Ex-President’s Message

At the end of June, I rotated off the AEMA Board and am no longer President. After 6 years on the Board, with two of those as President, it’s someone else’s turn. But don’t worry, I won’t be far away, since I’ll still be managing the website.

The Board for the July 2017 – June 2018 year will have David Lawrence as a new member, with all other Board members continuing (Daniel Pyle and Thom Culbreth were re-elected). Their first order of business (other than awarding grants) will be to elect a new slate of officers. Until they have officer elections, Michael Fuchs, Vice President, will be the acting President.

The Annual Members Meeting on June 10 was great fun, with a very brief Annual Report followed by music. To summarize the report: AEMA is in great shape, continuing to hold and sponsor workshops and support the early music community with grants and concert announcements. I can hardly wait to see what this next year will bring.

Barbara Stark
No Longer the AEMA President
Another successful Mountain Collegium (the 46th) was held the last week of June at Western Carolina University in Cullowhee, NC. It’s just so amazing to be able to have this great workshop, with top-notch instructors, in such a beautiful and convenient setting (convenient because the classes are held in the dorm common areas where the attendees are housed, so there’s no need to ever leave the building except to eat; which means the instruments don’t get wet when it rains !!).

As in past years, there was specialist instruction for recorders, viols, voices, plucked instruments, and sackbuts. Other instruments, such as cornettos, dulcians, baroque flutes, harpsichords, crumhorns, and cornamuses could also be heard during the week. The classes provided choices from among Sephardic, Renaissance, baroque, folk, and modern music. And then there were the relaxed evening playing sessions (faculty-led and student-led). The faculty concert on Thursday night was (as always) excellent. On the more active side, the Country Dance sessions were great fun, and the yoga sessions were much appreciated.

But ultimately it’s all about the people – catching up with friends you only get to see once a year, and making new friends from around the country (and Puerto Rico).

Next year’s workshop will be July 1-7, 2018. For information on Mountain Collegium, visit the website at www.mountaincollegium.org.

By Barbara Stark
Early Music at Church of the New Covenant

Another season of musical enjoyment at Church of the New Covenant in Doraville ended with Grammy-nominated John Burke’s engaging piano recital on May 7.

While music from a variety of historic periods is performed on CNC’s Concerts with a Cause series, the church has become known as one of the leading presenters of early music in the greater Atlanta area as an increasing number of local musicians have recognized New Covenant’s particular friendliness toward early music.

Beginning the past season on September 16, 2016 with a performance by Ritornello, the series continued its early music offerings with Lauda Musicam’s winter program on February 26, and the annual Consort Day presented by the Atlanta Recorder Society on March 19.

Church of the New Covenant is proud to have the ARS as a “resident” ensemble, providing free rehearsal space for the organization; CNC is also proud to continue as the “winter venue” of Lauda Musicam. As always with both organizations, it is a pleasure to enjoy beautiful music performed by a wide range of ages, from grade school students to octogenarians.

New Covenant’s Concert with a Cause series continues next season with performances by Harmonie Universelle on September 10, the Atlanta Concert Ringers on October 29, Lauda Musicam on February 18, the Atlanta Recorder Society on March 18, and a spring performance by the Atlanta Balalaika Orchestra.

CNC’s concert series continues to be offered with free admission to all, with the opportunity to contribute to the specified, church-supported ministry/cause on a free-will basis. The church appreciates the Atlanta Early Music Alliance’s ongoing support of the series through AEMA grants and attendance.

By David Buice
Hildegard’s Music

By Brenda Lloyd

St. Hildegard von Bingen was known for many things – visionary, scholar, medicinal writer and healer, theologian, preacher, and composer. She was what you might call a Renaissance woman, and she won the respect of popes (Eugene III and Anastasius IV, statesmen, emperors and other important figures of her time, which was the 12th century. Like her other interests, she excelled in music and had her own style.

She was around eight years old when her parents, Mechtild of Merxheim-Nahet and Hildebert of Bermersheim, sent her off to a Benedictine monastery as an oblate in the early 1100s. Whether she was sent as a tithe offering (as the tenth child) or because she began having visions at an early age, her life as nun and abbess gave her the freedom to write about science and natural science – and music.

Of her musical compositions, about 80 still exist, including the *Ordo Virtutum* (Play of the Virtues), a morality play with monophonic melodies for the Anima (human soul) and 16 Virtues, as well as a speaking part of the Devil. It was written around 1151. Here in Atlanta, Kelly Morris, founder of Schola Cantorum, and Kevin Culver, choirmaster at the Cathedral of Christ the King at the time, produced *Ordo Virtutum* at the TULA Art Center, Emory Presbyterian, and Trinity United Methodist Church in the 1980s, with a special performance at the Monastery of the Holy Spirit in Conyers in 1987, and at St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church and at Christ the King in the 1990s (also in Charleston at the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist in 1999).

Hildegard composed many liturgical songs, ranging from antiphons, hymns and sequences to responsories, which were collected into the *Symphonia armoniae celestium revelationum*. These are set to Hildegard’s own text.

Her music, so ethereal, differs from the more staid Gregorian chant, which developed in the ninth and tenth centuries, in that it has soaring melodies and is highly melismatic and often with recurrent melodic units. There is also an intimate relationship between music and text in her compositions with rhetorical features often more distinct than is common in twelfth-century chant. The reason may be because her music came from her own visions. Viriditas (greenness, vitality) or power of life appears frequently in her works, such as *O Frondens Virga*. Hildegard used it to refer to or symbolize spiritual and physical health, often as a reflection of the divine word or as an aspect of the divine nature.

The Harpsichord II: National Styles

By Daniel Pyle

Very often at recitals and concerts in which I have been playing harpsichord, after the performance there are audience-members who come to see the instrument, wanting to know what style it is — meaning what national style it represents. (Actually, the most common question is, “Did you make it yourself?”), which I did not, any more than the violinist or the flutist made their own instruments.) For many who listen to early music, this question of whether my harpsichord is in the Italian or French style, or Flemish or German, means little or nothing. But it does have a very real bearing on what the harpsichord sounds like. This article attempts to explain what distinguishes these various styles, and how their sounds are distinct.

At first look, the most obvious difference is often the number of keyboards. (Sometimes the term “manual” is used interchangeably with “keyboard”: this is organ terminology, a “manual” being a keyboard that is played with the hands, as opposed to the pedal keyboard, which is played with the feet.) Italian harpsichords had only a single keyboard almost invariably. Flemish, French, German, and English harpsichords often had two keyboards — there are even a very few German instruments with three. Nevertheless, the differences which truly define the national styles are immediately visible. There are basically just two, which are closely interrelated: the scale of the strings (meaning the length in relationship to the sounding pitch), and the weight and design of the case, especially its internal bracing. There are other characteristics which are related to these two fundamental ones, or even derived from them, particularly how the bottom of the case relates to the sides and the internal bracing, and also the material used for the strings. All of these physical characteristics make a very real and audible difference.

There is one particular technical detail that helps in discussing the national types. When builders and players discuss the string gauge (the length of the strings relative to the pitch which they play), it is customary to use the length of the string that plays c’’ (that is, C one octave above middle-C). The length of this string varies from 9 to 14.5 inches in the different national styles. This assumes that the pitch at which the instrument is tuned is within a whole-step (higher or lower) that modern a-440 — there were instruments made which apparently played a fourth or fifth higher that modern pitch, and a scale of 9-14.5 inches at c’’ would make no sense on them. But if we assume a pitch level that is close to modern, then a scale shorter than 9 inches would make the string too loose to generate a stable pitch, and longer than 14 or 14.5 inches would cause too many strings to break.

The most commonly used materials for harpsichord strings were (and still are) brass and iron. Marin Mersenne, in his encyclopedia of music Harmonie Universelle (1636) mentions that harpsichord strings could also be made of gold, silver, silk, and gut; nevertheless, brass and iron are by far the most important. Brass seems to have been the first choice, because it creates a richer, fuller sound, whereas iron tends to be brighter. But brass has a much lower tensile strength (meaning that it pulls apart more easily) than iron. Therefore, as the scale of string length becomes longer, iron must be used in place of brass.

The two fundamental characteristics (string scale and case construction) present all harpsichord-builders, past and present, with a problem that must be handled as a kind of balancing-act. One the one hand, it is desirable to make an instrument that is as resonant as possible, which is achieved through lightness of construction. On the other hand, the case must be strong enough to withstand the cumulative tension of 50 to 180 strings. Making the case too light (in an effort to increase resonance) leads to structural failure — the instrument collapses inward on itself. Making the case too heavy (trying to achieve structural stability) leads to lack of resonance and a choked, brittle sound.
The earliest physical type seems to be the one that we identify with Italy (even though the harpsichord seems to have been invented in Vienna). The Italian-style harpsichord generally has one manual from which are played two sets of strings, both sounding the same pitch. The scale of the stringing is relatively short, ranging from 9 to 10.5 inches for c'', which is short enough to use brass strings throughout the range of the instrument. Because the strings are short and therefore tension on the case is relatively low, the case can be constructed lightly: a full-sized Italian harpsichord with a range of 56 notes (four and a half octaves) weighs only 30-40 pounds. The short string length contributes to the very deep curve of the bentside. The procedure of building a harpsichord in this style is also characteristic. First the bottom is cut to shape, and then the sides are wrapped around it, and lastly the soundboard is installed (this explanation is vastly simplified, of course). This means that the bottom is the primary structural member, which supports all the rest of the instrument against the tension of the strings.

The result of all this is a tone quality that is characterized by a strong attack, rapid decay, and a strong fundamental quality to the sound. These tonal characteristics are well-suited to the musical function of the instrument, which was primarily as a center of the basso-continuo group. It provides a strong rhythmic impulse in ensembles ranging from small chamber groups to full operatic productions. It is also highly appropriate for Italian harpsichord music, with its deep connection to the Italian language and poetry, the madrigalesque qualities of the toccatas of Frescobaldi and his successors, and the sonatas of Domenico Scarlatti. The Italian harpsichord was the basic work-horse instrument of opera-houses and orchestral ensembles all over Europe, and remained basically unchanged from the 16th century until well after 1800.

The other primary style of harpsichord evolved in Flanders some time after 1560, and is exemplified in the work of the Ruckers family in Antwerp. The scale of the strings is much longer than in an Italian harpsichord: anywhere from 12 to 14 inches (instead of 9 or 10). This longer length leads to several other differences. From tenor c upward, the strings must be iron instead of brass. It also means that the strings of the bass register must be much shorter than strict mathematical proportions suggest: increasing the thickness of the strings must take the place of lengthening them. And the case must be built much more heavily to withstand the increased tension of the strings, weighing at least twice as much as an Italian instrument of comparable size. It also requires the builder to create the first rim of the instrument, with its internal bracing, and then install the soundboard. The bottom, unlike the Italian, has no structural purpose at all, and can be removed without affecting the structural integrity of the case. (This in the ancestor of the modern piano — which has no bottom whatsoever.)

Visually, this results in a much shallower curve in the bentside. Aurally, the greater mass of wood in the case means that it takes more time for the acoustical energy to pass from the strings to the soundboard and the case, and once the case is set in motion it stays that way longer. The resulting sound is not so “plucky,” sustains longer, and is less complex than the Italian. This sound is not quite as good in ensemble, but more interesting in solo literature. And instead of building two choirs of strings sounding in unison, they made the second choir sound an octave higher than the first. This increased the brilliance of the instrument, but made it less useful in ensemble (the higher set of strings tends to confuse textures when used for continuo playing).

The Flemish builders were apparently the first to make harpsichords with two manuals. They did this at first to aid in either transposing or accommodating different pitch standards. The two keyboards plucked the same pair of strings, but one manual was offset so by a fifth, so that directly above any “C” key on the lower manual was an “F on the upper. This arrangement, which seems so strange to us, seems to be related to the use of certain groups of clefs in Renaissance music to indicate transposition up or down by a fifth. However, by the end of the 16th century, the two keyboards were being used to play contrasting choirs of strings, using the two keyboards for echo-effects and solo-and-accompaniment effects, in emulation of the organ.

Continued on p. 7
The ultimate evolution of the Flemish-style harpsichord took place in France, especially in Paris, in the 18th century. Before 1700 there was an indigenous French style of harpsichord, which had several points of similarity to Italianate instruments. But after that, French musicians became enamored, even obsessed, with the sound of the Flemish instruments of the Ruckers family. However, the changing musical styles required expanding range (five octaves, FF-f”, instead of four octaves C-c”), and two manuals. This in turn required completely reconstructing the cases, making them wider to enlarge the range and deeper, often to squeeze a second keyboard into an instrument that originally had only one. This process was called “ravelement,” and new harpsichords were built in the same style as the enlarged Flemish ones. Such were the instruments of the famous Blanchet and Taskin family, which have become more or less a modern standard. Their increased size and weight (a French double weighs up to 180 pounds), combined with the long scaling of the Flemish style, results in a sensuous, silvery sound of long duration, with a rich booming bass, beautiful in itself but not as well-suited for either continuo playing (lacking the rhythmic impetus) nor for complex polyphony (the sheer beauty of the sound obscuring the interplay of independent voices).

The German harpsichords of the 17th and 18th centuries combined the bottom-oriented construction of the Italians with somewhat longer scaling, but not so long as the Flemish. Thus, the harpsichords of Michael Mietke and Gottfried Silbermann, who were the builders most closely associated with Bach, were strung entirely with brass. They have somewhat of the speech-like character of the Italian harpsichord, but not such a prominent attack. They can often be identified by sight by a double-curve in the bentside, in the shape of an “S.” The German harpsichord makers of the 18th century were also influenced by the organs of their time (Silbermann was, after all, a very important organ-builder). They experimented with adding registers sounding an octave lower as well as an octave higher, and even on rare occasions with making an instrument with three manuals.

The modern harpsichord-player is thus presented with the problem of finding, or acquiring, the instrument which is best suited to the needs of the repertoire which he or she desires to play. Between 1950 and 1980 it was generally assumed that the French two-manual harpsichord was the best single option, and a basic required for any player who wished to be considered professional. Now we know that there are more, and perhaps better options which can make the music even more interesting to play and to hear.
A Short & Sweet History of the Dance Suite
by Lyle Nordstrom (March-April 2000)

The Suite is one of the most popular instrumental forms in the Baroque—common for orchestras, solo and trio sonatas and keyboard alike. Essentially it is just an ordered series of dances, usually in the same key and meant to be played together. Unfortunately it is one of the most varied, and therefore confusing, forms of the era. The actual title, the make-up of the dances and the order of the dances (and occasionally other non-dance movements) can vary greatly.

The history of suites goes back almost to the beginning of written instrumental music. In the Medieval and early Renaissance times, one can find the bassadanza-saltarello pairings (sometimes with a quartrinaria and/or a piva). Sixteenth century composers were partial to pavan-galliard pairs or later, tanz-nachtanz pairs, and we also find the first use of the word "suite" to indicate a series of bransles. As we move into the seventeenth century, the terminology becomes more complicated. In England we find the word "Sett" applied to a series of dances, often with a fantasie as the first movement, followed with an alman and often an air or galliard. The French keyboard composers (clavicinists) tended to prefer the title "order" as a series of dances set down in order. We also see the term "ouverture" applied. Essentially this is the term used to describe the first movement which was a majestic prelude, normally composed in dotted-note figures with a second faster imitative section, and usually a third section that reflects the opening dotted, majestic style. Even though the term "ouverture" technically only applied to the first movement, it was associated with the whole series of connected dances. Under Corelli, in the late seventeenth century, we find the term "Sonata da Camera" (chamber sonata) used to describe his suite of dances. Presumably, these were pieces intended for a more secular entertainment as compared to the more standard four-movement "Sonata da Chiesa" (church sonata). In Germany we find the term "partita" becoming common. All these can be confusing, but one can also relish in the imagination of composers and their wish to create variety within such a common form.

Though there is a great deal of variety, there is also a standard form from which most of the Baroque composers started. This includes the four standard dance forms, the Allemande, Courante, Sarabande, and Gigue. Within just these four there is a variety that holds the interest. We have the stately Allemande (with its underlying march connotations), the faster Courante with its wonderful mix of three beats or two beats in the bar, followed by the slower and more sensuous Sarabande and finally, an upbeat Gigue, usually in 6/8 or 12/8. Most of Bach's many suites for individual instruments (under all of the various names) start with this pattern. However, many of them have additional dances between the Sarabande and Gigue. For example, in the first two cello "suites" there are two minuets; in the others two bourrées or gavottes are found.

When one examines the orchestral suites of Bach a slightly different picture appears. Bach labeled them "Ouverturen" in the French manner (also terminology used by his colleague Georg Philipp Telemann), and three of the four suites use the traditional French overture style first movement. The Allemande, Courante, Sarabande, Gigue forms are only hinted. The Gavottes and Bourrées are common, but the Courante and Sarabande seem to be abandoned. In № 3 there is even an additional "Italian" air.

The non-standardization is also found in Handel. His famous Water Music and Fireworks Suites contain a variety of dances and in good English fashion, a few Hornpipes are also included. Although the variety can be confusing, it can also be a great deal of fun to see how a composer arranged a series of diverse dances to be a unified whole. The contrast is built in with the dance variety, but the concert-goer can revel in the imagination of these composers.
Little is known about this composer's early life, but he was probably born west of Chartres, perhaps in Brunelles, near Nogent-le-Rotrou, making him one of the first of the Netherlandish composers who was actually French. He sang at Notre-Dame de Chartres from 9 August 1483 until 1486 and subsequently held posts at St. Peter's in Geneva (until 1492) and Laon (around 1497) before becoming choirmaster to the boys at Notre-Dame de Paris from 1498 to 1500. He later became choirmaster to Alfonso I d'Este at Ferrara from 1506, replacing the famous composer Jacob Obrecht who had died of the plague there the previous year. The chapel there was disbanded in 1510 after which he evidently stayed in Italy; several documents connect him with churches in Faenza and Mantua where he probably died in 1512 or shortly after. He is known to have written at least one work after his dismissal from Ferrara (the *Missa de beata virgine*), and may still have been alive in 1513 since there is a mention in a treatise of Vincenzo Galilei that he was one of a group of composers who met with Pope Leo X in that year. However since Vincenzo was writing more than a generation later and reporting second-hand, this account is not considered to be certain. However, Heinrich Glareanus wrote later indicating that he lived to a "ripe old age," so it is possible that he lived longer. A man who was organist for the Ferrara court in 1543 is presumed to be this composer's son.

He was at the center of the changes that were taking place in European music around 1500, in which the previous style of highly differentiated voice parts, composed one after another, was giving way to smoothly flowing, equal parts composed simultaneously. These changes can be seen in his music, with some of his earlier work conforming to the older style and his later compositions showing the polyphonic fluidity which became the stylistic norm of the Josquin generation.

After Josquin des Pres, this composer is considered one of the greatest composers of his generation. During his life, Ottaviano Petrucci published a book of his masses and a number of other composers wrote pieces commemorating him after death. His impressive 12-voice *Missa et ecce terrae motus* survives from a part-book in Munich of 1570, long after his death, evidently used for performances by Lassus.

**“Name that Composer”, from the April—June quiz**

Claudio Monteverdi was born in 1567 in Cremona, Italy, the eldest of five children. His father was a doctor, apothecary and amateur surgeon. During his childhood, he was taught by Marc’Antonio Ingegneri, the maestro di cappella at the Cathedral of Cremona, and learned about music as a member of the cathedral choir. He also studied at the University of Cremona. His first music was written for publication, including some motets and sacred madrigals, in 1582 and 1583. His first five publications were: *Sacrae cantiunculae*, 1582 (a collection of miniature motets); *Madrigali Spirituali*, 1583 (a volume of which only the bass partbook is extant); *Canzonette a tre voci*, 1584 (a collection of three-voice canzonettes); and the five-part madrigals Book I, 1587, and Book II, 1590. He worked at the court of Vincenzo I of Gonzaga in Mantua as a vocalist and viol player, then as music director. In 1602, Vincenzo appointed him *master of music*.

In 1599 he married the court singer Claudia Cattaneo, who died in September 1607. They had two sons and a daughter. In 1610 he moved to Rome, arriving in secret, hoping to present his music to Pope Paul V. His Vespers were printed the same year, but his planned meeting with the Pope never took place.

In 1612 Vincenzo I died and was succeeded by his eldest son Francesco. Heavily in debt, due to the profligacy of his father, Francesco sacked this composer, who then spent a year in Mantua without any paid employment. By 1613, he had moved to San Marco in Venice where, as conductor, he quickly restored the musical standard of both the choir and the instrumentalists, which had declined under his predecessor.

Monteverdi became a priest in 1632. During the last years of his life, he composed his two last masterpieces. He died, aged 76, in Venice in 1643 and was buried at the Church of the Frari.
## Composer Birthdays: July-September

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<th>Born On</th>
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Atlanta Early Music Alliance
Grant Application

Effective July 1st, 2016

Mission of the Atlanta Early Music Alliance:
It is the mission of the Atlanta Early Music Alliance (AEMA) to foster enjoyment and awareness of the historically informed performance of music, with special emphasis on music written before 1800. Its mission will be accomplished through dissemination and coordination of information, education, and financial support.

Goal of the Atlanta Early Music Alliance Grant:
The goal of the Atlanta Early Music Alliance Grant is to support and encourage the education and performance of early music throughout the Atlanta area. Preference will be given to proposals which directly support historically informed performance practice and/or education of early music (travel expenses, performance stipends, music purchase, expenses incurred by the venue, etc.) and which demonstrate financial need.

Eligibility Requirements:
Individuals and/or organizations who apply for a grant must be members of AEMA for consideration of the application. Membership information can be found at the website below:

http://www.atlema.org/index.php/become-a-member

Grant Amounts:
Grant amounts will vary, but will not exceed $500.00. The awarded amount will be at the discretion of the Board.

Deadlines and Award Announcements:
Applications should be received at least three months in advance of the proposed event. Awards will be announced within one month following receipt of application. Applications are reviewed on a continuing basis. Because grant funds are limited, early applications are encouraged.

The application form, with attachments, should be submitted to subsidies@atlema.org.

Upon Receipt of Grant:
The recipient is required to

- Acknowledge the Atlanta Early Music Alliance in the printed program and/or aloud during the concert.
- Open the event to the public, including members of AEMA.
- Provide a 10% or similar discount to card-carrying AEMA members for event admission.
- Allow AEMA to display membership and promotional materials during the concert.
- Provide AEMA with a preview or article related to the event for its BROADSIDE newsletter.
AEMA Membership Form

Thank you for your interest in AEMA! Membership includes a newsletter, the Broadside, member rates at the Midwinter Workshop and other AEMA events, and reduced admission (same as senior admission) to concerts of the Atlanta Baroque Orchestra.

- Our membership year is July 1 to June 30.
- Your membership contribution is tax deductible.
- If you work for a company that matches charitable contributions, please check with your Human Resources department to see if they will match your contribution to AEMA.

Name__________________________________________________________________________________

Address__________________________________________________________________________________

City________________________________________    State__________    Zip Code______________

Phone: Home___________________________ Work____________________________
Other_________________

E-Mail___________________________________  or______________________________________

If you participate actively in early music, please fill in medium and check performance category:

Instrument or Voice
Beginner    Intermediate    Advanced    Professional
_______________________          ________      __________       _________      __________

Enclosed is payment of ______ for the membership choice checked below:

___ Individual Membership ($25)
___ Family Membership ($35)
___ Group/Institutional ($45)
___ Supporting ($100)
___ Sustaining ($200)

Additional Donation: $__________, thank you!

Please return to:
The Atlanta Early Music Alliance
P. O. Box 663
Decatur, Georgia 30030

You can also join online by registering on website www.atlema.org
Quiz Inside: “Name That Composer”