending a basketball camp, so the din was unbelievable, and the approach to the food counters so choked with bodies that most of us detoured to the salad bar.

I was a little disappointed at first to find that I didn't get into Julie Jeffrey's tenor technique class, but my second choice "Get off my Bach" class (late 17th century consort music leading to Bach) with Alice Robbins and Janet Haas was an acceptable substitute. My two remaining classes both turned out to be Jenkins 5- and 6-part consorts, the first with Carol Lewis and the second with Elisabeth Reed, who both played a part. Again, my first reaction was disappointment because of the duplication, but you really can never get too much Jenkins, and we played different pieces in each class, so I adapted just fine. It was especially rewarding to play in ensembles with Carol and Elisabeth and to interact musically with players of their caliber.

There were four half-hour "mini-concerts" in the late afternoons, and a major concert Thursday night by the Carthage Consort (Laura Jeppeson, Jane Hershey and Emily Walhout), with guest Sarah Cunningham joining them. They played a pleasing program of English consort music, including pieces by Byrd, Lupo, Lawes, Jenkins and Purcell, many of which we all know and love, but always sounding new in the hands of such magnificent musicians. A highlight of the mini-concerts was a "melodrama" depicting the life of Antoine Forqueray, as narrated by a suitably costumed John Pringle, and illustrated musically by Brent Wissick, assisted by Liam Byrne, playing pieces of Forqueray "pere" and "fils," St. Colombe and Marais. Very entertaining, and wonderfully executed, both dramatically and musically.

In addition to the Carthage Consort performance, there was something scheduled almost every evening after dinner: A group play-in the first night, the annual scholarship auction, an intriguing lecture by Natalie Lowell and John

Shortridge on the first known viols to be made in America (by Thomas Smith for the University of Illinois Collegium in Urbana), the annual banquet at which "Viol Barbie" was again dispatched by lottery to a new custodian (Thallis Drake this time) for the next year, and a final student performance by some of the classes which had met during the week.

I went to almost everything that was offered, including most of the "ad hoc" consorts set up during the minimal free time for those of us who never know when we've had enough. It might have been smarter to rest, but I always find it hard to say no when there's an opportunity to play. It's an addiction!

The rumor is that the next East Coast Conclave three years from now will probably be back at Franklin Pierce College in Rindge, NH. I'll be there.

Membership Updates

New

Denise E. Mauldin
494 Sybil Ave.
San Leandro, CA 94577
(510) 895-1375
dmauld@aol.com

Updates

Alice Benedict
2545 Buena Vista Way
Berkeley, CA 94708

Julie Morrisett
jmorrisett@gmail.com

Letter to the Editor

Jordi and Me

When I took up viols 40 years ago after having played modern violin, viola and contrabass for over 25 years, I kept my bow grip at the frog. My teacher Murray Lefkowitz (later professor at Boston University) saw nothing wrong with this grip, which permits adjustments along all three axes. In the intervening years I played with viol players on four continents who predominantly gripped the bow several inches away from the frog, some closer, some farther. The explanation I heard was that the bows in use are very long and the grip on the hair gave better balance. I did notice a small percentage of players with "my" grip at the frog.

Imagine my surprise when I read a review of Jordi Savall concerts at the Metropolitan Museum in New York in the New Yorker of May 2, 2005. A close-up action photo of Jordi (the bow a little blurred, no doubt due to its motion) and his seven-stringer clearly showed his grip to be at the frog. Well, this removed a lot of doubt from my mind—the "King" and I are on the same wavelength! Now I look forward to an interview with Jordi Savall in which he explains why he uses the frog grip.

—Walter Unterberg



The Gamba News invites commentary on this and any other viol-related subject.—Ed.

Join VdGS-Pacifica or renew for 2005-2006

First and last name _____
Mailing address _____
City, State and Zip _____
e-mail address _____
Phone number, including area code _____

_____ **Playing Member (\$25):** You can attend monthly consort meetings 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-Pacifica** will help us buy sheet music and rental instruments and fatten our scholarship fund.

_____ **TOTAL ENCLOSED**

Make out check to VdGS-Pacifica. Mail it with this form to:

Penni (Pj) Savage, Treasurer
VdGS-Pacifica
436 Hudson Street
Oakland, CA 94618

Mark Your Calendar

Upcoming Playing Opportunities, Concerts and Workshops

Wednesday, September 1

First meeting date of the mid-Peninsula Recorder Orchestra, which welcomes early strings and winds. Please bring a music stand. Music will be provided at the meeting. For information call Frederic Palmer, (650) 591-3648, or visit the orchestra website at www.sfems.org/mpro.

8:00 pm, *Jane Lathrop Stanford Middle School Music Room 060, 480 East Meadow Drive, Palo Alto*

Wednesday, October 12

Noon Concert: **La basse continue.** Faculty recital including Elisabeth Reed, viola da gamba. French baroque sonatas, including music by Francois Couperin, Joseph Bodin de Boismortier, and Michel Corrette.

12:15 pm, *Hertz Hall, UC Berkeley Campus. Free. (510) 642-4864*

Friday, November 4

The Wildcat Viols (Joanna Blendulf, Julie Jeffrey, Elisabeth Reed) present **Orpheus Britannicus-England's Greatest Masters of Song.** With guest artists Catherine Webster, Soprano; and Michael Leopold, lute & theorbo. The finest musical compositions of 17th-century Britain, as expressed in fatasies and airs for voice, viols, and lute. Presented by SFEMS.

8:00 pm, *First Lutheran Church, Palo Alto. \$25/\$22. (510) 528-1725; www.sfems.org.*

Saturday, November 5

The Wildcat Viols repeat program of November 4.

8:00 pm, *St. John's Prebyterian Church, Berkeley. \$25/\$22. (510) 528-1725; www.sfems.org.*

Sunday, November 6

The Wildcat Viols repeat program of November 4.

4:00 pm, *St. Gregory's Episcopal Church, San Francisco. \$25/\$22. (510) 528-1725; www.sfems.org.*

Playing Opportunity

ORCHESTRA AROW (American Recorder Orchestra of the West), based in Oakland, CA, is looking for a bass viola da gamba player for the upcoming Musical Traditions of Eastern Europe.

First rehearsal is on Sept. 24. AROW goes into concert performances beginning in Feb. and continues through the spring months, performing altogether 4-5 concerts.

Contact director Richard Geisler, richgeis@jps.net, to inquire further regarding opportunities, experience and expectations.

Gamba News
c/o 468 62nd Street
Oakland, CA 94609



Mary Elliott
920 Ventura Avenue
Albany, CA 94707