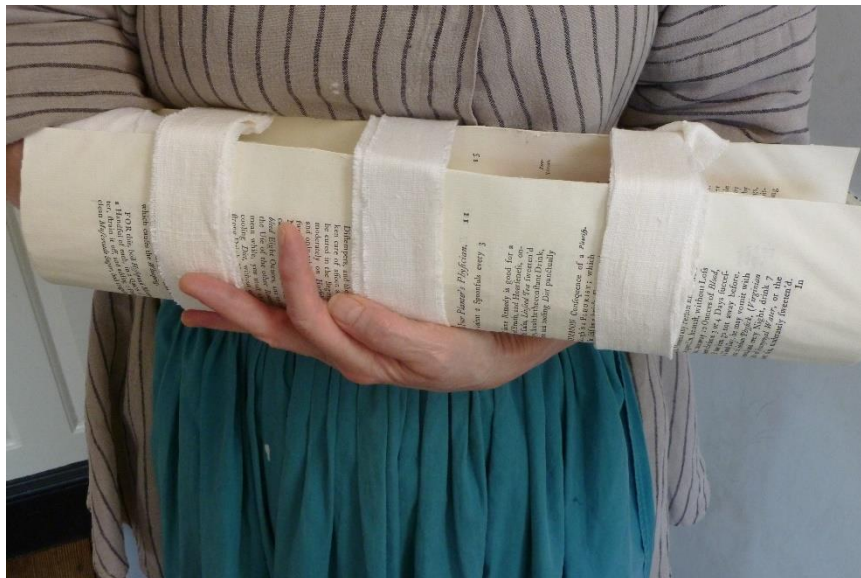


THE MECHANICK'S ADVISER

June 24, 2022

Apothecary – Sharon has fallen down the stairs at the Apothecary and broken her arm (not really), and Apprentice Mark has willingly taken on the responsibility of treating her. He has applied the new pasteboard case that he made with the help of Pete Stinely from the Printing Office. The case is based on the pictures and descriptions found in Lorenz Heister's *A General System of Surgery*, 1743. The arm would have been set, wrapped in bandages, and splinted/cased. The patient would carry the arm in a sling made of a kerchief. Hopefully, Mark has done a good job setting that bone, or he may not make it to level 5 in his apprenticeship.





The Apothecary Shop will be open Tuesday (11:30-5:00), Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday.

Armoury:

Blacksmith – Greetings from James Anderson’s Blacksmith Shop! This week has been scorching hot; nevertheless, the forging goes on! Josh continues his quest to dividers; his latest pair is looking quite nice all polished up. Josh makes great strides onto the next pair, welding the section to become the receiving leaves is fun to watch. Additionally, Josh is drilling the holes to table leaf hinges he and Ken are making for the Cabinetmakers. Alex pursues skewers and spits, taking great pains to make them from miscellaneous bits and bobs he finds scattered across the slack tub dugouts and Owen’s piles of rake heads. One tooth from a rake is sufficient to create a single skewer, a very satisfying conservation of material and conversion from scrap to skewer. Broadus has forged a few sheepsfoot tools for the Printers across the way. They function as a pry bar, included within this summary you’ll find a picture of it. They are of utmost quality as Broadus continues to impress the Guests with his billhooks going through their hardening and tempering. If you got a chance to witness it, Broadus even quenched a billhook, which sent a large spout of fire upwards out of the tank, most likely singing an eyebrow as well as the hair off his knuckles. Owen has returned from the Rocky Mountains. His knees are still a bit shaky from climbing to the top of one, where he saw a young bull moose. He continues to forge flesh forks, a favorite kind of welding that is by design resourceful in its use of material folding, drawing out, and twisting. For the Journeymen: Mark treads onwards to more sword and lock parts while Aislinn files away at sliding bolts and buckles. To each, the benches where they are toiling away are covered in a fine dust of metal. Finally, Ken has forged more chisels and a hammer, and like the Journeymen, has made heaps of filings under his vice where he has been polishing flatware. We all can agree about the heat of early summer: it’s only going to get warmer. Nevertheless, I most assuredly can attest, that all’s well that falls well at the foot of the anvil.



The Blacksmith Shop will be open Daily. On Wednesday, June 28th, 4:30pm in the Hennage Auditorium, the Blacksmiths will present “The Art of Weathervanes of Williamsburg.” Explore Williamsburg's architectural ironwork through examination of the weathervanes of the city. We will explore the origins, iconography, and sources for this important piece of architectural ironwork.

Tinsmith – This week in the Tin Shop, Steve has been working on canteens for Fife & Drum and Day and Evening Military Programs behind the scenes, and, in the shop, he’s been working on a platter. Joel received an order for tin cartridge boxes from Military Programs and is currently making six of those. His research this week has been compiling references from Joseph Plumb Martin’s memoir. Jenny passed a 6th Level project on Tuesday of a candle box copied from one in the Philadelphia Museum of Art Collections. She’s currently working on small tin trunks/document boxes for the 4th Level. Her research this week was for her apprenticeship paper, which involved combing through probate inventories from Maryland and Virginia.

The Tin Shop will be open Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday.

Anthony Hay Shop – **The Cabinetmaker and Harpsichord-maker are open Daily.**

Brickmaker – This week in the Brickyard saw the continued production of bricks and thus, quite a lot of moving sun-dried ones. We also paid our Cooper friends a visit and received a shiny fresh new bucket which will soon come to know clay rather well. Otherwise, we are continuing to fill up more of the saw house and take the Carpenters' visibility with it, while we long for a shelter of our own. At present, we have around 4,400 or so stored, which sets our pace at around a thousand bricks a week. And thus, production moves along so long as we are not inundated with rain, as we have been recently.



The Brickyard will be open Sunday through Wednesday, and Saturday, weather permitting.

Carpenter – Last week, we finished the Brickyard drying house #1, so this last week, we test fit the two end walls and re-worked some braces. We have some finishing work to do to some pieces that we could do after the frame is raised, but since we have time and good weather, we will do what we can now.

This upcoming week, we will be organizing the frame for its raising and installing the stairs after the raising. Stay tuned for more updates on the raising.



The Carpenter's Yard will be open Tuesday through Saturday, weather permitting.

Colonial Garden – This week's most noteworthy activity was the construction of two straw mats in the Historic Garden. Bundles of rye straw (*Secale cereale*) were sewn together on a wooden frame under the direction of Master Eve by Summer Intern Kira and Apprentice Marc, in a true test of eye-hand coordination, attention to detail, and solar endurance. The resulting mats will be used about the Garden, shading plants in the summer and protecting plants from winter frost.



The frame, strung, and ready for straw



Mat being sewn



Kira and Marc with the finished product.

Three horizontal trellises, or tables, were constructed during the week, as well. Two are positioned for our tomato plants (*Solanum lycopersicum*) to grow over, while the third is shading recently sown carrot (*Daucus carota*) seed.



The tomato (or love-apple) table



One simply must shade the seeds.

New blooms about the Garden include peanuts and squash.



Arachis hypogaea



Cucurbita pepo

The Colonial Garden will be open Daily, weather permitting.

Cooper – The Cooper Shop will be open Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Saturday.

Engraver – The Engraving Shop will be open Tuesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday.

Foodways – The Foodways Staff will be at the Palace Kitchen Sunday through Wednesday, and Saturday.

Foundry – Last week, the Founders were busy making final preparations for the first of our summer Workshops that began last Saturday. We've heard that the first three programs have already sold out. Journeyman Mike has continued work on the brass harpsichord hinges and Apprentice Leanne has been polishing pewter cups and spoons for our Engravers. Apprentice Drew has finished work on his bronze dividers, as well as pouring his first high temperature metal, sterling silver for some tray feet that will end up with our Silversmiths. And, as always, musket ball production continues.



The Foundry will be open Sunday, Monday, Wednesday, and Saturday (11:30-5:00).

Gunsmith – The Gunsmith Shop will be open Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday.

Historic Farming – The 150 tobacco plants are doing well this year. We pitched them as four-inch seedlings on May 7th. Check out their size now at five weeks later!



Five weeks in the field

Prentis Field will be open Tuesday through Saturday, weather permitting.

Joinery – The Joinery will be open Sunday, Tuesday, Friday, and Saturday.

Milliner and Mantua-maker – As we have been talking about for the last several weeks, our “Gown in A Day” Program will focus on 18th-century issues of Sustainability. Sustainability is a hot topic in the modern fashion industry, and so we are addressing it. Perhaps the reasoning for the concern is different between the two centuries, but the result is a remaking and re-using of clothing and fabric. In the 18th century, the cost of fabric may have influenced the remaking, which would enable a person to continue to use the investment in a new fashionable style. Today, the concern is fabric waste, the textile industry using an enormous amount of water, and textile’s dyes polluting the rivers and land, to name a few.

So, in preparations for next Tuesday, June 28th and our 18th-century workday, we have nearly finished the 1774 gown. It has been made to fit Kate. This gown starts the theoretical journey of a fabric into new styles across time and wearers. Only the fabrics available from the making of this 1774 gown will go into the 1784 gown, and only the fabrics found in the 1784 gown will go into the making of the 1810’s gown. In addition, only the sewing completed from each prior gown will be used in the new style. So, the center back seam from the 1774 gown will be found in the 1784 gown. Sleeves for 1784 coming out of the 1774 sleeves, etc.

On Tuesday, we will be making the 1780’s gown and the 1810’s gown, two time periods, two teams, and twice the fun. Thank you, in advance, to all our colleagues who have volunteered to help sew and cut and fit and totally make this day a success.



The Shop will be open Sunday, Tuesday (open 8:00am-6:00pm), Friday, and Saturday.

Music – Greetings from The Governor’s Musick! Summer is underway, and so is our summer programming. We’re taking a break from our Spring haunts—the Raleigh Tavern, the Governor’s Palace Ballroom, and the Art Museums Galleries, and moving into the Capitol (Saturdays at 7:00pm), onto the Palace Stage (Thursdays at 7:00pm), and into the Hennage Auditorium (Fridays at 4:30pm - check the Museum Events page for program details). The Wythe House and Geddy House are opening up full-time (yay!), so you can hear us there, too! In the words of Landon Carter, in Williamsburg in 1771, “...a constant tuting may be listned to upon one instrument or another.” If you chance to hear some of our tuting this summer, please say hello!

Printer and Bookbinder:

Printing Office – We have Quartz Drucker joining the Press Crew for the Summer. Quartz attends The College of William and Mary, studying History.



The Printing Office will be open Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday (11:30-5:00), and Saturday.

Bindery – Good day, everyone! My name is Mary Hannah Grier (I go by Mary Hannah), and I am the Bookbindery Intern for this summer! I am a newly minted graduate from the College down the road, and while I'm putting off getting a master's degree for the moment, I'm excited to be continuing with historical research (sans grades) while learning the bookbinding trade. This summer, I'll be continuing research I began last spring with the Bray School Lab, working on reading between the lines of the historical record to get a glimpse of the experiences of the enslaved children who were educated at the school. I'm hoping to explore what some of the students may have been learning to read from and what that can tell us about both the Bray School and education in Virginia more broadly, as well as how William Hunter figured in the mix as a Trustee. I'm also hoping to look more into women – both enslaved and free – in the bookbinding and printing trades to help contribute to ongoing interpretation.

I'd love to meet you all, so please, feel free to stop by and chat! If any of you all are in need of a new waste-book or two, I'd be happy to put one together for you!

I leave you all with some historical wisdom (of a sort) from the Bard himself: "What's past is prologue, what to come / In yours and my discharge." – The Tempest, Act 1 Scene 2.



The Bookbindery will be open Sunday (11:30am-5:00), Monday, Tuesday, Friday, and Saturday.

Public Leather Works – Greetings from the Public Leather Works. One of the questions we get asked the most is: "Is most of your leather from cows?" I thought I would take this opportunity to answer that and clear up a couple of misunderstandings.

First, the short answer to the question is "No. Most of our leather is from cattle but not from cows." "Okay," you're saying to yourself, "are you just being pedantic, or is there more to the story?" Bear with me here. You may think I'm splitting a frog's hair, but there really is a difference for us. To start with, cows are female. A bull, steer, or an ox is male. To break it down a bit more:

A Bull = Male bovine. Strong, virile, and capable of helping produce baby cattle.

A Steer = Male bovine. Strong, not virile anymore, and incapable of producing offspring.

An Ox = Male bovine. Basically, a Steer with an education.

"Fascinating," you're saying to yourself, "but so what?" Well, let's continue to break it down by how valuable each type of critter is to us:

Cow = Highly valuable as a source of dairy and calves.

Ox = Highly valuable as a work animal on your farm.

Bull = Less valuable as an ox, but still valuable as a means of producing calves.

Steer = No value until he reaches market weight and becomes dinner.

"Okay, I'm with you so far. But leather is the skin of the animal. What does this have to do with anything?" I'm glad you asked. Cows, Bulls, and Oxen are kept for as long as they can perform their assigned chores. Once they reach an age where they cannot do their job anymore, they will change careers and become dinner. However, just like every other animal on the planet, the older they get, the more collagen their skins lose. That Steer, on the other hand, is only hanging around until he can reach market weight and be sold. Two, maybe three years tops. Younger animal means more collagen, which means his skin will have more density and elasticity than the older animals, thus making the leather that comes from it more suitable for making things.

So, this is why we prefer Steer and Calf to Cow.

"I think I understand now. It's not that you're sexist when it comes to choosing leather. You're ageist." Yes, that pretty much sums it up. Thanks for your time, and I hope we've helped you win on Jeopardy.

The Public Leather Works will be open Sunday, Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday.

Shoemaker – The Shoemakers will be at the Armoury on Sunday, Monday (11:30-5:00), Thursday, and Saturday.

Silversmith – The Silversmith Shop has been rather noisy with the ringing of hammers. Tam has quickly improved her piercing. She has completed some of the more difficult patterns and is now working on her first silver jewelry pieces. Megan has finally finished hammering out her ingot into sheet and has cut a disc from it for her silver bowl. She is now planishing it, smoothing out the hammer marks with a flat faced hammer. Once it is smooth and even, she will begin raising it into a silver bowl. Chris has been tirelessly working on mourning rings and making the rim to a tray that will match Bobbie's. Bobbie's tray is coming along well; she is very busy chasing in the decorative walls below the rim. Preston is raising his army of extremely popular small bowls and has been polishing a number of jewelry pieces. George continues his work on forging out the long ingot for spoon blanks. Bobbie has created a list of the enslaved individuals at James Craig's Shop.



Tam's complicated copper piercing and her first silver work



Left: One half of the ingot Megan cast. *Right:* The other half hammered into sheet, cut into shape, and currently being planished.



One of George's in-progress ingots on the left, the finished one on the right is ready to be cut into spoon blanks.

The Silversmith Shop will be open Sunday through Wednesday, Thursday (11:30-5:00), and Saturday.

Tailor – The Tailors visited the Museum Collection to study several original waistcoats last week. Apprentice Logue's current focus is the patterning and construction of waistcoats. The examination began with the waistcoat of a suit recently purchased by the Foundation: Green wool broadcloth trimmed with gold lace that dates to the 1760s.



The waistcoat, or in French “veste,” was added to the suit in England in 1666. Its adoption is credited to Charles II of England, who had brought the suit, first consisting of just breeches and coat, from the court of France. It seems that rather than pronouncing the entire word “waist-coat,” in the 18th century, it was common to contract it to “weskit” or “wescot”. Whichever way you said it or spelled it, waistcoats were a necessary part of men’s dress in the 18th century.



The Tailor Shop will be open Sunday, Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Saturday.

Weaving, Spinning, and Dyeing – As Interpreters, our minds often go to those who came before us; it is both grounding and a little breathtaking when we can put names to them. In the case of our Shop, if we want to find Weavers, we need to look outside of the city of Williamsburg. While most fabric in our era came
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from England, there was some textile manufacturing happening here before the war. Some of those operations were set up by men like Washington and Jefferson on their plantations as an act of rebellion against the Crown. It's from their records that we can find the names of some of those who came before us.

Weavers: Anthony and Wally

Spinners: Alce, Ally, Anna, Betty, Caroline, Charlotte, Delia, Delphy, Dolshy / Delsey, Jenny / Jane, Judy, Kitty, Matilda, Sall, Winny

These names come from the online *Database of Mount Vernon's Enslaved Community*, with thanks to those who compiled and digitized this information. We acknowledge that there may be others there whose names will be added after this is published, or who may have been lost to time. More importantly, we also acknowledge that it is only one source for one plantation and that we are still studying to find more names and stories from more locations to be presented in the future.

<https://www.mountvernon.org/george-washington/slavery/slavery-database/>

The Weaving Shop will be open on Tuesday through Saturday.

Wheelwright – Good couple of weeks for the Deane Shop. Last week, the Shop had a successful hooping of an older cannon wheel (pictured below) for CW's own Teacher's Institute. Special thanks to Armoury Blacksmith Intern Josh and to the teachers that volunteered for their assistance with the tire!

The Horse Cart project is nearing completion, with the raves sawed out a few weeks prior getting dimensioned by block plane. The Apprentices made a large batch of Spanish Brown paint for the Horse Cart, as Joel is prepping the undercarriage and wheels for painting, scraping old paint away and brushing it with sandpaper. What better place to see the new paint in action than the Carpenters' Yard wheelbarrow? Murphy finished repairing it last week, and two coats of paint later, it's ready for use, as pictured below. Speaking of barrows, the Gardeners dropped off one for repair this week, its floorboards well-worn from carrying dirt, pictured below with Murphy. The Apprentices are jumping to the task to see it refreshed. In addition to the flooring, the front panels, a standard (the supports behind the paneling on the barrow's front), and numerous nails will all have to be replaced.





The Wheelwright Shop will be open Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday.

Wigmaker – Greetings from the Wigmakers! Maintenance needs were fewer these past couple weeks, so Edith and Benton were able to concentrate more on their projects. Edith has completed her hand knotted silk base and has stitched it to the outline tape. She has now begun weaving the human hair and has already gotten a few rows sewn to the base. Benton decided to restart his wig because the outline tape he was originally using was not playing nice with him and was pulling apart as he tried to stitch. He is now stitching the woven netting to the new outline tape. He is also separating out pale horsehair from dark horsehair. The dark horsehair will be blended with dark human hair for his project. Debbie continues to work on her demo hand knotted silk base. This past week, we welcomed Lexie, our Summer Intern, so stop by Department of Historic Trades and Skills



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to say hello if you can! We want to thank the Milliners for their generous clothing loan until Lexie's costuming is ready. Study continues into the hair trade, Marie Antoinette's hair, wire wigs, and Edward Charlton's accounts. As always, please feel free to reach out to us for any tonsorial needs that may arise.

The Wig Shop will be open Sunday, Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday.

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

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