

# *THE MECHANICK'S ADVISER*

## *April 22, 2022*

Now that Spring Break is behind us, we have some changes in the Trades Workshops. We will be adding in a few Beginner ones. Beginner Workshops cost \$60 per participant. The Family Workshops remain \$20. Here is the schedule:

**Sundays – Cabinetmaker: “Plane Talk.”** Join us for an in-depth, hands-on tour and demonstration of hand planes – one of the traditional woodworker’s most indispensable tools. When Williamsburg cabinetmaker Edmund Dickinson died in 1778, he was inventoried as having “81 planes of various sorts.” Such a variety of tools would be suited for many tasks like making boards flat and smooth, creating precise structural joinery, and making shapely moldings. We’ll demonstrate the breadth of work done with these tools and give guests a chance to plane away some shavings themselves. Limit of 16 participants. Minimum age is 7.

**\*\*\*BEGINNER WORKSHOP\*\*\* Mondays – “Weaving Workshop.”** Try your hand at weaving in this 2-hr class for all levels of experience. You will learn some of the history behind weaving in Williamsburg at the time of the Revolution to spark your patriotic homespun spirit. This class is taught on pre-warped modern looms, on which you will be able to pass the shuttle back-and-forth to build up a cotton tea towel to take home. All the necessary supplies will be provided in this workshop, including care instructions for your handwoven towel. Limit of 6 participants. Minimum age is 7. **This Workshop will be offered twice every Monday, 10:00-12:00 and 2:00-4:00.**

**Tuesdays – Joiner: "Drawing and Designing With a Compass and Rule."** Throughout recorded History, craftsman have used math to create works of art. With a simple straight edge and compass, we will demonstrate exercises used to create simple geometric forms which, when combined, can be the basis for fashionable design as well as our tools. Limit of 8 participants. Minimum age is 7.

**\*\*\*BEGINNER WORKSHOP\*\*\* Wednesdays – Tin Shop: “Small Cellar Stick.”** Join the Publick Armoury Tin Shop in exploring the unique properties of tin-plated iron by creating a practical lighting device. Commonly known as a cellar-stick, this simple candle holder offers a useful beginner’s project to develop the fundamental skills and knowledge that all tin-plate workers, both historical and modern, need to learn to be competent. Bending, cutting, and soldering are performed in this quick project, providing the maker with a functional candleholder and invaluable life skills to take home and enjoy. Limit of 9 participants. Minimum age is 10.

**\*\*\*BEGINNER WORKSHOP\*\*\* Thursdays – Milliner: “Embroider Your Way to Organization.”** Join the Milliners to learn two of the basic embroidery stitches and sew together a copy of a thread case from circa 1795. Participants will use hand-dyed wool yarn to embroider the outside of this small project organizer. Limit of 8 participants. Minimum age is 7. This will alternate with their Family Workshop “Simple Stitches for Sewing Success.”

**Friday – Tailor: "Every Child Taught to Sew."** Each participant receives a packet of printed illustrations from Diderot showing assorted stitching techniques. We provide pre-cut fabrics on which to practice the stitches, and appropriate instruction. The samples are then stitched or pinned to the pages, and the pages can be stitched/laced together or put into a binder. By selecting different groups of stitches, we can vary the skill level according to the age group, experience level, or individual need. Limit of 10 participants. Minimum age is 7.

**\*\*\*BEGINNER WORKSHOP\*\*\* Saturday – Cooper: "Coopering Basics."** Learn some of the basic skills involved in making a bucket, including the opportunity to shape a stave using draw knives and a jointer plane. Participants will also learn to use a brace and bit and tie a wall and crown knot. Limit of 6 participants.

\*\*\*\*\*

***Apothecary*** – In preparation for our summer Workshops, the Apothecary did the first of two practice Workshops on Thursday morning. We would like to thank our five participants. They helped us gain invaluable insight so that we can make some minor adjustments and make the program better for our Guests this summer. We also want to thank Justin for buying the oranges we needed for the program. Slowly but surely, Sharon is getting the tools she needs to run the Shop, and she can't thank Justin enough for his help.

**The Apothecary Shop will be open Sunday, Tuesday, Friday, and Saturday.**

### ***Armoury:***

***Blacksmith*** – Greetings from the Anderson Blacksmith Shop! This week past has been busy as ever in our Shop. Alex and Broadus have continued work on hinges, with momentary reprieve in the shape of a small hatchet for Broadus, as well as finishing draw knives for a few customers across town. Alex busies himself too with mending hoes. Owen is filing away on welded cooking forks both he and Ken have been forging. Aislinn and Mark prepared themselves for a demonstration out of town while also fixing a few axes. Ken has made a few more cooking utensils as well as more chisels. Together, all of us are enjoying this cool spring, and to be sure, steeling ourselves against the coming summer heat. Whatever your reason, come see us no matter which season, to find that all's well that falls well at the foot of the anvil.

**The Blacksmith Shop will be open Sunday through Tuesday, Thursday, Friday (closes at 3:00pm) and Saturday.**

***Tinsmith*** – This week in the Tin Shop, Steve has been making watering cans of various sizes for outside museums, while Joel has been making cups for Prentis Store and a tea kettle. Jenny has been working on side pouring coffee pots as part of her apprenticeship. No research has been conducted because of Spring Break upstaffing.

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

### ***Anthony Hay Shop:***

***Cabinetmaker*** – With the Cabinet Shop closed for maintenance, we have taken the opportunity to get over to Collections and study the furniture there. We are frequent visitors as it is, but usually to look at a specific piece. This week, we have gotten many hours to peruse the Collection at large, checking out pieces that spark our interest and seeing things in person for the first time. The more work we see from this time, the better sense of convention and style we get, and the better we can identify outliers and unique traits. John and Jeremy have also gotten the chance to measure in detail projects for the near future, but more on those later. Bill has spent much of his time looking at chairs, observing dimensions as well as decorations. Big thanks to Tara Chicirda for hosting this visit and patiently answering all our questions!

**The Cabinet and Harpsichord Shop are closed for annual maintenance. There is no Workshop on Sunday.**

*Brickmaker* – This week saw the Brickyard Crew continuing to set up the new Yard despite the torrential rains on Monday. We were greeted the next day by Carpenter Bobby Clay’s smiling face and a quite thoroughly flooded treading pit. Master Josh put on a brave face, jumped in, and weathered the freezing depths. With a new understanding of water flow in the Yard, we ventured out to retrieve our cistern from the Coopers, which we then paraded down Duke of Gloucester Street. In the midst of this journey, we encountered a game of hoop and stick! Apprentice Nick jumped up to help encourage parent and child alike to learn the ropes from Kelsey. After a quick interlude, Nick tore off across the Palace Green to show the kids how it's done. After the excitement of hoop and stick, we returned to the Yard to create a berm to encourage water flow away from the pit and set down our cistern. With the issue resolutely solved, we moved to the next task at hand ... paving! Apprentices Nick and Madeleine set off to paving a section around the pit, which will serve as a better pad than hard packed dirt. With one side done, we can move around the pit and eventually establish each side.

Otherwise, this week, we completed our last *Daub to Dough* Workshop successfully, which completes our spring programing. We also noticed fowl visitors to our expansive retention pond, ducks! We very much hope that they return.







**The Brickyard will be open Sunday through Thursday, weather permitting. On Wednesday, April 27th, at 4:30pm in the Hennage Auditorium, the Brickmakers will present, “Who Designed This Place? Architects and Design in the 18th Century.” Join Master Bricklayer Josh Graml as he explores how 18th-century buildings were designed and built as gentlemen architects plied their trade in Virginia. Where did their design inspirations come from? And how did they translate English architectural forms to Virginia-born tradesmen? Let’s find out!**

***Carpenter*** – This week in the Carpenters Yard, we are focusing on laying out and cutting up braces for the front wall of the Brickyard’s new drying house. Chopping the mortises in the black locust posts is not as fun as it may sound.

We also are doing some work over at the Public Armoury, working on some fence repair. We will likely be working to repair or replace parts of the fence in coming weeks. Some pit sawing will be required to do it right.

Just a reminder that the “Voices of Their Hands” tour has resumed for the spring schedule.





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

*Colonial Garden* – This week, the Gardeners weeded and cleaned up Garden beds of weeds that have responded to greater day lengths. If only Garden vegetables grew at such a furious pace. Our NIAHD Intern, Kira, harvested our largest cabbage and spent a morning with Foodways at the Palace, cooking forced cabbage. Our intrepid Intern not only honed some cooking skills, but also learned how to build a trellis. This structure will provide support for our ever-popular Cypress vine.

The northwest quarter has been hoed clean, and four poles have been installed so that our pole beans have a place to climb. Apprentice Marc learned the intricacies of making wattle fences and replaced all four fences around the southwest quarter. A true improvement and a major project as the plants were thinned and pushed back, the edges all cleaned and straightened out, and at that point, the fence can be installed. These fences are made from the branches harvested from the Sycamore trees.

Rows of radishes have been mended as well as onions, celery, and skirret. The cool nights did not harm any of our seedlings. They were tucked away in the hotbed, covered in a tarp and straw mats.



Our prized cabbage, with asparagus, parsley, and flowers - all headed to the kitchen





Kira on her way to the Palace



Forced cabbage, enjoyed by all



Kira with her newfound skill of trellis construction



Beautiful new wattle fences surround the garden beds. An excellent execution of a wattle fence. Good job, Marc.  
**The Colonial Garden will be open Daily, weather permitting.**



**Cooper** – This week, the Coopers completed a large vat that will be used by the Brickmakers at their new site. In addition, we supplied two new buckets and repaired a small tub for the Cresset Crew. Our search for a new Apprentice continues with another interview on Saturday.

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

**Engraver** – Here we have some of the drafting tools we have finished for the Brickmakers:



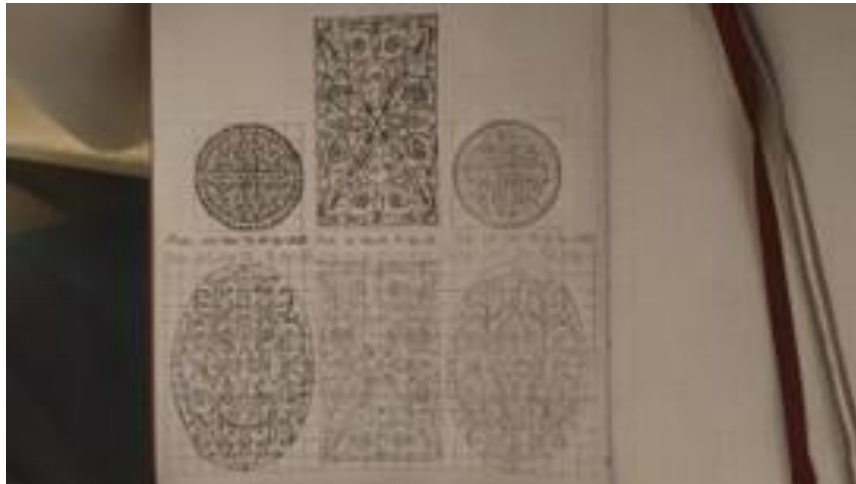
Badges cast by the Foundry for Fife and Drum being engraved:



Items being worked on by Intern Erica. She is really coming along nicely in her engraving work:



The last of a long list of required drawings by William for his apprenticeship:



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

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



**Foundry** – We have finished making the drafting tools for the Brickyard staff, and the Engravers are doing their craft on the tools. Leanne and Drew have been pouring musket balls, pewter taperstick bases, and spoons for our upcoming summer programming. Mike finished the gnomon for the sundial, and now it's onto the dial itself.



**The Foundry will be open Sunday, Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday.**

**Gunsmith** – The Gunsmith Shop will be open Sunday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday.

**Historic Farming** – The field has been plowed and harrowed, and now it is time to hill. Crops this spring and summer will be flax, barley, corn, cotton, and tobacco. Shown below is the Gentry family from Colorado, helping us hill. Thanks to Apprentice Blacksmith Alex Hinman for our new hoes that can be seen in action here.



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

**Joinery** – The Joinery will be open Tuesday (11:30am-5:00pm), and Wednesday through Saturday (**closed 10:30-12:30**).

*Milliner and Mantua-maker* – Firstly, a call to thimbles! We're in the process of planning our "Gown in a Day" program for this summer. Because of Covid restrictions, this will be the first time we've been able to host this event since 2019, so we'd like to bring it back in style! On June 28th, we'll be working an 18th-century workday - 7:30am to 6pm - to showcase just how much can be accomplished stitching to meet an 18th-century customer's timeline. If you're a Tradesperson who is confident with your stitching ability and your supervisor can spare you for as little as a couple of hours to as much as the full workday, we'd love for you to join us! The more hands we can assemble, the larger the scope of the project we'll be able to complete. Please let us know as soon as possible if you're interested so we can start coordinating!

In between endless school group interpretations, we've spent our week on a couple of projects. CW is currently hosting an EXARC Fellow, Giovanna, who is researching and recreating an 18th-century foot-pedaled grinder for gemstones. She'll be demonstrating its use in the old Barber Shop and wanted to be able to do so attired for the 18th century. Within a couple of days, we stitched some new pieces and altered older ones to provide her with a bedgown, petticoat, shift, cap, kerchief, apron, short cloak, and hat. We had a lot of fun with Giovanna as the photography team documented her experience getting dressed this morning. We hope the period clothing helps enhance her experimental research with 18th-century tools and technologies and look forward to visiting with her at the Barber Shop to hear her interpretation next week!

Kate and Rebecca also continue work on their new stays; Kate in particular has made significant headway and is now to the point where she's ready to have the fit double-checked by the Tailors before moving on to the boning channels. She's also joined Janea in this week's shift making-and-mending "fun"...another one of those unavoidable but periodically necessary tasks! Rebecca has cut a new summer-weight bedgown for another Tradeswoman, and also continues work on altering a cotton sack jacket and petticoat for Mistress Smith to wear on her summer outdoor acting-interpreting duties.



Giovanna

**The Shop will be open Sunday, Monday, Thursday (12:00-5:00pm), and Saturday.**

*Musket Range* – It appears that 2021 has continued for the Musket Range right into 2022, as we are selling out repeatedly! Under the stewardship of the Range's new Supervisor, Seth Herbert, the Musket Range is getting back to pre-Covid operations. We now transport guests again and have opened up to six lanes of shooting. Please continue to mention us to Guests who are looking for an interesting and unique experience.



**Printer and Bookbinder:**

***Printing Office*** – The Printing Office will be open Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday.

***Bindery*** – The Bookbindery will be open Sunday through Tuesday, and Friday.

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

**Shoemaker** – The Shoemakers will be at the Armoury on Monday, and Thursday through Saturday.

**Silversmith** – Work continues in the Silversmith Shop on their extremely long list of projects. Megan continues working on her ingot and is working on a large amount of trade silver items for the store. Chris' teapot is nearing its completion. She is working diligently on the ebony handle. Bobbie's tray has been lined out so that soldering the rim can begin. Preston continues work on his small bowls and on polishing jewelry for the retail store. George is forging out the long ingot for spoons and gave a very well received talk, "Forty-six Years a Silversmith", at the Hennage. Research continues on trade silver.



Megan's ingot has certainly grown; it is almost large enough for her to cut the disc needed for her bowl.



Bobbie's tray has been outlined.



Preston's bowls



In extremely important news, the Silversmiths discovered that their beautiful goblets could fit nearly an entire can of your favorite (or in this case, extremely questionable) carbonated beverage. Many thanks to the Brickyard for bestowing such a gift upon us! (No silver was harmed in the making of this picture. The goblet was being given a good cleaning, and it seems that the caustic nature of the liquid may have actually gotten rid of some tarnish and possibly improved the flavor.)

**The Silversmith Shop will be open Tuesday through Saturday.**

*Tailor* – Just like the rest of town, the Tailor Shop has been full of Guests. In fact, on Tuesday, the Shop set a new record number of Guests in a single day: 1,038!!!

Apprentice Logue has been working on a waistcoat for Master Hutter. This waistcoat is based on an example from the CW Collection (object number 1993-338).





While the original item is believed to have a printed design, Journeyman McCarty inked out the figures in pen.  
**The Tailor Shop will be open Sunday through Tuesday, and Friday (11:30-5:00).**

***Weaving, Spinning, and Dyeing*** – **The Weaving Shop will be open on Sunday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Saturday.**

***Wheelwright*** – An interesting week for the Deane Shop. The Wheelwrights are currently putting the finishing touches on a pair of cartwheels that needed hooping. They hope to get that project off the docket next week. In other news, Apprentices Murphy and Joel are hard at work on their hand cart project for the Market House. Murphy is dimensioning the parts for the body of the vehicle. Having finished cleaning and shaping his spokes, Joel is moving forward on his first pair of wheels. The next step is to turn the hubs on the lathe with the assistance of Murphy and Master Wheelwright Paul to power the great wheel.

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

***Wigmaker*** – The Wig Shop has been very busy this past week, both with projects and with interpretations for the influx of Guests we've had. While fascinating the crowds with her nimble fingers, Edith made a half wig in miniature for Public Leather Works to utilize. Benton worked diligently on making sure that all our display wigs are in good condition and has been practicing his wig styling by creating styles new to him. Debbie has been gathering materials and tools and making a display wig caul (base) for her trip to Historic Deerfield, April 27-30. She will be taking part in their Hair Forum by demonstrating the basics of creating an 18th-century wig, from caul to style. Maintenance has picked up with the onset of warmer weather, though we were all confused, and pleased, by the cooler temperatures this past week! Please be aware that Debbie will be away from the Shop for much of this coming week, so turn-around on any maintenance may be longer than normal. As usual, don't hesitate to reach out for any tonsorial needs.



**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.

**Editor:** Shari Monaco

**Contributors:** Apothecary – Sharon Cotner, Armoury – Owen Kelsey (Blacksmith) and Joel Anderson (Tinsmith), Anthony Hay Shop – John Peeler (Cabinetmaker), Brickmaker – Madeleine Bolton, Carpenter – Matt Sanbury, Colonial Garden – Eve Otmar, Cooper – Jon Hallman, Engraver – Lynn Zelesnikar, Foundry – Mike Noftsgar, Historic Farming – Ed Schultz, Milliner and Mantua-maker – Rebecca Godzik, Musket Range – Justin Chapman, Silversmith – Megan Cantwell, Tailor – Michael McCarty, Wheelwright – Joel Morris, Wigmaker – Debbie Turpin