

THE MECHANICK'S ADVISER

October 8, 2021

Apothecary – Our pharmacy student arrived this week from VCU. We have been working with her. Mark did some study on embalming and contacted a British archive that had been closed due to the pandemic. He also compounded a lochoch for irritation in the mouth and throat. Margaret has been studying snake root, an indigenous plant listed in the British pharmacy books.

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

Armoury:

Blacksmith – This week at the Blacksmith Shop, Ken finished garden tools and provided instruction to the Apprentices; Mark worked on drawknives, locks and squares; and Aislinn made a hatchet and compass for the Brickyard. Alex finished a second set of andirons; Broadus has been filing his braces, getting them ready for assembly; and Owen has made spoons and hasps.

The Blacksmith Shop will be open Sunday through Tuesday and closed the rest of the week.

Tinsmith – The Tin Shop reports that Steve continued his work in the tool shop on a large order of stainless-steel canteens for Fifes & Drums, Military Programs, and the "In Defense of Our Liberty" Evening Program, as well as began development of a large lantern project for the Palmer House. In the Shop, he's been making cups and working on a struck lantern. Joel has been working on continuing research into the historical administration and workers of the Public Armoury and is beginning to produce a series of tin measuring cups for the Apothecary Shop. Recently in the Shop, he completed a series of speaking trumpets and cups, as well as made a hardy effort in refinishing the soldering coppers. Jenny made a replacement lid for one of the saucepans in the Armoury Kitchen for Historic Foodways, finished a struck lantern, made a canister for the Blacksmiths to put their new flux in, and completed a few wine tumblers. Her apprenticeship projects are ongoing with research for her final paper on tinware in probate inventories and merchants' records, and she's continuing to work on coffeepots.



Jenny's replacement lid

The Tin Shop would also like to extend their thanks to Katharine Pittman from the Nation Builders for sending along a letter she stumbled across in her research. The letter is posted from George Washington to Dr. John Cochran, dated 1779 from his encampment at West Point, regarding an upcoming dinner party. It can be read in full on the Library of Congress website (<https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/03-22-02-0125>), but we were very amused at Washington's comment about his plates: "If the ladies can put up with such entertainment, and will submit to

partake of it on plates—once tin but now Iron—(not become so by the labor of scowering) I shall be happy to see them". Washington spoke of the meals they were eating at West Point and what they planned for this party in his letter, so we passed the information along to Historic Foodways in hopes of researching an apple or beef pye in the future.

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

Anthony Hay Shop –

Cabinetmaker – Work goes forward in many capacities this week, and in one special way in particular - Folks from Operations and Landscaping have made it out with some very 21st- century machinery to give the looming woods behind the Hay Shop a much-needed trim. We're told that many of these trees are Paper Mulberry, a tree native to the Far East, but common in this part of Virginia as an invasive transplant. The crew has gotten a good start at removing the trees that overhang the buildings and aim to introduce better light and appearance to the entire area. We here at the Hay Shop site are extremely grateful for the efforts being made and look forward to the results of the facelift to come! The Shop will be open on its regular Fall Schedule days, but the back area of the Shop will probably be roped off, with guests asked to enter and exit from the west door.

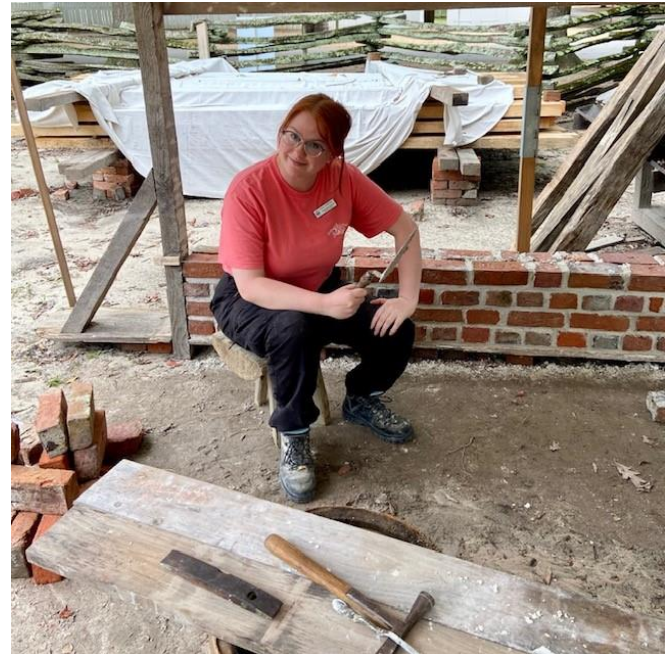
John and Jeremy are pushing ahead with their desk and bookcase project, John starting in on the construction of the doors, and Jeremy finishing out the major understructure of the desk. The Public Leather Works recently made some nice new work aprons for the two Apprentices, so hopefully their waistcoats will be a little less worn and soiled as they push onward with the piece. Bill, after getting a good look at the Masonic ceremonial chairs in the CW Collection, has spent hours drawing out the patterns of carving on elements of the pieces, and will start to put gouge to wood very soon. His contribution this year to our annual *Working Wood in the 18th Century* Conference won't be a finished piece of furniture, but rather a diverse and in-depth study of these iconic chairs with a focus on the decoration, and possibly even how modern wood carvers can apply their decorative themes to their own projects. Registration will soon go live, so interested parties should keep an eye open!



The Cabinetmaker and Harpsichord-maker Shop will be open on Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday. Either the Cabinetmakers or the Harpsichord-makers will be at the Art Museum Gallery on Wednesday.

Brickmaker – It's been a busy week for your favorite Brickmakers! Kenneth and Nick spent the first part of the week continuing Nick's painful transformation into a plasterer. Some of you may recall the dormer window Carpenter Matt Sanbury inelegantly slapped onto the saw house at the Carpenter's Yard. Nick has been applying plaster to the interior of the dormer and learning all sorts of important lessons about the finer points of plaster work. Frequently, Nick could be heard to take the name of Sir Isaac Newton in vain, as gravity occasionally sent his plasterwork plummeting towards the firmament. Carpenter Bobby Clay was a constant source of encouragement, however, and kept Nick motivated to complete the task. Meanwhile, Kenneth got to spend some time with our friends from the Fairfield Foundation, showing some of its volunteers the proper way to stabilize and repair historic brickwork. It's always fun to spend time with these folks!

New Apprentice Madeleine is quickly getting into the work at the combined Carpenters/Brickyard site. Wednesday saw her pit-sawing parts of the new Brickyard drying sheds with Carpenters Matt Sanbury and Jack Underwood. As much as the Carpenters wanted to criticize, alas, they could not as she stayed perfectly on-line while sawing. She's also been starting the first of many practice walls of her apprenticeship, learning to lay level and plumb and getting used to the weight of bricks and trowel. Once Madeleine receives her costume allotment, she's excited to put her new leather apron through its paces; both she and Josh received aprons from our pals at the Public Leather Works. In addition to being quite spiffy, these leather aprons will protect us from the lime in the mortar, the heat from the kiln, and from the various missiles launched by the Carpenters.



Madeleine's bricklaying

What's on the horizon? We had a meeting with our Architectural Historian Matt Webster this week and took a look at some work we'll likely end up doing soon on the wall around the Capitol building.



Madeleine in the saw pit



Josh modelling his new leather apron

Carpenter – The Carpenters are in the home stretch in making the materials for the Brickyard drying shed ... this poplar timber is one of the last five timbers we need to saw for this building. It's great having the Masonry Trades folks to help with the heavy lifting and moving. And we seem to have picked up a hitchhiker along the way, their newest Apprentice Madeleine.



The Carpenter's Yard will be open Daily, weather permitting. On Monday, October 11th, at 4:30 pm in the Hennage Auditorium, the Carpenters will present "Forty Years in the Trade." Join Master Carpenter Garland Wood as he takes a look back at his forty years working in Colonial Williamsburg's Historic Trades Carpentry Program.

Colonial Garden – Harvested from the Garden and sent to Foodways at the Palace Kitchen were green peppers (which will be pickled), and as an oddity for the Governor’s table, we included a turkey cucumber. From the Sankofa Garden: the sorghum is ripening, and the tops will be kept for seed. The canes contain a sugar which we found quite pleasing when chewed. The Egusi melon was harvested, and the seeds were removed, washed, and dried. The seeds are pounded and then added to soups and stews as a thickener. Rye as a cover crop was sown, and soil was turned and chopped to make way for winter crops. Cabbage was planted from the cold frame into the southwest quarter. At this time, we are covering the plants with bell glasses until we complete the construction of a rabbit proof fence. We are plagued by rabbits which last week got through one of our fences and chewed a goodly amount of peanut plants.



Sorghum plant: the leaves of sorghum are used as animal fodder, and the cane contains a sweet pith that is turned into sorghum molasses.



Egusi melon



Megan from Foodways picks up peppers and a melon to take back to the Palace.

The Colonial Garden will be open Monday through Saturday, weather permitting.

Cooper – The Cooper Shop will be open on Sunday, Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday.

Engraver – The Engravers had the pleasure of having the newest Silversmith Apprentice come down for training. William has made strides in his monogram designs! He has turned the corner! They are coming along nicely. Also, he gave a great talk on engraved copperplate printing on textiles. Lynn has finished Churchill Bell #14, which will be presented later in November.



The Engraving Shop will be open Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday. The Engravers will be at the Art Museum Gallery on Saturday.

Foodways – The Foodways Staff will be at the Palace Kitchen Sunday through Wednesday and at the Armoury Kitchen on Thursday.

Foundry – The Foundry will be open on Sunday, Monday, Wednesday, and Saturday.

Gunsmith – The Gunsmiths are winding up their last two days with Intern Tyler, helping him learn as much as possible in the time allotted, though we truly hate to see him go. He, too, wishes he had much more time here. Yesterday, Tyler was shown the process of forming an entry thimble from sheet brass; today, he was shown how we heat and cast brass into sand molds.

Darrin has forged out a few sears for the two-pistol lock and is now in the file, try, fit, repeat, mode. Brad forged out yet another tomahawk, and again, the first-run low-grade wrought iron is causing blemishes that are completely unacceptable. Can you say frustrating? Until next time from the Gunsmith shop...

The Gunsmith Shop will be open on Tuesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday.

Historic Farming – It's turnip time at Prentis Field! Though they are grown to show an experimental method of growing sheep food, they end up in human bellies. Shown is a wheelbarrow load of thirty or so heading to the Palace Kitchen for the Historic Foodways staff.



Mike Cecere gets ready to haul turnips

The Farmer will be at Prentis Field Tuesday through Saturday.

Joinery – The Joiners are working on their projects for this year's Woodworking conference. Brian has decided to reproduce sections of the round window from Bruton Parish Church. To that end, he is trying to find or build a suitable plane to cut the curved moldings in the window. Over on the center bench, Peter is experimenting with some architectural carving. He has been spending his study days digging through books on layout and carving techniques. At the back of the Shop, Scott has selected a mantel from the Finnie House. It has a beautiful section of fretwork on it that Scott is currently laying out. And over at the window, Amanda has been working on her coffin. In addition to adding these skills to the Shop's repertoire, she is also researching 18th-century funerary practices for her presentation at the conference.

The Joinery will be open on Monday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday. The Joiners will be at the Art Museum Gallery on Sunday.

Milliner and Mantua-maker – We're in the midst of preparing for several upcoming social media commitments! One of them involves assembling an entire ensemble to be worn by a visiting host on film. We

decided to base the gown closely on a cotton sack in our Collection, so we spent Tuesday morning with Neal at the Museum studying, photographing, and taking notes on our source. Janea is building a new pair of pocket hoops to give shape to the gown, and Rebecca has disassembled an old black silk cloak to re-line and re-trim it to be part of the suit of millinery to complement the outfit. As a new Apprentice still working on building up her wardrobe, Kate needs something appropriate to wear during the filming and is endeavoring to re-fashion an old striped silk gown to work for her. She's already learned well the cardinal rule of the 18th century mantua-maker: it's the fabric that holds the value!



The Milliner and Mantua-maker will be open on Sunday, Monday, and Wednesday.

Music – Greetings from The Governor's Musick! Our Raleigh mini-concerts continue to fill up, and we have got risk assessments for Palace Concerts in November and December, so we are going full steam ahead with programming to the end of the year.

The Raleigh concerts emphasize the role of music in everyday Williamsburg, and two of the pieces we use were chosen from published sheet music that was imported on the ship, the *Virginia*, by Captain Robertson and advertised as for sale at the Williamsburg Post Office in the August 29, 1771, issue of *The Virginia Gazette*. In Williamsburg, as in other colonies, the Post Office also served as the Printing Office. These offices were established in 1738 by William Parks, who there founded *The Virginia Gazette*, Virginia's first newspaper. By 1771, the Printing and Post Office were run by Alexander Purdie and John Dixon, whose names appear at the head of our advertisement. The Printing Office sold both materials printed on site and imported from overseas.

Most of the sheet music for sale at the Post Office was published in London in the 1750s and 60s. As the effects of the Industrial Revolution were beginning to be felt, the number of music publishing firms multiplied rapidly, reflecting the growing demand for printed music, particularly chamber music, which comprised a full three-quarters of the total catalog listings. Published music was meant to appeal to the general public and was intended to be played at home - harpsichords, violins, and flutes were all popular instruments in Williamsburg among the gentry, and musical training was a valued quality in a gentleman.

Here is a movement from Beozzi's Opus 3 No. 4:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iveyPKQiifo&list=RDMMiveyPKQiifo&start_radio=1

Enjoy!



[Governor's Music Bezozzi Op 3 No 4 - YouTube](#)

Members of Colonial Williamsburg's Governor's Musick ensemble play the first two movements of Bezozzi's Trio Sonata, Op. 3, No. 4 in the Apollo Room of the R...
www.youtube.com

The Musicians will be in the Art Museum on Friday mornings and afternoons as advertised and on Saturdays, unadvertised and subject to change, and at the Raleigh Tavern Apollo Room on Wednesdays throughout the fall at 1:30pm, 2:30pm, and 3:30pm for half-hour presentations.

Musket Range – The Musket Range continues to enjoy steady sales and has recently completed the required Range Safety Officer Course training for several of our newer hires, including Scott Bradford of the Musket Range along with Ren Tolson and John Settle of Military Programs. We're happy to say that Colonial Williamsburg employs some of the best-trained staff in regards to historic weapons anywhere in the museum community. We would also like to thank Operations for recently aiding us in correcting a power issue with the Greenhow Tenement Stable, enabling us to keep our guns looking and working their best.

Printer and Bookbinder:

Printing Office – The Printing Office will be open on Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, and Friday.

Bindery – The Bookbindery will be open on Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday.

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

Shoemaker – Val is almost finished with shoe-boots for Ren Tolson. Nicole is half-soling and re-heeling a pair of common shoes for CDC. She is also midway through a pair of common shoes for Edith Broward Edds. Rob is re-soling and re-heeling a pair of pumps for Bryan Austin. The Shoe Shop spent this Thursday at Great Hopes, dressing upper leather for a virtual demonstration that the Shop will be presenting to the Honourable Cordwainers' Company on October 23rd. Consequently, the Shop will be closed that day, as all three members will be attending the virtual conference. The Shop would like to thank Ed Schultz, Layne Chappell, the Tin Shop, the Weavers, the Wheelwrights, the Public Leather Works, and Tom Redd for their assistance in putting it all together.



Ren Tolson's shoe-boots



Common shoe repair for CDC



Common shoes for Edith Broward Edds



Repair for Bryan Austin



Getting ready to start dressing



Rob, Nicole, and Layne

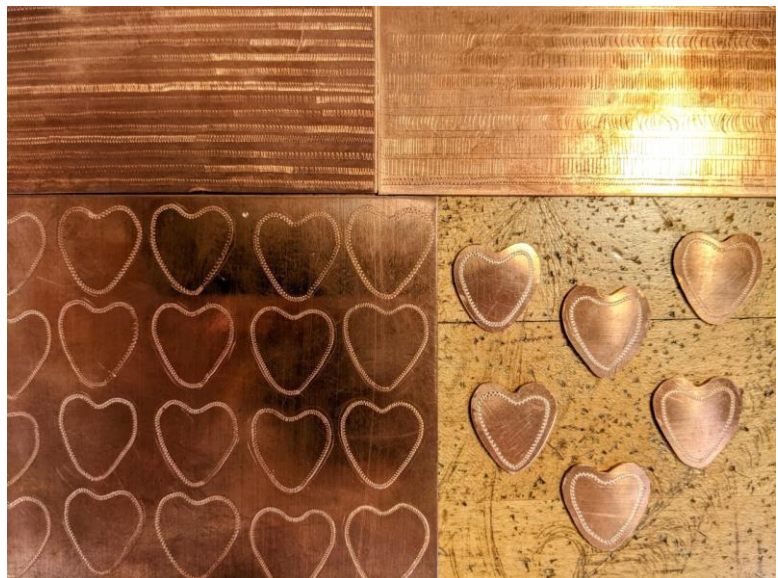


Skins in various stages of dressing

The Shoemakers will be at the Armoury on Monday, Tuesday, Friday, and Saturday.

Silversmith – Autumn tidings from the Silversmith Shop! We have finally got Apprentice Megan back from the Engravers. Her study visit was fruitful, and according to Journeyman Lynn, she has made leaps and bounds in picking up the grueling foundations of our sister trade. After lots of drawing and cutting plates and plates of curved lines (sooo many lines), Megan is practicing basic engraving on copper mock-ups of trade silver and other small-work jewelry we most often make. No matter the technique, Silversmiths practice in copper for its similar way of working and affordable relative cost. Megan has also set handles to her sharp new set of steel files, necessities in the trade.

Additional doings in the shop find Master George contemplating the silver scabbard furniture for young George Washington's sword, and Preston chasing around small silver bowls ... He'll catch them up soon. Bobbie has been continuing the joy of piercing happy little mote spoons, and Chris is fitting the rim to the lid for the 1705 Nelme teapot. We are grateful to Brian Weldy for his keen expertise and generosity in roughing out the ebony teapot handle blanks, which Chris will set to with mixed fervor and trepidation in the coming weeks.





The Silversmith Shop will be open on Sunday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Saturday. The Silversmiths will be at the Art Museum Gallery on Friday.

Tailor – The Tailor Shop will be open on Tuesday, Friday, and Saturday. The Tailors will be at the Art Museum Gallery on Thursday.

Weaving, Spinning, and Dyeing – We are getting ready for a new project in our Shop, a twill blanket coat, with white in the warp and blue in the weft. There will be several hidden challenges in making this fabric and ensuring it is up to our standards. All of this will require careful consideration and a close eye to detail, not to mention a good understanding of the fundamentals of weaving. Sounds like a perfect first project for a new Apprentice, doesn't it?

Dolly has just finished winding tubes for their first project. Next will come the creel configuration, followed by setting up the tensioning box, before warping onto our warping mill. Then beaming, threading, sleying, and tying on. Lots of jobs ahead, but all in a day's work for a new Apprentice, right?



The Weaver Shop will be open on Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Friday, and Saturday.

Wheelwright – The Wheelwrights will be at the Armoury on Sunday, Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday.

Wigmaker – This past week, Benton encountered one of the most-dreaded experiences: he discovered his wiglet was a bit too big, so he had to take it apart and rebuild the ribbon base. Edith and Debbie assured him it won't be the last time this type of thing happens. Better to discover this *before* it's completed, right?! He's well on his way to a better fit, though. Edith has nearly completed her first Flax wig, and we're all excited to see the final results. Debbie has had to switch gears from Dave Catanese's wig to wigs requested *by* Dave for the upcoming Halloween event. The spirits of the season have long been embedded in our Shop, but now the spiders and fairy dust really get to come out of the woodwork ... or is that wig work? This event is one of our favorites because we get to pull out all the stops and do styles and colors that are not normally seen around town!

A note for our wig-wearing friends and any requests: Debbie will be off October 12 - November 3, so if you bring your wigs in for service, please allow for turnaround time, since Edith is only one person, and Benton hasn't graduated to styling yet. Benton is a pro at combing and washing, though, so between the two of them, they will get items done as quickly as they can. Some complicated styles may need to wait for Debbie's return, however. Please be kind to the Apprentices; Debbie doesn't want to come back to an empty Shop because they've run away!

The John Coke Office is currently open Thursday- Sunday

The Wig Shop will be open on Sunday, Thursday, and Friday. The Wigmakers will be in the Art Museum Gallery on Monday.

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

Editor: Shari Monaco

Contributors: Apothecary – Robin Kipps, Armoury – Alex Hinman (Blacksmith) Tin Shop – Jenny Lynn, Anthony Hay Shop – John Peeler (Cabinetmaker), Brickmaker – Joshua Graml, Carpenter – Garland Wood, Colonial Garden – Eve Otmar, Engraver – Lynn Zelesnikar, Gunsmith – Darrin McDonal, Historic Farming – Ed Schultz, Joiner – Peter Hudson, Milliner and Mantua-maker – Rebecca Starkins, Music – Karol Steadman, Musket Range – Justin Chapman, Shoemaker – Val Povinelli, Silversmith – Chris Strum, Weaver – Joseph Wixted, Wigmaker – Debbie Turpin