

THE SOUNDPOST

Newsletter of the Pacific Northwest Viols – A chapter of the Viola da Gamba Society of America
On the web: WWW.PNVIOLS.ORG

President's Message

Lee Inman

Holy Hannah! The new PNV season fast approaches. Can summer have receded in the rearview mirror so quickly? I trust many of you had a grand time at workshops and at the 50th-anniversary VdGSA Conclave. I'll be very disappointed if the *Soundpost* doesn't soon have copious reportage on your experiences and learnings, so write them down and get them in email to your editor before they all pass into the fog of history.

Our first Play Day on September 8 will feature a presentation by the well-respected, talented and too-long-absent **Ronnee Fullerton**. His insights are always valuable, and I know we'll all come away from the session with a fresh perspective. **We'll be in the Pastoral Center for the day.**

One matter I wanted to be sure to discuss with you concerns presenters who must travel a considerable distance to work with us. At the annual PNV members' meeting last spring, we noted that bringing more frequent out-of-area teachers into Seattle could likely mean higher travel (and perhaps lodging) expenses for the chapter for a season, even though the presenter's fee would be the same. I recall that the majority of the meeting attendees were supportive of counter-balancing those additional expenses by increasing the Play Day fee, rather than by dipping deeper into the chapter treasury. At the PNV board meeting on August 5, 2012, we agreed on a way to handle that circumstance. Here are the highlights of the approach we devised:

- The Play Day fee will increase by *no more than* \$15 per person on those occasions when the day's presenter is 'out of area', to a total of *no more than* \$35 for the day.
- The membership will be notified in advance each time a Play Day fee will be increased, and by how much.
- An 'out of area' presenter will be expected to commit to a full day with the chapter, including the usual morning presentation, and two afternoon coached sessions.
- All Play Day attendees will be guaranteed access to a coached afternoon session if they so desire.
- This change in policy will not go into effect until January of 2013

This approach will be used only if there are actually additional expenses to cover. We've had considerable luck in the past with 'out of area' presenters who've gotten good deals on airfares, and who've lodged with open-hearted local hosts, resulting in minimal additional costs to the chapter for their visit. When that happens in future, the Play Day fee will *not* be raised. Please let me or any other board member know if you have any questions about this new policy.

Finally: it's **membership renewal time**. We have included a form in this newsletter. The membership form is also available for downloading from PNViols.org. We're grateful to each and every one of you for your continuing contributions to, and involvement with, Pacific Northwest Viols. I look forward to an exciting 2012-13 season.

Play Day Schedule

- ❖ 9:30 AM: Check in, sign up for consorts, tuning, announcements
- ❖ 10:00 AM: Grand Consort, Presentation
- ❖ 11:30 AM: Lunch break
- ❖ 1:00 PM: Session I: Informal Consorts or Coached Consort
- ❖ 2:30 PM: Session II: Informal consorts or Coached Consort
- ❖ 4:00 PM: Clean up

\$20 Fee per participant
A = 415

**Location for the Sept. 8, 2012
Play Day
Pastoral Outreach Center**
907 Columbia
Seattle, Washington

Ronnee Fullerton Leads on September 8

Bio information provided by Ronnee Fullerton



Ronnee Fullerton is one of Seattle's most versatile early musicians. In his early years, Ronnee was self-taught on the violin until he auditioned for college. He served, beginning at the age of 18, in the First Violin section of the Tacoma Symphony Orchestra for 11 years before he took an interest in the viola da gamba and lute. He also has extensive chamber music experience, playing in the premier string quartet in college that was called on to perform a new chamber piece on every string concert and was a national finalist in the MENC's National Chamber Music Competition in 1990, performing in Dvorak's Piano Quintet. He performs on a variety of historical stringed instruments, including bass and treble violas da gamba, quinton, baroque and modern violin, lira da braccio, ud, vielle, psaltery, and rebab. Recent music pursuits include the Baroque Lute and the Early Romantic Guitar. In addition, he occasionally sings and composes music.

Mr. Fullerton has performed numerous solo and chamber recitals for the Early Music Guild of Seattle and their education program. He has appeared as Viola da Gamba soloist with Orchestra Seattle, the Seattle Choral Company, and has performed with Seattle Baroque Orchestra and Seattle Pro Musica, performing on their CD of early Christmas music of Latin America. He is a music specialist for the Tacoma Public Schools and has taught for the Pacific Northwest Viols. Mr. Fullerton has also taught at Baroque Northwest's Baroque Flute Boot Camp. Ronnee is a member of La Lira (formerly Le Nouve Musiche), Dulce Sono, and the Puget Sound Consort. Ronnee can be heard on Le Nuove Musiches premiere CD, *Dolce Desio*. A solo CD of music for viola da gamba is forthcoming. Mr. Fullerton has performed in concert with, Margriet Tindemans, Mary Springfels, Annalisa Pappano, Matthias Maute, Jed Wentz, Janet See, David Morris, and Eric Mentzel, and was a member of Baroque Northwest with Kim Pineda, Elizabeth Brown and Gus Denhard.

Horizon House Residents Entertained with History of the Gamba

Lee Talner and Noreen Jacky

Each year members of Pacific Northwest Viols perform in several Seattle retirement communities. On May 24, 2012 several of us (Jon Brenner, Noreen Jacky, Lee Talner and guest recorder player Laura Faber) gave a unique, innovative multimedia presentation entitled "What is a Viola da Gamba?" to the residents of Horizon House. We were joined by one additional performer... a laptop computer.

Our goals: We wanted the audience to come away with a clear grasp of the instrument and it's colorful history and the different ways its has been used over the centuries. Essential information was presented with the help of PowerPoint slides that were projected onto two large screens for easy viewing. Live performance and short YouTube video clips of appropriate musical examples were integrated with the slides to provide a varied multimedia spectacle.

Noreen began with a brief history of the viol and demonstrated some of the unique characteristics of our instrument that differentiate it from the much more familiar violoncello. Lee followed with a sequence of slides that touched on the key viol related events and composers in Spain, England, Germany and France from the 16th to the 18th century.

To illustrate early viol music in Spain and Italy, we showed a YouTube clip of Jordi Savall playing Ortiz. The concept of the viol consort in England was introduced when we played a three-part arrangement of

(Horizon House, cont.) the Holborne “Galliard Farewell”. And to tease the audience with a bit of ‘broken’ consort, Laura joined in doubling the treble viol part on recorder.

When the tour came to Germany, much of the PowerPoint discussion focused on how Bach and Abel used the viol during the baroque and rococo periods. At that point, Laura on alto recorder and Lee on bass viol played a Telemann sonata to show the viol in its continuo role accompanying a melody instrument.

The tour proceeded to France that allowed us to bring to light some of the best known viol composers and players in the late 17th and early 18th century, including St Colombe and Marais. Noreen and Lee played two movements of a Boismortier sonata for two bass viols to illustrate some of the characteristics of French viol music. The piece afforded us a perfect opportunity to discuss and demonstrate the concept of *inégal* and ornamentation in French music.

Noreen next explained the viol’s loss of popularity in the late 18th century that coincided with the need for louder stringed instruments that could be heard well in concert halls and could better negotiate the music then being written. Thus came the rise of the instruments of the violin family. Recent research has shown that the viol never completely disappeared from the scene, but there is no doubt that the major stimulus for a viol revival in the late 19th century can be attributed to the Dolmetsch family in England, followed two generations later by the Trapp family in Austria and the US.

Turning to the history of the viol in Seattle, Noreen highlighted the two people most responsible for the instrument’s strong presence here, Eva Heinitz and Margriet Tindemans. Interestingly, several residents of Horizon House were familiar with both these individuals and had anecdotes to share.

With composer Jon Brenner an active member of Pacific Northwest viols, we thought it was important to include a segment about contemporary composers who write for the viol. Jon presented recorded examples of six contemporary pieces that include one or more viols. Unusual combinations of instruments and sometimes voice combined in intriguing ways with the viol sound. This part of the presentation explored new territory not only for our audience, but also for Noreen, Lee and Laura. We enjoyed hearing samples of some very prominent 21st century composers’ works. Clearly, an entire presentation could have been devoted to contemporary music for the viol.

Lee closed by showing the audience how the viol continues to thrive in the 21st century. University collegia and graduate programs, professional ensembles and soloists, amateur players, and local, regional and national societies for the viol are all increasing. Further, Seattle boasts a unique viol program for high school students, now in its 5th year. Lee collaborates with Ellen Siebert and Chris Briden teaching viol to Roosevelt High School modern string players as an elective twice weekly during the Spring quarter.

The PowerPoint presentation was posted on ‘Google docs’ (<http://tinyurl.com/csoxf9u>) so that it could run on a web browser and be easily shared and edited. Putting it together was quite a learning experience for Noreen, who created an earlier version that she has presented to her UW Library staff colleagues for several years running. Several questions came up along the way. What is the best way to share documents while carrying out joint editing? Will the links to online performances work in all web browsers? Will the connection speed be adequate at the venue? Horizon House was well equipped and their staff was very helpful in setting up the laptop and projector. The links to on line performances worked seamlessly during our presentation, but testing the equipment before the actual presentation allowed us to relax, at least about that aspect of the event.

The performance was well attended. We prepared 35 handouts and ran short. Several residents came forward afterwards to ask probing questions and offer thanks for sharing our passion for the *viola da gamba*.

Bastyr 2012 Workshop

Chris Briden

This year Margriet Tindemans hosted the Pacific Northwest Viol Workshop from July 8th to the 14th on the beautiful grounds of Bastyr University. We thirty-five participants were lucky to have six attentive faculty members: Joanna Blendulf, Lee Inman, Larry Lipnikn Roz Morley, David Morris and, of course, Margriet.

She began with a play in on Sunday evening where she gave us objectives to work on throughout the week. Most days had four class sessions, the last of which was a large ensemble, *Dori and Ori*, in which students could sing or play or both. In the evenings there was always some sort of event such as Tuesday's Faculty Concert in the chapel or Thursdays' carpool to see the *Wayward Sisters* performance in Seattle. On the last day we performed a student concert in which all those who participated in *Dori and Ori* performed for those who did not... there was an audience of four. The week was wrapped up by one last group class led by Margriet in which we played the same music as at the play-in but this time it we sounded so much better for all that we had learned throughout the week.

For those who are unfamiliar with Bastyr University, it specializes in naturopathic medicine. Accordingly, there are acres of medicinal gardens on the grounds and the whole thing is surrounded by the old growth forest of St. Edward State Park on the shore of Lake Washington. The building surrounds a courtyard in which there is a turtle pond whose inhabitants are accustomed to begging for food and attention. The food served here was some of the best you will find at a summer workshop and could be augmented by foraging for several different types of berries in the nearby woods. The weather made exploring all of these extremely seductive which may or may not have cut into my practice time.



Ch-ch-ch-ch-changes; Turn and Face the Strange

Lee Inman

Two items of note: Saint James has graciously offered to allow PNV to store its music library on the Saint James campus. While this will avoid the need to cart two or three boxes across town for each Play Day, there still is some shleppage involved, and I trust we can find eager volunteers to help us with that. ***Thanks once again to Myles for his many faithful years of managing the library! And many, many thanks to Jim Savage and the Saint James administration for supporting our residency with this additional generosity.***

We will also need one or two people at each Play Day to arrange afternoon ensembles. Please consider offering your services. It's not a difficult task – in fact, it's kinda fun – and it offers the 'arrangers' the perk of assembling the perfect ensembles for themselves, too!

What I Did on My Summer Vacation

Noreen Jacky

This summer my husband and I attended week one of the five week Dartington International summer school in Devon, England. Week one had several early music courses that we were interested in. The courses offered at Dartington are varied. Courses such as 'Improve your sight singing' and 'Baroque Dance' were open to all. Courses such as 'Baroque Orchestra', 'Advanced Baroque Opera', and the master classes for voice, lute and oboe were auditioned courses.

I registered for the courses 'Viol Consorts' and 'Chamber Music'. My husband registered for 'Medieval/Renaissance Music' and he also signed up for chamber music. We arrived in London on July 17 when streets were being closed and banners were being put up in preparation for the Olympic games. After two days in Bloomsbury we took the train to Hampshire and spent a few days visiting and playing music with friend who we had met at a previous music. Our friends took us to the train station in Salisbury for the trip to Dartington.

Everyone had been talking about the rain and floods in the cothe weather turned beautiful when we left for Dartington and stayed that way all week. Buses from Dartington met the train and we were driven to the place where we would be staying for the next week. Jon and I were staying at the Postern – a twenty-minute walk from the main area where classes and meals were held. There was a mini bus that came in the morning and evening that was helpful. We discovered that the members of Fretwork were also staying at the Postern. I was excited because they would be the coaches for the Viol Consort course.

Dinner followed by a concert was the first experience of the week. We enjoyed starting to get to know the other students who seemed to be mostly from the UK. The food was wonderful with a vegetarian choice along with a meat choice. After dinner on the first night we gathered in the great hall for the Fretwork concert. The members of the group are Richard Boothby, Liam Byrne, Reiko Ichise, Asako Morikawa, and Richard Tunnicluffe. I was excited to realize that over the week I would have a chance to meet all of them. As the concert began, one thing that struck me was that they walked out and started to play right away. There was no on stage tuning. We heard some Dowland songs. Emma Kirkby joined the group for some songs.

The next day we went to our classes.

There were usually three sessions of Viol Consort during the day. I attended one at 9:15 and one at 11:15. The first day we were divided into two five part consorts. My group read through the Byrd Fantasia number 2 with helpful coaching. Tuesday and Thursday morning we were going to play 'In C'. The week before the course we were sent information about the minimalist piece 'In C' by Terry Riley that was written in 1964. This piece consists of 53 short, numbered musical phrases, lasting from half a beat to 32 beats; each phrases may be repeated an arbitrary number of times. I had found YouTube clips of the piece but not with viols. Richard Boothby led us through the patterns. The piece worked very well with viols and it was an excellent study in reading and playing rhythms. The experience of 'In C' also reminded me of how jazz musicians play off of each other with dynamics and letting different people take the lead. I learned that listening and being aware of what is going on around you is very much part of making this kind of music work. Of course listening and being aware are important reading any kind of music. Fretwork was not in residence on Wednesday so we sorted ourselves into groups. I was delighted to find two bass players who wanted to work on the Nikolai trio sonatas for three basses. We enjoyed ourselves and asked for a coaching session on the piece.



(...**Summer Vacation, cont.**) Other morning sessions were a session on Improvisation with Liam Byrne and a helpful technique session with Richard Tunnicliffe. The improvisation was fun. I recognized that the ground we were improvising on was the basis for many pieces of music that viol players play. In our last morning session Richard suggested bowing exercises that we all practiced. The instructors were all very encouraging and we were able to schedule individual lesson if we wanted to. I was able to arrange lessons on both the bass viol and the treble.

After lunch I switched from playing my viol to playing cello. The chamber music coordinator Rihannon Evans had the task of matching up the people who wanted to play chamber music into viable groups. People were asked to describe themselves as beginning, intermediate, or advanced players when they filled out the chamber music form. Jon and I both decided to call ourselves intermediate. We were matched up with another recorder player and formed a trio sonata group for the week. The members of the Brook Street Band took turns coaching the different chamber music groups. Sometimes we had a harpsichord player and sometimes we had a recorder player, but my favorite day was when I was able to work with Tatty Theo; the groups cellist. The first thing she had me do was try to play without the endpin in the cello. She also had me experiment with holding the bow further forward for a lighter touch. I was also told not to shy away from open strings. I felt that my continuo playing improved over the week as I got more confident. At the end of the week there was a chamber music concert for chamber music participants. We were able to hear what the other students had been working on.

Our trio played two movements of a Schickhardt Sonata for two recorders and continuo. One notable group was a string quartet of four brothers dressed in tee shirts labeled thing 1, thing 2, thing 3, and thing 4. They were ages 18, 16, 12 and 10. I was really impressed by the 12 year old cellist. Their playing of Nimrod was just gorgeous.

We were lucky to have wonderful concerts every evening at 7:45PM. In addition to the Fretwork concert we heard 'the Brook Street Band', Emma Kirkby, a piano recital, The Dartington Baroque Orchestra and baroque dancers, and the Dartington Choir and Baroque orchestra on the last night. There were also concerts or lectures at 5:15PM and at 10PM. We only stayed up for a 10PM concert once, when the Tudor ensemble was singing. The week went by quickly. The final concert was the baroque orchestra and the choir. What a glorious sound. After the concert we mingled in the White Hart bar next to the great Hall. We drank cider, toasted the week, exchanged email addresses and said farewells to new friends and teachers.

For more information about Dartington: <http://www.dartington.org/summer-school>

For more information about Fretwork: <http://www.fretwork.co.uk/>

For more information about the Brook Street Band: <http://www.brookstreetband.co.uk/>

Outreach Opportunities

Et al.

It is time to plan our annual performances for **Horizon House**, Chancery Place and other possible venues. Can you or your group organize a program? Please let Jon Brenner (yomaestro@hotmail.com), Vicki Hoffman (mikeandvicki@q.com), or Noreen Jacky (noreenbj@gmail.com) know .

Thanks to the efforts of Jon Brenner, **there is now a PNV Gig Book** that you can choose musical selections from. For more information on this resource contact Jon Brenner.