

# Cascadia Viols

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*Cascadia Viols* is the quarterly newsletter of the Viola da Gamba Society ~ Cascadia, a chapter of the Viola da Gamba Society of America.



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VdGSC is grateful to:

- ◆ Knuckleheads for website development and maintenance
- ◆ Trinity Cathedral for hosting our four events this year
- ◆ Boulder Early Music Shop for the material in our lending library

## Message From the President

Tim Scott

On behalf of the board of Cascadia Viols, greetings to viol players and viol lovers of Oregon and southwest Washington. When I first met with Jeanne Collins and Anthony Allen a few months ago, I had no idea that today we would have a mailing list of 80, 31 members so far, a newsletter, website, Facebook page, tax exempt status, a bank account, a budget, and be the newest chapter of the Viola da Gamba Society of America. I guess it makes sense, as we have had three conclaves here, and a great increase in interest in the viol in recent years. We have members from across the state. Portland has the Portland Viol Consort, the only professional viol consort in the Northwest. We have instrument makers, and string makers, and one of our board members, Bill Monical, is known as one of the leading instrument restorers in the world. We especially welcome members of the Portland Recorder Society and the Early Music Guild of Oregon.

Of course, for me, one of the most exciting events is having Wendy Gillespie, one the leading viol players in the world, joining the Portland Viol Consort for a concert of English favorites and rarities for five viols on May 1<sup>st</sup> and then leading our first Cascadia Viols workshop on May 2<sup>nd</sup>. In the afternoon she will be joined by members of the Portland Viol Consort to coach ensembles. It will be a great time to meet other viol players from Portland and around the state, and to enjoy playing with some new people while improving your skills.

We hope that Cascadia Viols will be a resource and meeting place for everyone interested in the viol and its music—amateur and professional, student, audience, composer, and maker. Through our website, newsletter, and Facebook page we will communicate and find people to play with, ask questions, share videos, photographs, books, and ideas. We are planning to start with four workshops a year in which we will have presenters (they may not all be viol players) come to share their knowledge. Topics may include anything from Eastern European viol music, to Jenkins, Praetorius, voices and viols, new music for viols, and lyra viol. They will all include a lot of playing. We welcome suggestions; please contact any board member with your ideas.

With that in mind I encourage all our members to learn something new this month. A clef, instrument, bowed trill, new key, barless consort music—we can all expand our knowledge. I am trying to get better at early notation.

During the coming months I look forward to meeting all of you, and hope that many of you can become involved with Cascadia Viols.



## Calendar of Events

May 1, Friday, 8 p.m.: **Portland Viol Consort concert.** Grace Memorial Episcopal Church, 1535 NE 17th Ave Portland, Oregon. Tickets at the door: \$20/general, \$15/senior/student. Please e-mail Tim Scott (his info is on p. 1) for more information.

May 2, Saturday, 9:30 a.m.–4 p.m.: **Inaugural Cascadia Viols workshop.** Trinity Episcopal Cathedral, 147 NW 19th Ave, Portland, Oregon.

July 5–11: **Port Townsend Early Music Workshop.** Visit <http://www.seattle-recorder.org/workshop/> for more information. Viols always welcome at Port Townsend.

## Inaugural Cascadia Viols Workshop and Special Concert—With Lessons, Too!

Our inaugural workshop will feature Wendy Gillespie and the Portland Viol Consort as faculty. Hurry to register if you haven't already, as space is limited! The registration form is attached with this newsletter.

The concert the preceding evening promises to be an outstanding one, with Joanna Blendulf, Max Fuller, Lee Inman, and Tim Scott, and guest Wendy Gillespie performing the work of English Masters, 1550-1650: Tallis, Picforth, Parsons, Tye, Ward, Lupo, Gibbons, Lawes, Holborne, and Byrd.

Wendy will be available for private lessons at \$50/hour on Saturday, Sunday, and Monday following the workshop. Please e-mail Tim Scott (his info is on p. 1) if you would like to be scheduled. ♦

## Cascadia Viols Interview: Bob Loy

Editor's note: Cascadia Viols has members from around the state and beyond, which means that many members may not know each other well, if at all. Our hope is that having a regular interview column in the newsletter will help us get to know each better and bring the viol community together in spirit if not in body. For our first issue Tim Scott starts with an interview with long-time Portland resident Bob Loy. It seems that Bob has the distinction of being among the first ever viol enthusiasts and players in the state of Oregon!

*Cascadia Viols: Tell us about your earliest musical experiences as a child and student.*

I have always been a singer. For my first "public" performance I sang "The More We Get To Gather,"

accompanied by a ukulele; I was about 4. In grade school I started clarinet and switched to flute as a freshman in high school. Later, I played oboe, but not well. I sang in choruses and in a musical. As an 8<sup>th</sup> grader I heard Dorothy Maynor, a black soprano, sing in a solo concert and was blown away. I went to the University of Washington and graduated with a BA and MA in music. I did a lot of singing and got interested in opera.

*CV: When did you first become interested in the viola da gamba?*

The cello teacher at UW, Eva Heinitz, played a beautiful antique viol, usually at Christmas. But our paths did not cross; I was involved in singing and though as a music education student I took some classes in teaching strings I didn't play or even think of playing. Later my wife and I were teaching in California and we went to hear an amateur string orchestra from Mexico. At a reception after the concert I chatted with one of the players, who remarked that she started playing viola after she was 40. I thought that was interesting and thought I might do that. Little did I know. Sure enough, at 42 I got a gamba. Gamba teachers were not easy to find and I learned many bad habits by myself.

*CV: What was the viol world in Oregon like when you first moved to Portland?*

In 1975, when I began to think about getting a viol, I knew of only two viol players in Oregon: Tim Swain in Portland and Margaret Young at the University of Oregon. My wife and I sang in a Christmas Revels performance and they were in the band. There were viol players in Seattle, which was where I got my first viol; it was an Ueble bass from a student of Heinitz at UW.

*CV: Please tell us about some of your best classes and teachers.*

I heard that Carol Herman was coming to teach in Seattle several times a year and I played in her classes. I started going to Viols West and Port Townsend in the summers. Margriet Tindemans came to Seattle and the rest is history. Probably the most fun playing viols has been with Wendy Gillespie at Conclaves and Viols West.

*CV: Tell us about your instruments.*

At this time we have a bass, a treble, and a tenor in A from Dom Zuchowicz; a German tenor; a treble from Linda Shortridge; and a treble, a tenor, and a bass from the late Portland luthier Jess Wells. I was fortunate to meet Jess, and got him started making viols. Over the years he made several instruments for me. Mainly he made basses and trebles which became popular in the

Northwest, and later he made several for players in California. His style of instruments changed over time as he got feedback from players. My wife and I have three of his viols and we treasure them. Probably the most interesting instrument I've had was an 18th century bass which was restored by Bill Monical.

*CV: What have been the best viol concerts you have heard live?*

We heard the Jaye Consort in England and Fretwork at a Conclave.

*CV: What are some of your favorite pieces for solo viol or viol consort?*

The Bach Sonatas and the Ferrabosco five-part pavens.

*CV: Are there any pieces you think should be better known?*  
There is a lot of modern 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century music that we rarely hear.

*CV: What other kinds of music do you like to play or listen to?*  
Vocal music and opera.

*CV: Anything else you want to share?*

I have caused a number of fine viols to be made and I have rescued several viols that were damaged and that needed to be restored to good playing condition. This is something that I take pride in. ♦

### **Still Needed: Your Help!**

We would love to have some help in the areas listed below; please consider what you might like to do to help our chapter grow. Some jobs are on-going; others could be a one-time contribution or a regular newsletter feature. With a workshop coming up, if you are planning on attending, here's a chance to jump in and write about it for the next newsletter. Please let President Tim Scott know how you can help. If you would like to contribute to future newsletters, please contact the editor, Karen Bartlett (her info is on p. 1).

Facebook expertise

Publicity help

Newsletter help:

- Photographs of rehearsals, playing with friends, concerts, your instruments, bows, strings, rosin—really anything interesting that is viol-related.
- Workshop reviews
- CD and music reviews
- Artistic skills: drawings, cartoons, etc.

## **Lending Library**

Our chapter is off to a good start with a lending library, thanks to donations from Boulder Early Music Shop. Stay tuned for more information, and be sure to peruse our holdings so far at the May 2<sup>nd</sup> workshop. ♦

## **Introducing “The Viol Curmudgeon”**

Editor's note: It is a great honor and privilege to have among our ranks one of the leading instrument specialists in the field of early music—not to mention a really congenial guy! Bill Monical comes to Oregon from New York City, where he spent the past 40 years as a violin maker with emphasis on the restoration and adjustment of the Baroque Violin and Viola da Gamba families of bowed string instruments. In addition, we just learned that Early Music America has awarded Bill their Howard Mayer Brown Award for lifetime achievement in the field of early music. And here he is in lil' ol' Salem, begging us to ask him questions! Do not let this opportunity pass you by! He really does want to answer our questions, and I know we have lots of them, so please don't be shy, don't edit your thoughts or think your question is probably too common. He wants to hear from you! ♦

From the Viol Curmudgeon himself:

WELCOME! This is a fun, interactive feature of *Cascadia Viols News* for *your* questions, concerns, problems and comments about viols, bows & accessories...their history, construction, stringing, playability, repair, insurance, and anything else that comes to mind!

Do send your questions to me c/o the editor, Karen Bartlett (info is on p. 1). If you wish to remain anonymous, please let me know. I will attempt to help with answers and information that will be printed here in each edition of *Cascadia Viols News*, and also introduce brief ongoing discussions of your topics at our play days, beginning with the workshop on May 2<sup>nd</sup>.

For background information, you might enjoy looking at “Shapes of the Baroque: The Historical Development of Bowed String Instruments,” which is available and free to download in pdf format from:  
[www.williammonical.com](http://www.williammonical.com).

I look forward to your ideas and questions, and indeed meeting you at future Cascadia Viols events!

All best wishes,  
Bill Monical



*Bruce Van Buskirk, Tim Scott, Rae Parlier, and David Beanland were among 19 members who gathered on February 28 for the first meeting of Cascadia Viols. The day was filled with planning, conversation, and music-making. Photo: Tom Gettys*

## **Introducing “Practice Pointers”**

Editor’s note: Practicing, by its very nature, means shutting oneself up in a room, away from the world (unless you are lucky enough to have a large open space and no neighbors). We’re often left to our own devices, figuring out for ourselves how best to explore the possibilities of our instrument, how to organize our limited practice time to get the most out of it, how to decide how much time to spend during a given session on a particular skill, what order to practice things in, exactly what to practice if time is short. Of course we love our teachers for their guidance in technical and musical matters, but often it seems that we get very little instruction in how to practice in the above sense. Or, sometimes we come across a difficult passage which we have practiced and practiced, to no avail or with limited success, and our next lesson is a frustratingly long month or more away. Some of us live in locations where it is not possible to have a teacher at all, so we really are literally on our own. We must invent our own ways of staying on track with practicing, of analyzing what is

causing problems with a difficult passage, of figuring out how to get a better tone or how to sound more musical.

I am excited to have the opportunity to have a regular column via this newsletter, “Practice Pointers.” It’s intended to be just that: a way of sharing any favorite way or trick you’ve come up with which helps you get more out of your practicing, which helps it be more enjoyable, which helps you solve problems with your playing. It can be as simple as a one-sentence tip, or a lengthier description of something you have learned along the way, or something you have invented for yourself.

Now that we have formed a chapter, and can communicate via a newsletter, let’s make a point of sharing with members what we have learned, which in turn may give back to each of us new ideas and encouragement. That means I need to hear from *you*. I am convinced that each one of you—regardless of playing level—has something to offer. I’ll start this column off with a lengthier description of something I do which I find helpful; your own tips can be as long or as short as you like. Send your ideas to the editor, Karen Bartlett (info on p. 1). If you really hate writing, or think you can’t, then tell me about your idea, and I will do the write-up.

Let’s help each other! ♦

## **Practice Pointer: Getting in the Mood**

Karen Bartlett

In the “Ask Your Viol Teacher” column of the current *VdGSA News* (March 2015), in response to the question what to practice when you have only 10 minutes, Joanna Blendulf talked about how she starts “active practicing” by taking advantage of the time spent tuning to think about how she is using her body. That got me thinking about what I do during this pre-practice period, and I realized that over time I have developed a habit of “psyching myself up” for a practice session, before I even pick up my instrument. Think of it as a kind of mental warm-up during the few minutes when you are on your way to your practice area, perhaps first visualizing yourself getting out your instrument and admiring its shape or beauty, or appreciating owning such an instrument. Think about what you might like to focus on for this practice session, and then—and this I find most helpful of all—imagine the beautiful sound of

the viol, and picture yourself calmly, joyfully, and confidently playing what you have chosen.

If you have not played in a while, you might also think about how you would like to renew your friendship with your instrument. If, for example, I decide to start with some slow bows on open strings, then I might imagine how my shoulder and arm feel as I start to move the bow on an up-bow, spinning out a warm, beautiful sound.

Perhaps you have a lesson, rehearsal, or performance coming up, and need to work on the music for that. How would you like to begin? Sometimes, if time is limited, I decide I will go directly to a difficult passage; I review quickly in my head whatever problem I was having with that passage. Yesterday I discovered that I was not placing my fourth finger early enough or firmly enough against the fret, resulting in a sound I didn't like, so now, as I am getting out my treble, I hear in my head the sound I want and imagine the feel of the fret against my finger.

If you have the luxury of enough time to practice whatever your heart desires, then you could ask yourself, "What do I feel like working on?" I might think about spending a few minutes doing something I rarely do—leisurely playing a couple of tunes by ear; I settle on starting with "Greensleeves," and hum it to myself as I am looking for my tuner.

I once read that Yehudi Menuhin often spent time meditating before he practiced. While this may not be practical for most of us, it does underscore the importance of preparing oneself mentally for being "in the zone" in order to get the most out of a practice session. Remember, I'm not talking about taking time away from your practice session by going through the above process, but rather just using those few minutes—or sometimes even seconds—of time on your way to getting out your instrument, or even while you are picking it up or tightening your bow. Whatever you think you might focus on, imagine it, let it flow through your mind. Most importantly, visualize yourself doing it with pleasure, confidence and the ability to master it.

Happy practicing! ♦

## Classified Ads

Do you have an instrument, music, or music-related item to sell (or give away), or are you looking for something? We will be happy to include your ad in the

classified section of the newsletter. Please send your ad to the editor, Karen (info on p. 1).

For sale: 6 string bass viola da gamba. Based on 1713 Barak Norman instrument, made in 1988 by Sidney Greenstein, former Metropolitan Museum musical instrument restorer and maker. String length 66.5 cm, highly flamed maple and quarter-sawn spruce, bridge custom-made after design by Monical, PegHeds. Clear, pleasing tone, excellent condition. Comes with Jaeger hard case, pernambuco Mettal bow, and set of blueprints of original instrument in Boston Museum of Fine Art. Photos available. Located in Salem. \$4900. Contact Karen Bartlett, dagamba@ucsbalum.net. ♦

## Sheet Music for Four

Jeanne Collins

Is your consort missing that fifth person?

There exists a great deal of wonderful viol literature that is scored for five parts. Because many consorts (including ours) cannot muster five parts, I decided to reduce some of that literature to be playable with four parts (and in a few cases, four-part music to be playable with three parts). In choosing music for condensation, I looked at the nature of the contrapuntal lines and at the harmonies, and tried to choose only those works that would not suffer irreparably from reduction to fewer parts. I strived to retain the most important moving lines and to make sure to maintain the harmonic structure and follow the principles of good voice leading (thank you, Professor Owen!). I have transcribed some of these pieces without bar lines—I did that wherever the bar lines were not part of the original notation, and would in fact lead the modern player down the primrose path.

I hope that these reductions, which will appear in each newsletter, will offer smaller consorts a chance to experience some of the great pieces of the viol literature. For this issue, I have chosen John Dowland's *Lachrimae Antiquae*. The *Lachrimae, or Seaven Teares*, is part of a collection of 21 pieces for five viols and lute by John Dowland, published in London in 1604. The *Seaven Teares* is a set of seven pavans called *Lachrimae*, which are variations on his song *Flow My Tears* (the remaining 14 movements are dances). The *Lachrimae Antiquae* presented here is the first (and probably most famous) of those pavans. The other pavans are *Lacrimae antiquae novae*, *Lachrimae gementes*, *Lachrimae tristes*, *Lachrimae coactae*, *Lachrimae amantis*, and *Lachrimae verae*. ♦

# Lachrimae Antiquae

John Dowland  
(1562-1626)

The first system of musical notation consists of four staves. The top two staves are in treble clef, and the bottom two are in bass clef. The music is written in a single system with a brace on the left. The notation includes various note values, rests, and accidentals.

The second system of musical notation consists of four staves, continuing the piece from the first system. It features similar notation with treble and bass clefs, and includes repeat signs at the end of the system.

The third system of musical notation consists of four staves, continuing the piece from the second system. It features similar notation with treble and bass clefs, and includes repeat signs at the beginning and end of the system.

System 1: Four staves of music. The top two staves are in treble clef, and the bottom two are in bass clef. The music consists of quarter and eighth notes with rests, and a key signature of one sharp (F#).

System 2: Four staves of music. The top two staves are in treble clef, and the bottom two are in bass clef. The music consists of quarter and eighth notes with rests, and a key signature of one sharp (F#). A double bar line with repeat dots is present at the beginning of the system.

System 3: Four staves of music. The top two staves are in treble clef, and the bottom two are in bass clef. The music consists of quarter and eighth notes with rests, and a key signature of one sharp (F#). A double bar line with repeat dots is present at the end of the system.

# *Cascadia Viols*

Membership list as of April 14, 2015

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Individual	\$ 30
Family	\$ 40
Student	\$ 20

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Founding benefactor	Dues plus \$100 or more

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David Beanland – web site development  
Eileen Flory – newsletter  
Karin Thompson – event support  
Rae Parlier – event support

***In-kind business support:***

Knuckleheads – web site development & maintenance  
Trinity Episcopal Cathedral – hosting of chapter events

***And a special thanks to Boulder Early Music Shop for their generous donation of materials for our music library!***