

THE MECHANICK'S ADVISER

July 23, 2023

Apothecary – We've been busy this week – but no one has been as busy as our Pharmacy Intern, Joy, who's been compounding up a storm! She's made an infusion of foxglove; a syrup of ginger; and now (for the first time in recent memory!), a batch of white pectoral troches, pictured below. Hoping everyone's staying cool and hydrated out there!



The Apothecary is open Wednesday through Friday, and Saturday (11:30-5:00).

Blacksmith–

If you wish your work to succeed,
A blacksmith is all that you need.
Though silver may gleam,
And pewter hold cream,
It's iron to finish a deed.

Lately, the Shop has been centered on work for the Carpenters' Yard. Their chisels are now getting tempered, their steel both resilient and hard. Ken has some hammers to make and also a compass or two. A lock has been brought in for fixing and cleaning out crusted-on goo. Though Mark has finished his lock mechanism, he still has the door knobs to file. The piece functions nicely, and gives optimism, that the Bray will be furnished with style. Clouts for the wheelers are his other task, with countersunk nails a mutual ask. Alex and Broadus continue on chisels and studying some in Collections. When white hot, a bar will spark and will sizzle, but always will yield to corrections. For Ewing Field's gate, it's Broadus's fate, to forge out some coarse hooks and hinges. Alex, meanwhile, has cleavers in hand, to send to Mt. Vernon's old kitchen. Joshua, too, has gridirons to do, and to finish he surely is itchin'. But now, it is time to finish the rhyme, and frankly this one is a handful. Remember this spell, as we always tell, that all's well that falls well at the foot of the anvil.

The Blacksmith is open Sunday through Tuesday and Thursday through Saturday.

Bookbinder – Good day from the Bookbindery. I feel extremely lucky to report that we have the legendary Bob Lyon volunteering with us at the Bookbindery. Mr. Lyon graduated from W&M in the spring of 1977 and was hired by Mike Kipps to work in the Printing Office, where he worked for five years. In 1982, he went to Sturbridge Village for a short stint in their Printing Office and then returned to the Colonial Williamsburg Bookbindery, where he remained until 1987. In 1988, Bob moved to Sydney, Australia, to work at D.S. Murray, a small hand bindery founded in the early 1900's. Upon his return to Williamsburg, he has been a self-employed bookbinder ever since.

Bob is a multi-faceted man of many talents! His bookbinding skills are beyond comparison, and his gold tooling skills are second to none. He is a genius in the art of calligraphy – which he taught here during his employ. Bob both builds and fixes his own tools, and if he does not know how to do something, he makes it his business to find out. He is also patient, kind, and willing to teach anyone who is open to learn. Please join me in welcoming the newest member of our little community back home!



Kickin' It Old School with the Printers and Binders of Yore. From left to right: Peter Stinely, Bob Lyon, Rhonda Graves, Bob Albergotti, Dale Dippre, Bruce Plumley, and Mark Howell.



Bob displays a knife Dale Dippre made for him when he worked here in the 1980's (left), and a sewing lesson, colonial style (right).

The Bookbinder is open Sunday, Tuesday, Friday, and Saturday.

Cabinetmaker – This summer, each week begins with the Hay Shop’s “Plane Talk” program – a hands-on, Family Workshop that gives participants a chance to learn about and try a variety of the hand planes that we, along with the Harpsichordmakers, use in our work. We’ve been enjoying the chance to share our work with the public in this way each Sunday morning.

As for projects, we’ve got a couple of big ones going on, one nearing completion and the other just beginning. John has been roughing out walnut parts for his copy of a cellaret from the Collection. Bill made and installed the decorative brackets for his writing table and completed the final fitting of its quadrant drawer (essentially a drawer within a drawer).



The writing table dressed up with its "Chinese" brackets



The quadrant, snug in its proper place



John planing the walnut legs for his cellarette project

The Cabinetmaker is open Sunday (11:30-5:00), Monday, and Thursday through Saturday.

Carpenter – This week, the Carpenters re-cut the studs on the Farm wagon shed walls. Now that they’re installed, we can start working on the clapboards that will make up the gable-end walls. The clapboards need a little bit more work before they can get installed on the wall. The Farm site gates are also coming along nicely. Most of the joinery for them have been chopped and will, in coming weeks, get test fit.

The Carpenters are working at Ewing Field Sunday through Tuesday, Friday, and Saturday, weather permitting.

Cook – Summer has been shaping up over at the Palace Kitchen! Over the last few weeks, we have had Donor visits, where two of our Donor families came in and spent time with us in the Kitchen, making spice buns and picking, washing, as well as frying, potatoes. Both groups seemed to really enjoy their experience and are looking forward to spending time with us in the future. Abbey and Dom have also had some exciting developments in their apprenticeships. Dom has officially moved on to the second level of our five-level apprenticeship, while Abbey has moved on to the third. We have found ourselves getting to venture down to the Armoury a couple of times, with the tree removal happening at the Palace closing our regular operations. As always, it is a pleasure to be down at the Armoury, seeing so many of our Trades colleagues and getting to tell the other half of the 18th-century food story.

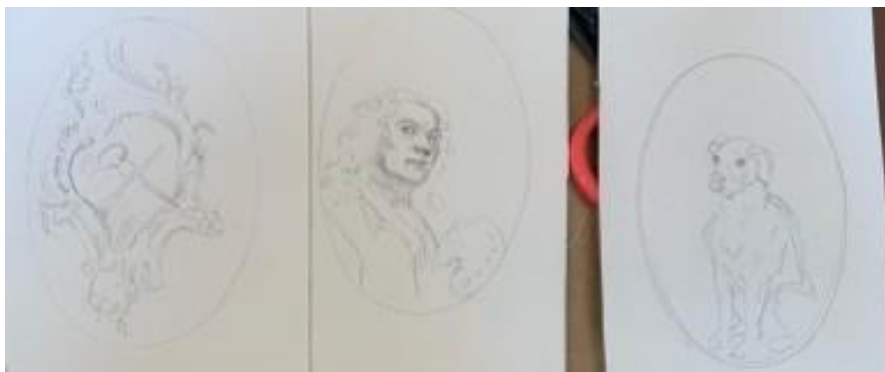
The Palace Kitchen is open Sunday, and Wednesday through Saturday.

Cooper – The Coopers are currently working on a number of items to fulfill orders for other museums, including buckets, tubs, and several cannikins. Cannikins are wooden tankards primarily used by sailors. The handles are integral parts of the container and are a bit more involved in terms of shaping than usual. Below are some images showing the shape of the handle, for the shaping of which, we borrowed a special saw from our colleagues in the Cabinetmaker Shop.



The Cooper is open Sunday, and Thursday through Saturday.

Engraver – We want to welcome Emma Allardice!! Emma is the newest Apprentice in the Engraving Shop. She has begun her six-year Journey with us this week. Emma is quite the artist and has jumped right in. She has been working on her exercise plates in copper and in pewter, getting a good feel for the burin, and learning tool control. She has worked on some monograms, various drawings, and cutting some pattern work. On Wednesday, she began learning the printmaking routine of our copper plates, with William as a good teacher. They printed several plates including William's latest ships and Fan prints for the Milliners. William has been busy drawing out some floral themes on jewelry and drawing out inscriptions on bottle tickets. This week, he has begun work on inside and outside ring practice. Lynn has been setting up several CW Foundation jobs, drawing out a gorget pattern for presentation pieces, cutting a second copperplate with the CW seal for printing, and getting Emma situated in her new position. Miss Emily, our Junior Interpreter, was with us on Thursday, practicing her cursive writing and drawing with Emma. Busy week for all of us.





The Engraver is open Tuesday, and Thursday through Saturday.

Farmer – Farmer Ed, Wigmaker Edith Broward Edds, and Weaver Joe Wixted, along with Farming Volunteer Rachel West, pulled flax last week. Though it was laid down by heavy thunderstorms, we managed to save about ten percent of it. Farming processes it into beautiful line flax during the fall, in which the Weavers spin and weave into cloth, and the Wigmakers make wigs.



The Farmer is at Ewing Field Wednesday through Saturday, weather permitting.

Fifes and Drums – Great job to all of our Corps members and fellow performers for an amazing set of performances at the Fourth of July celebrations! The Corps took part in four different ceremonies over the course of the day. The Fourth also marked our Corps' official 65th anniversary! We are fortunate to have an active and engaged Alumni Corps, who gathered on the weekend before for several marches, jam sessions, and a special banquet to mark this milestone in our history. Now we turn our attention to graduation marches. Last week, we celebrated Riley Schwartz, Fizz Waldron, David Degaraff, Isabel Kantor, and Peter Zickel's graduation from the Corps with a special program in place of/in addition to our normal 4:40 pm performance. The marches were longer than normal and featured the favorite tunes of the graduates, who each got to lead their section for the last time. We will have another grad march on Friday (July 28th) to

honor Spencer Johnson and Duane Bradley, so feel free to come watch if you are able! While all of this is happening, the adult staff have started interviewing candidates for our next Recruit class. It's been fun to meet these excited aspiring musicians! While we haven't had anybody rise in rank over the last month, several Junior Corps members were issued their uniforms and had their first of many marches in the Historic Area.



A Duty Pair for the Recruiting Party program playing music with a young Guest (left). Some Corps members enjoying the 4th of July fireworks (right).

The Fifes and Drums will be performing Wednesday through Friday at 4:40 pm in Market Square, Saturday at 12:30 pm starting at the Capitol and marching to the Palace, and Saturday at 1 pm on the Play House Stage.

Founder – This week, the Founders have been busy molding and casting CW seals for Donor gifts. We just found out our order of sixteen has increased to thirty-one.

The Foundry is open Sunday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday.

Gardener – The combination of rain and heat has seen substantive growth in the Historic Garden, especially among the weeds. Sunflower, China aster, and celeste rose have all bloomed in the last week. Efforts to support plants during summer downpours continue through strategic placement of trellises and sticks.



Helianthus annuus, *Callistephus chinensis*, and *Rosa x alba*



Intern Will builds a trellis about a Scotch bonnet pepper (*Capsicum chinense*) in order to prevent rain from knocking down the growing plant (left). The season's first early frame melon (*Cucumis melo*) sliced in twain (right).

The Historic Cooks have been the recipients of much produce including okra, carrots, beets, onions, and Swiss chard as well as pole beans (*Phaseolus vulgaris*), cucumbers (*Cucumis sativus*), and cayenne peppers (*Capsicum annuum*).



Abelmoschus esculentus, *Daucus carota*, *Allium cepa*, and two varieties of *Beta vulgaris* before the trip to the Kitchen (left). Intern Andrew selects a beet (right).

The Historic Garden is open Daily, weather permitting.

Gunsmith – The Gunsmiths have a few projects going on, as usual. Richard just finished a beautiful hammer pole tomahawk for a customer. The wrought iron and steel bit has a silver oval inlay on one side and is finely engraved all over. The handle was shaped out from a stunning piece of curly maple, stained with aqua fortis.

Darrin has been welding a barrel tube from a nice wrought iron bar. A couple more hours of smithing and the tube should be ready for reaming. Once it's reamed to size and filed, it will be cut in half to make a matched set of barrels for the pistols.



The Gunsmith is open Sunday, Monday, and Thursday through Saturday.

Harpichordmaker – Greetings from the Harpichord Corner! The Harris Spinnet is coming along nicely. Ed's recent work on the internal support structure is largely complete, and while there is still a bit of veneer décor to come, Melanie has made up all of the molding for what will be needed, rounding out much of the case assembly. On to Part Two. Musical and mechanical components are up next. We've already prepared the keyboard of white pine and laid out the key heads. With the register in place, we can now lay out the tails of the key levers and saw them out. Once prepared, the levers will be capped with bone for the natural keys and the decorative arcades, and ebony capped pear for the accidental key covers. The jack parts are prepared, but we must still assemble and fit them to their individual slots. It won't be too long before we can prepare the soundboard, which is always an exciting step. Stay tuned!





The Harpsichordmaker is open Sunday (11:30-5:00), Monday, and Thursday through Saturday.

Joiner – Summer marches on and at the Joinery, we've been making progress on a number of projects. This week, Scott painted his Finney House mantle. Previously, it was eye-catching for its use of four different kinds of wood, but now that it's been painted, the contours of the molding and frieze are on best display. Most Joiners' trim work (like this mantle) would have been painted in a range of fashionable colors.

Peter continues to plane, chisel, chop, and fit together parts of his Menokin portico. A common misconception is that the curved pieces that make up the top of the arched doorway are bent into shape, but Peter actually cut them out in that shape. Similar technique can be seen on other arched finish-work.

Brian also continues on his own long-term project: a foot-treadled lathe. More parts are taking shape, and the oak they are made of is an unusual sight in the Joinery. Our most commonly used woods are yellow pines, like longleaf and loblolly. Oak is suitable for a large tool like this lathe, as it is strong and dense.

Laura was excited for the arrival of new poplar stock to begin planing parts for a new toolbox for the Engravers. Over the last few weeks, she's learned how to design and draw plans for the box. Now, it's time to put the plan into action!



The Joiner is open Sunday, and Wednesday through Saturday.

Leather Breeches Maker – This week, we are bidding a fond farewell to our Intern, Ever. Ever joined us in May and jumped right into learning the Shop Interpretation, engaging with Guests, and beginning to work in dressed leather for the first time. When we were sure they had their fill of covering buttons, they moved on to putting together a pair of breeches for one of the Carpenters. Though Jay helped with cutting pieces, all the sewing was done by Ever. And they have completed that pair of breeches this week! Their work has helped us add to the number of leather breeches in the Historic Area and increase awareness of the Trade to our Guests. While Ever's background has been mostly theatrical costuming to this point, they were glad to be able to dip a toe into the world of museum and historical trade work. We are excited to see where their path takes them as they head back to school and continue to explore what museums/trades work might mean in the future for them. Ever has been an amazing part of the Breeches Making Team this summer, and we are glad they could join us!



The Leather Breeches Maker is open Sunday, and Wednesday through Saturday.

Masonry – This week found the Brickmakers doing what they do best: making brick and cursing the rain. An afternoon shower isn't bad, just annoying, and adds an extra day or two to the bricks' drying time. Nor'easters, super storms, or confusingly early hurricanes would wreck our production, but a three o'clock storm isn't that disruptive. Plus, who doesn't love a little extra humidity?





The Brickyard is open Daily, weather permitting.

Military Programs – Our new Supervisor has started. We welcome Dr. Terrence Christian to Military Programs. We have made it through our July Holiday Programming mostly intact, though unbelievably sweaty. We are once again trying to spruce up our Guardhouse to make it more of a Guard “home”. Ren has been hard at work on various projects to add to our table display and improve our visual interpretation. They have been finishing blankets made for us by the Weavers – thank you, Weavers – as well as blanket slings to hold the beautiful blankets. The blanket slings are being used to enhance the Light Infantry demonstrations created by Matthew and Kevin for one of the variations of our “The Necessity of Order in Battle” Program, the look being modeled by Kevin below. Ren would also like to thank the Department of Historical Clothing & Dress for their new nickel-free glasses as pictured below. We are all hard at work on our goals for the year. Ren is working on their 71st Highland impression, which they hope to have completed by the end of August. Kevin, Matthew, Alex, and Ren are starting their long-awaited hunting shirt project. Working through the Neal Hurst Hunting Shirt Workshop, we hope to be resplendent in our new hunting shirts by next summer. Alex is setting to work on his required transcription project to advance in his curriculum.



Military Interpretation at the Guardhouse is open Daily.

Milliner and Mantua-maker – Quite a lot has been going on with the Milliners and Mantua-makers in the last few weeks! Apprentice Kate spent a week in Lambeth working with [The School of Historical Dress](#) on making a mantua based on an unpicked 1690s-1710s mantua they recently acquired for their collection. Kate was selected from a large pool of applicants to come in, examine the original, and work to create a reproduction based on the stitch patterns and pleats observable on the original. From Monday to Friday, she was kept busy studying, stitching, and taking as many photographs as possible. The finished reproduction mantua will be displayed on a mannequin alongside the flat original pieces at the upcoming “Our Collection in Blue” exhibition at the School. Kate learned so much from this opportunity and is so excited to be back and sharing that information with her colleagues. Feel free to come by and ask – she will gladly talk your ear off!



On Wednesday the 19th, the Shop’s first real Research Day of the summer, we took a field trip to SWEM’s Special Collections, thanks largely in part to the help of our summer Intern, William & Mary student Ishbel. We were primarily there to examine the account book of John Morton Jordan, where we were specifically looking for records concerning the Strachan sisters of Richmond, who were both Milliners in that city. We were able to find a great deal in that account book and also were invited down to see the storage facility of Special Collections. There we were able to see the original Frenchman’s Map, as well as a few other really cool texts!

Here in the Margaret Hunter Shop proper, we have a number of different projects going on. Janea is making progress on her new jacket designs for the Department of Historical Clothing & Dress, Rebecca is making excellent progress on her stays, Kate is working on a child’s pinner apron for the Mary D. Doering Exhibit, and Ishbel just finished an orange-striped jacket and petticoat.

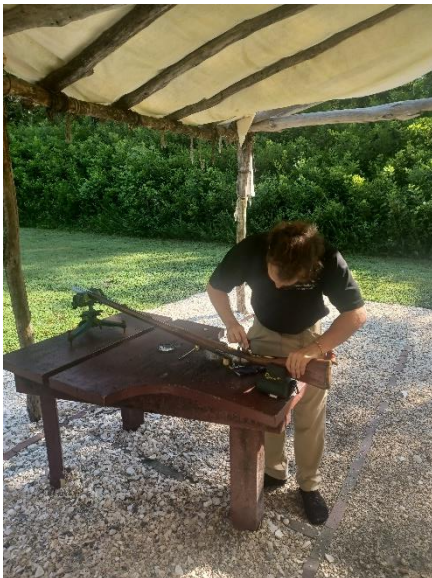
We hope everyone has a great week!



The Milliner and Mantua-maker is open Sunday, and Thursday through Saturday.

Musket Range – The Musket Range is working hard through the summer at maximum capacity for nearly every session. Alex and Andy have been enduring the hot temperatures, continually exceeding customers' expectations.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank Shari Monaco for all her hard work continually making this publication available for everyone! Thank you, and you will be missed!



The Musket Range is open Sunday through Tuesday, Friday, and Saturday with sessions at 9:30am, 11am, 1:30pm, and 3pm.

Printer – Just this past week, David Wilson placed the next form of Clementina Rind's *Virginia Gazette* in the press. These pages contain a letter from Mrs. Rind to her subscribers and the House of Burgesses lamenting her husband's death. We intend to sell these newspapers at William Prentis Store once the supplement is completed. This is our first six-page *Gazette* we have ever reprinted from the Rind family.

Our Guests this past week left with a keepsake featuring “The new Song” that Charlotte Larsen had set this past spring.



New Song hand bills drying



Newspaper pages two and three from September 2, 1773

The Printer is open Sunday through Thursday.

Shoemaker – Tyler continues making slippers; presently, he is working on two pairs for the Tailor Shop. Nicole just finished a pair of slippers and is currently closing a pair of uppers, for a fine pair of pumps. Victoria is working on a pair of slippers for the Masonry Trades and learning how to make a pair of dancing pumps. Since this is her first pair, she will be making them for herself. Val is working on a pair of welted pumps and will soon start on a pair of common shoes for himself.

The Shoemaker is open Sunday, and Tuesday through Thursday.

Silversmith – Greetings from the Silversmith Shop. Megan has been filing some cast silver feet that the Foundry was kind enough to pour for us. These feet will go on a large, eleven-inch silver salver, one of thirteen we’re making. Our Intern this summer, Jacob Van Buren, has been piercing some letter charms for the Golden Ball.



The Silversmith is open Sunday through Friday.

Tailor – In the Tailor Shop, Percy, our Intern for the summer, is finishing up a pair of lightweight summer breeches. He is currently stitching on the garters and will only have to add buttons and buttonholes to finish them. These breeches are made out of a cotton dimity. Dimities were a range of figure woven linen or cotton fabrics that were commonly used for men’s summer breeches, waistcoats, and coats, as well as gowns for women.



The Tailor is open Tuesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday.

Tin Plate Worker – The Tin Shop is currently working diligently on a large order of tinware for the kitchen at George Washington’s Mount Vernon. Steve and Jenny have been making items such as colanders, coffee pots, baking moulds, a reflecting oven, storage canisters, dish covers, and (coming soon) a spice box. Steve also completed and painted two large watering cans for The Old Barracks in Trenton, New Jersey. Last month, Jenny completed and submitted her research paper, a requirement for the apprenticeship, on the value and cost of tinware in the eighteenth century using primary sources, with a focus on Williamsburg. This month, Steve is traveling to London to meet with the Worshipful Company of Tin-Plate Workers and to visit sites within the English Heritage Crafts network. Jenny will be traveling to New England next month and plans to stop by Old Sturbridge Village for a brief visit with the tinsmiths there. Steve will be teaching the Tin 3 class at Historic Eastfield Village at the end of August.

The Tin Plate Worker is open Tuesday through Saturday.

Weaver, Spinner, and Dyer – This week, we got a fresh crop of indigo from Farmer Ed! We have already weighed, washed, and submerged the plants in water. We predict that from the thirteen pounds of raw indigo, we will generate less than an ounce of dye. Now we will monitor the vats and watch for just the right level of fermentation. If it's overdone, it will be ruined; then the rotted plant matter will be removed and discarded. The water that remains will be left to settle multiple times until a sludge forms at the bottom of the container. The sludge will then be compacted into cakes and dried out. These cakes are also called junks! Hopefully, everything goes just as it should, and we can dye some of our handwoven fabric with locally grown indigo.



The Weaver is open Sunday, and Thursday through Saturday. It will be open on Monday for two Workshops ONLY.

Wheelwright – We apologize for our absence as of late, but we have been quite busy! Murphy continues on the velocipede, with the installation of the saddle and the creation of the pattern for a bushing for the wheels, provided by our colleagues at the Foundry. Paul continues with the repair of the wagon, and Ayinde is beginning a Tinker's barrow! Ralph continues on a wheelbarrow, and Ayinde and Liam have completed the workboard for the Leather Breeches Makers! Come on by!





Pub. Jan 1855, at R. Ackermann's, 10, Strand.



TINKER
*From Publicity with the Bell, December 31, 1858
 by John Thos. Smith, N. 14, Chatham Street, Great Britain.*

The Wheelwright is open Sunday through Thursday.

Wigmaker – The Wig Shop has been busy lately with regular maintenance and projects! Intern Stella and Edith have completed Robert W.'s new blonde wig. The wig took approximately 81 hours to complete and is made from a blend of human and horsehair. This is the first time one of our Interns has worked on a large-scale project like this.



Wigs waiting to be styled after washing and drying



Robert W.'s new wig



The wig, ready to be styled

Adult Volunteer Marie and Junior Volunteer Alexa have been working on hairpieces for themselves.



Marie's outlines



Alexa's woven hair

Hand knotting has also been practiced extensively lately. The cauls that we're creating today would have been imported in the 18th century, but no one makes them for us, so in between major projects, we've all been working on making cauls for future use.



Benton knotting



Stella knotting



Four pieces in various stages

As always, please feel free to reach out to us for any hair-related needs or questions.

The Wig Shop would also like to take this opportunity to thank Shari for all her assistance and hard work over the years. Whether it was making travel plans (sometimes in a pinch), scheduling us all, ordering supplies for us, putting together the Adviser, or just getting us answers to pressing questions, Shari has always been professional and reliable, and we greatly appreciate everything she has done for us. Best wishes in your future endeavors, Shari!!

The Wig Shop will be open Sunday through Tuesday, Friday, and Saturday.

As Founding Editor of the Mechanick's Adviser, it has been my honor to chronicle the magnificent accomplishments of the Department of Historic Trades and Skills. This edition marks my last, and I wish to thank the readers for their supportive comments over the years. I also wish to express my gratitude to all of the talented Artisans who have brought these pages to life and wish them every continued success. Shari Monaco



Shari Monaco in the Governor's Palace Dining Room playing the Serinette (bird organ).

The Mechanick's Adviser is a publication of the Colonial Williamsburg Department of Historic Trades & Skills.

Editor: Shari Monaco

Contributors: Apothecary – Margaret Perry; Blacksmith – Alex Hinman; Bookbinder – Barbara Swanson; Cabinetmaker – Bill Pavlak; Carpenter – Matt Sanbury; Cook – Abbey Shoaf; Cooper – Jon Hallman; Engraver – Lynn Zelesnikar; Farmer – Ed Schultz; Fifes & Drums – Rebecca Sterner; Founder – Drew Godzik; Gardener –

Department of Historic Trades and Skills

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Marc Nucup; Harpsichordmaker – Melanie Belongia; Joiner – Laura Hollowood; Leather Breeches Maker – Emma Cross; Masonry – Joshua Graml; Military Programs – Ren Tolson; Milliner and Mantua-maker – Kate Hargrove; Musket Range – Jeffrey Thomas; Printer – Peter Stinely; Shoemaker – Val Povinelli; Silversmith – Bobbie Saye; Tailor – Michael McCarty; Tin Plate Maker – Jenny Lynn; Weaver, Spinner, and Dyer – Pamela Russo; Wheelwright – Paul Zelesnikar; Wigmaker – Debbie Turpin