

# GAMBA NEWS

Newsletter of the Viola  
da Gamba Society / Pacifica

Volume 3, Number 2 February 1990

## North-South Meet

A special mailing will go out to all members of /Pacifica and /West chapters shortly after our board meeting on February 10th. In the meantime, would our membership please use the enclosed reply card (for our regular February meeting) to indicate if they definitely do *not* plan to come to the Fresno Weekend (April 27-29). This will save the cost of mailing a brochure to you.

## February Meeting

We shall meet on February 17 at 9:30 AM at First Presbyterian Church of Hayward, 2490 Grove Way, Castro Valley (see map). We shall have the whole day for uncoached small group playing: bring your lunch. We have just received the second volume of the Coprario five-part consorts, which will be available, as well as three newly published four-part fancies by John Bull. Please send in your reply card as soon as possible: this is very important, as Julie Jeffrey needs accurate information to make up the groups.

## January Meeting

MusicSources was host to this very successful meeting, at which five groups performed for our distinguished panel — the Sett of Vyalls consort. Each group was allotted a scrupulously timed half-hour for playing and advice. With four lively panelists (Wendy Gillespie, Carol Herman, Mary Springfels and Margriet Tindemans) there was no lack of constructive criticism. Many thanks to all of the participants. In the morning, four rooms were used for group playing, not without some last-minute reorganizing caused by a tenor with a collapsed sound post! After the workshop, Peter Ballinger led a group of about twelve players in pieces by A. Gabrieli and Guami, for ten and eight voices respectively. The composer Léonie Jenkins came to hear the five groups, a

sign that a new piece for viols may be germinating!

## A March Workshop?

Mary Springfels will be in the area to make a recording during March. She would be willing to give a workshop (individual coaching of our small groups, plus a short lecture, or whatever we would like) on March 17, subject to approval by the Board, and with sufficient support by our members. We would like to get your reaction to this proposal before February 10th, so please indicate your interest on the reply card, even if you cannot attend the February meeting.

## Quotation of the Month

Let him undertake an Exact Performance of his Timekeeping, Daily, as he goes on, the which being done, with a Diligent Care, Right Order, Exact Postures, and True Fingering, the Difficulty of the whole Work will be over. From then on he will have little or nothing to trouble himself with, but only to Practice and Gain a Ready Hand. — *Thomas Mace*, in *Musick's Monument* (1676).

## News from Nevada

The Nevada Barefoot Consort (Pamela Dallas, Neil Hendricks, Natalie Sera, and Gail Petersen) participated in the Advent Services at St. Stephens Episcopal Church in Reno, December 3 (1989), performing the four-part fantasy No. 6 and Pavan in D minor by Jenkins, a setting of O Magnum Mysterium and several hymn accompaniments. (*My apologies for the late appearance of this item, which became subducted under later strata — Ed.*)

## Tuning Frets

I am somewhat diffident in bringing up this topic: I expect to hear more from experts among our readers — *but*, having enjoyed



the warm intonation of the Sett of Vyalls consort when they performed at First Congregational Church in Berkeley, on the eve of our January workshop, I would like to pass on the information that the frets of all of their viols were carefully tuned to the Vallotti and Young tempered scale on the afternoon of the concert. The following table gives the pitch adjustment that should be made to each note of a suitable tuning device in order to give the Vallotti & Young tunings. The numbers are cents (hundredths of an equally tempered semitone). Thus to tune the first fret, after adjusting the open A string to 415 (or whatever A is desired), the fret should be moved until the stopped string is in tune with an A# that is 6 cents sharp. The second fret should give a stopped string that sounds 6 cents flat, and so on. The other pitches (F to G#) can be used to make sure that the frets have been moved the same distance under the other strings. The strings must be true (i.e. of constant diameter, density etc. along their length) for these adjustments to be meaningful. The Werckmeister III tunings are given for comparison, and both tunings might be useful if the gamba were played with a similarly tuned harpsichord.

Note	Pitch adjustment (cents)	
	V & Y	Werck.
A	0	0
A#	+6	+7
B	-6	+5
C	+6	+12
C#	-2	0
D	0	+4
D#	+4	+6
E	-3	0
F	+7	+9
F#	-4	-2
G	+4	+7
G#	+1	+5

## Forthcoming Events

February 7 — April 11: SFEMS Early Music Evening School class in Viol Consort Playing, led by John Dornenburg, (ten classes). The class will concentrate on learning three or four pieces of English consort music, and will also include a bit of sight-reading. Wednesdays at Music Sources, 7 PM and possibly also 8:30 PM. Fee: \$160 (SFEMS members \$150).

Information: 415 530-3202.

February 24: **Ensemble Sans Souci** presents a benefit concert for the SFEMS Baroque Workshop. Music of Telemann, F. Couperin, Hotteterre and Froberger. Bob Andrews, baroque flute, Dennis Clark, harpsichord, Jean Harris, baroque violin and Julie Jeffrey, viola da gamba. Shepherd of the Hills Church, 401 Grizzly Peak Boulevard (at Spruce), Berkeley. 8 PM. Donation \$8.00. Information: 415 621-3085

## Advertisements

Impecunious early music group is in dire need of bow for bass gamba. Contact: Debbie (408 624-2039) or Sharon (408 624-1095).

For sale: 7 string viola da gamba by Kazuya Sato, 1981, Barbey Copy. \$5,500. Juliette White (408 426-4656) or write P.O. Box 428, Albion, CA 95410.

New: Viol consort transcriptions of music by J.S. Bach. Ricercare and Aus tiefer Noth for six viols (2Tr 2T/B 2B); Prelude No. 24 and Fugue No. 8 from Book I, WTC (Tr T B). Other music for viols, recorders: PRB Productions, 963 Peralta Avenue, Albany CA 94706

## Board Meeting

There will be a meeting of the /Pacifica board on Saturday, February 10 at 1:30 PM at the home of Jane Johnson, 2174 Clayton Drive, Menlo Park (415 854-0496).

## Map for February Meeting

