

# *THE MECHANICK'S ADVISER*

## *July 25, 2022*

### *Anthony Hay Shop:*

***Cabinetmaker*** – This week, John and Jeremy have completed the finish on the apothecary chest and will add a final layer of wax before applying the hardware. After that, we will have a finished piece of work on our hands, a rare feat! John has made good progress on the legs to his tea table, turning very square profile s-curve walnut into pleasantly round, shapely legs. It's the type of thing that goes slow for the first leg, but once you get the idea down, you can move more quickly. Bill has taken on making a roofing tile mold for the Brickmakers, and Jeremy has gotten a start on dimensioning out some wood for his next project. More on that in future entries!

**The Cabinetmaker and Harpsichord-maker are open Daily.**

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

### *Armoury:*

***Blacksmith*** – The Blacksmith Shop will be open Daily.

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

***Brickmaker*** – This week in the Brickyard saw our usual production, with the delightful background noises of our Carpenter friends tapping away at our building. While we encountered some rain, we've been moderately successful in clearing the space on our drying bed to allow for more production despite some very wet sand. Otherwise, we have some pallets of bricks staged in preparation for the copious amount of paving that will be in our future. Between paving the drying shed and creating the benches for our kiln, we will be rather busy in the coming months. Although that may be in our near future, we are focused on brick production, which sits presently at just over 8,500.

**The Brickyard will be open Sunday through Thursday, weather permitting.**

***Carpenter*** – This week in the Carpenters Yard, we have set up the scaffolding on the back of the Brickyard drying shed and have installed the shingle lath. By the end of the week, we will have the scaffolding taken down in order to clean the site for some site work that will happen under the frame on Tuesday. Stay tuned for more on the frame's progress.



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

*Colonial Garden* – Another hot week in the Historic Garden means we must pay close attention to all of our plants to make sure they have adequate water, and to check for harvestable produce. This week, we sent several baskets to Historic Foodways at the Palace Kitchen, filled with carrots, beets, squash, okra, potatoes, cayenne peppers, and edible borage and calendula flowers. We were very excited to begin harvesting our potatoes, and we will dig the remainder of them very soon. This week, we also cleaned the broad bean seeds we collected earlier in the season and began to pick mature dry seed pods from the lima bean vine. The Historic Gardeners also spent time potting up seedlings into larger pots,



Produce from the Historic Garden



Summer Interns Kira and Andrew harvest potatoes.

weeding, and doing a light summer pruning on our espalier fruit trees. The cup plant (*Silphium perfoliatum*) and brown-eyed susan (*Rudbeckia triloba*) are currently in full bloom and attracting many butterflies to the Garden.



Potatoes harvested at the Historic Garden



Butterflies visiting the cup plant (*Silphium perfoliatum*)

**The Colonial Garden will be open Daily, weather permitting.**

*Cooper* – Work continues on the tubs for the Weavers. Harry completed another one this week. Jacqueline is making excellent progress in developing her skills just under two months into her apprenticeship. She continues to work on buckets, which will most likely find use in various places around the Historic Area. After a lengthy pause occasioned by the hiring of a new Apprentice, I have returned to work on the tobacco hogshead for Farmer Ed. The plan is to use the hogshead for a Livestream in October about the transportation of tobacco.

Jacqueline has been using her research time to complete various training courses and to read training and background materials that help inform our interpretation. Harry has been looking for information on the locations of Rolling Roads and tobacco warehouses in the Tidewater region. I've been splitting the time on my research days between catching up on routine office work (so I'm free to be in the Shop on the days that we're open to the public), continuing research related to Adam Waterford (Free Black cooper in Williamsburg), and trying to reorganize and update our price lists based on changes in material costs over the last several years.

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

**Engraver** – Greetings from the Engraving Shop! This week, Erica has been working hard on starting a new copper plate. It is of a tobacco label. We looked through several in the Colonial Williamsburg Collection. The original is a wood block cut, so she will be adapting the design for hand cut with a burin. It has been drawn on, and she is in the process of scribing the image in. This will ensure she won't lose the design. This week, Lynn has completed the eight tankards for the graduating Fifes and Drums members. Congratulations! She is also sitting in on training classes and starting on several private orders that have been placed with us. During research time, Lynn is looking into methods of design from the 18th-century perspective. William has been researching and writing his Hennage program and preparing for his talk.

\*William has finished a small copperplate of a Monster! And boy, is this an interesting one. So, we thought folks could help us out on this. The original does not give us this creature's name. William would like suggestions on what you may think it is. You may want to start with telling us what combination of animals you think this may be made of. Send your suggestions to [WFleming@cwf.org](mailto:WFleming@cwf.org). The submitter of the one he likes the best will receive one of the prints! By the next "Mechanics Adviser" (get them in before 7/27/22), we will let you know who had the most interesting name.





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

***Fifes & Drums*** – The Fifes and Drums Corps is in the process of Graduating this year’s departing Senior Corps members. You might witness one of these special marches in the place of our regular programs during the summer. If you hear them cheering out names of graduates, you know what you're watching! As part of this, we're in the process of welcoming our new up-and-coming instructors and anticipating some Senior Corps members working diligently to rank up and apply to leadership positions in the Corps.

We are also in the process of hiring a new part-time Drum Instructor, which we hope to have more news about soon.

***Foodways*** – This week at the Palace Kitchen, the two Apprentices have been diligently working on their recipes that will enable them to move to the second level of their apprenticeship. With both joining the Shop within the last nine months, there has been a long wait for the seasonal appearance of the elusive cucumber, which is needed for a recipe in level one. With cucumbers finally appearing in the gardens about town, it seems as though there will be at least one moving on to level two in the coming weeks. Journeyman Barbara has been greatly looking forward to the return of CW’s Junior Interpreters and is pleased to say that our JI, Anne, is back and in full swing down at the Anderson Armoury on selected dates. As Master of Historic Foodways, Frank has been involved with several talks and interviews in the last week. This includes our on-going assistance on a project with a fellow food historian in England, who has asked the Shop to explore some 18th-century recipes that will be detailed in his upcoming book focused on *The English Art of Cookery*, a cookbook published in the 1700s. **The Foodways Staff will be at the Palace Kitchen Sunday through Thursday. On Tuesday, July 26th, 4:30 pm in the Hennage Auditorium, the Foodways staff will present, “To**

**Market We Go.” Join Historic Foodways to find out about procuring and preserving food in 18th-century Williamsburg.**

***Foundry*** – In the past couple of weeks, we’ve finished a couple more projects. The brass harpsichord hinges are being given their final polish and will be ready and waiting for whenever they are needed. We’ve also delivered a set of six bronze plumb bobs for the Carpenters Yard. Our Saturday programs have continued to sell out and have continued to be a success. We’ve also been doing some research and preparations for a joint Hennage Program next month with the William Waddill Engraving Shop on the bronze garden sundial that our shops are replicating. The original can be seen in the Art Museums and was made by William Collier of London from 1712-1745.



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

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

***Historic Farming*** – Tobacco is getting cut at a rate of about 12 per day, and we should be finished with the first 100 by the end of next week. The other 50, planted about three weeks later, will come in August. Each plant shows signs that it is ready to be cut over a two-week-or-so period, even though they were pitched (transplanted) on the same day. Every year, one of the George Washingtons comes over to cut tobacco with us. Daniel Cross (shown in the photo) is right handy at it, as he cut many when he volunteered as a kid at Claude Moore Living History Farm in Northern Virginia. Some things you just don’t forget.



This tobacco leaf is a clear sign that the plant is ready to be cut.



Young George Washington cutting tobacco

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

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

**Military Programs** – John has been working on collecting and organizing all the orders for Virginia units from orderly books during the American Revolution and is currently working with orders for General Muhlenberg and Colonel Febiger. Despite the heat, the staff has done well with its outside programming and appears to have still been a hit with the Guests despite the heat. We are also continuously working on the recruiting program and adding more details to it. It is coming along very nicely. We received this week our porringers from the Tin Shop and will be pleased to add them to our kit and will be very helpful at the Frontier Culture Museum next month. The staff is continuing to work toward a skills ladder.

**Milliner and Mantua-maker** – Greetings from the Margaret Hunter Shop! This update is brought to you by Summer Intern Rachel. Last week, I delved into the John Norton papers for my current research with the Bray School Lab and came across several detailed invoices for milliner Catherine Rathell. Her meticulous orders have given me great insight into the large variety of goods a Williamsburg milliner hoped to provide her customers. Kate continues to make good progress on stitching the many boning channels for her stays, and happily modeled a 1774-style cap I recently finished as one of my explorations into millinery construction. We welcomed Rebecca back this past week from vacation, and she has since started a new set of curtains for the Foundry. Janea has mended some well-loved shifts and has continued researching for a developing program on the cost of dressing in the eighteenth century. We recently met with Christina Westenberger to discuss this exciting project.

**The Milliner and Mantua-maker will be open Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Friday, and Saturday.**

**Music** – Greetings from The Governor’s Musick! We are finishing up our summer programs and looking ahead to fall and beyond. We are discussing future scheduling, repertory and programmatic themes, and beginning our research accordingly. Our concert preparation involves finding music to fit our themes, having read-throughs to select our repertory, timing our tentative selections, and preparing interpretive notes that introduce our pieces, relate them to our themes, and fill in our historical narrative for our programs.

As such, Amy, Kyle, and Jenny are researching repertory and finding music that fits both our themes and our musical forces. Brady continues his research on Isaac Bickerstaff, so that he can expand his wonderful LGBTQI+ presentation into a lecture/concert for this October. Karol continues her research into the political rhetoric of music, as she finishes up her upcoming “Trades Tuesday” presentation on Broadside songs.

Please, everyone, take care of yourselves in this heat.

***Printer and Bookbinder:***

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

***Bindery*** – ~Sunday Morning at the Bookbindery~

We are happy to announce that our Sunday morning Workshops are quite a success. We combine paste paper making, constructing a stitched journal, and folding and stitching a small primer into one action-packed hour. After the pandemic-induced hands-off era, this experience has been a breath of fresh air. Best!



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



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

*Shoemaker* – We had another successful family Workshop, and we've been brainstorming future Workshop ideas. Victoria is making progress on her slippers. Nicole has started a pair of domed square toed shoes for her apprenticeship. Val has closed the uppers for Steve Delisle's shoes and repaired Robert Weathers' pumps. With the summer heat, we've had to scrub out our water tubs every couple of days. Guests may love the smell of leather, but water in which leather constantly soaks has an incredibly unpleasant odor that develops faster in warmer temperatures.

Nicole has been looking through the *Lady's Magazine* Index (available through one of the library's subscription database trials) for mentions of shoes and was interested to find that the *Lady's Magazine* was reporting on the American Revolution specifically for a British female audience. Victoria has been researching 18th-century Jewish and Muslim scholarship about leathermaking and shoemaking, as they sometimes directly compare their practices with English and European practices. Val has been attending trainings this week in addition to instructing the Apprentices in their new projects and has reworked the NAI outline for our Shop and our Workshop program.

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

*Silversmith* – The Silversmiths are continuing to work diligently on their projects. Tam is polishing her silver rings and letter charms for the store. Preston is showing Megan how to hammer up her first piece of silver holloware, a five-inch Gurney bowl, and is continuing work on his fluted bowls. Megan is working on her two silver bowls and polishing spoons. Chris is working on chasing in the silver tray body before soldering the rim to the piece. Bobbie is working on cleaning up her silver tray and piercing jewelry for the shop. George has been forging out more ingots and drawing them into wire for spoon blanks. Bobbie has been gathering information and notes concerning James Craig in preparation for a research trip in the fall.



Chris' gold brooches have been traced from the pattern on the left and are now being cut free.



Bobbie's tray, soldered and ready for filing and stoning



Chris' tray, the rim is soldered together, and the body of the tray is being chased in.

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

***Tailor*** – Something's afoot in the Tailor Shop. Apprentice Tim has been working this week on a pair of linen cut hose. Although knit footwear was most common by the 18th century, and was available in broad range, fiber, quality, and price, a much older style of stockings cut-and-sewn from woven cloth was still used. In colonial Virginian parlance, these are most often referred to as hose when long, and socks when short, like the pattern for those that Tim is making. Our Museums' Collection houses several original pairs of linen hose, as seen in the attached image or at this link <https://emuseum.history.org/search/stockings>. They are cut on the bias of the cloth (a 45-degree angle to the straight of grain) in order to have stretch. This is easily discernable in images of Scottish Highland men when the tartan or check of their "diced hose" runs diagonally round their legs, as in the portrait of Lord Dunmore. Woolen cut-and-sewn hose were commonly issued to enslaved field laborers on Virginia plantations. As in the attached advertisement, the most frequently mentioned fabric for woolen hose is called plaid. Somewhat confusingly, not all plaid, or plaiding, is tartan patterned; "white Scotch plaiding" was imported to Virginia for the clothing of enslaved men and woman.



Linen-cut hose



Original-cut hose



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

Weaving, Spinning, and Dyeing – The Weaving Shop will be open Tuesday through Saturday.

Wheelwright – The Apprentices made some fresh Spanish Brown paint to further protect the hay cart from the elements. After a second coat on the body and two coats on the wheels, the project is complete! Wheelwright Paul found some new material for his Magazine handcart in the Wythe Stable and made a replacement forward shutlock for the vehicle's body, as seen in the photos below with its joinery layout. Speaking of joinery, the Apprentices are both working on the joinery of their handcart project. Paul continues research on the plow project, Joel with his paint research, and Murphy is studying 19th-century trade journals.





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

***Wigmaker*** – This week, the Wigmakers have been up to the usual maintenance and wig work. Edith continues to work on Jefferson's new wig; she's reached the exciting stage of construction wherein the wig closely resembles Riff Raff from the "Rocky Horror Picture Show". Benton continues working on his Brigadier and styling practice. Intern Lexie has finished weaving hair for her hairpiece and will begin stitching soon. We'd also like to wish Debbie a Happy Belated Birthday! As usual, if you need any tonsorial services, advice, or supplementation, please contact us.

**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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