

THE MECHANICK'S ADVISER

July 1, 2022

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

Armoury:

Blacksmith – The Blacksmith Shop will be open Daily.

Tinsmith – The earth shook in the Tin Shop as Journeyman Joel Anderson announced that his last day was July 2nd. Joel started work in August 2013 as the first Apprentice and during his time in the Shop, he became very proficient in the trade. He leaves his mark on the Shop through important research that informs our present interpretation, including that of the Armoury. We wish him success on his new path that includes going back to school. Apprentice Jenny has been working on a tin chest (squarish items are the trickiest to make for us) and now a set of struck lanterns. Steve will be busy this week with an order from the First State Historic Parks. A variety of objects including a camp kettle, lanterns, several japanned spice boxes, a coffeepot, etc., are in the works. Also, with the help of Apprentice Blacksmith Alex Hinman, who forged a spit with its set of skewers, a reflective oven (tin kitchen) made by Joel was prepared for sale to be acquired by a Donor and intended for another historic site. Making reproductions for our own co-workers and other historic sites is an important and gratifying outlet for our work.

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

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

Brickmaker – This week in the Brickyard saw the crew braving the consequences of quite a bit of rain. While production moved on as usual, the bricks that experienced the rain took quite a bit of time to dry. This left us with a very occupied drying bed; but worry not, for many, many bricks were moved and will continue to be moved. The walls of sundried bricks loom ever higher in the saw house as the days go by.



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

Carpenter – This week in the Carpenters Yard, we have been helping with the site work that needs to be done for the new Brickyard drying house. The holes that need to be dug are quite large, two feet wide and over four feet deep. With such a size, the equipment we could use is limited. Dale Trowbridge was able to drill down three feet, but the last foot and a half had to be drilled with a longer auger that Ted rented. We hope to finish cleaning out the holes today.

Harold and Mary are both busy chopping mortises for a new set of gates that will go at the new Brickyard site. When you can measure the amount of removed material in feet, then you know you're doing a few mortises.



The Carpenter's Yard will be open Sunday, and Wednesday through Saturday, weather permitting.

Colonial Garden – Consistent rainfall over the last two weeks has been a relief to the Historic Gardeners, but now, instead of watering, we find ourselves battling the weeds. Thankfully, our second Summer Intern, Andrew, started just in time to lend a hand. This week, we harvested mature seeds from our Naples broccoli, broad beans, corn poppies, and larkspur to be used in future years in the Garden. Thank you to the Wheelwrights for repairing and repainting one of our wheelbarrows. Last week, we paid a visit to the Weavers to plant Indigo in their dye yard. Indigo is an annual plant in our climate, and grows better further south, but we should be able to produce at least one usable crop in a season here in Virginia. We also sent a basket of peppers, garlic, parsley, squash, and edible flowers to Historic Foodways at the Palace Kitchen. The American Indian Garden and Sankofa Heritage Garden are filling up with beautiful looking plants, and squash is starting to form on plants in both Gardens. If you haven't stopped by to visit either of these Gardens this season, come take a look! Flowers blooming in the Historic Garden this week include safflower (*Carthamus tinctoria*), nigella (*Nigella damascena*), germander (*Teucrium chamaedrys*), and pennyroyal (*Mentha puligeum*).



Historic Garden Apprentice Marc harvests broccoli seed



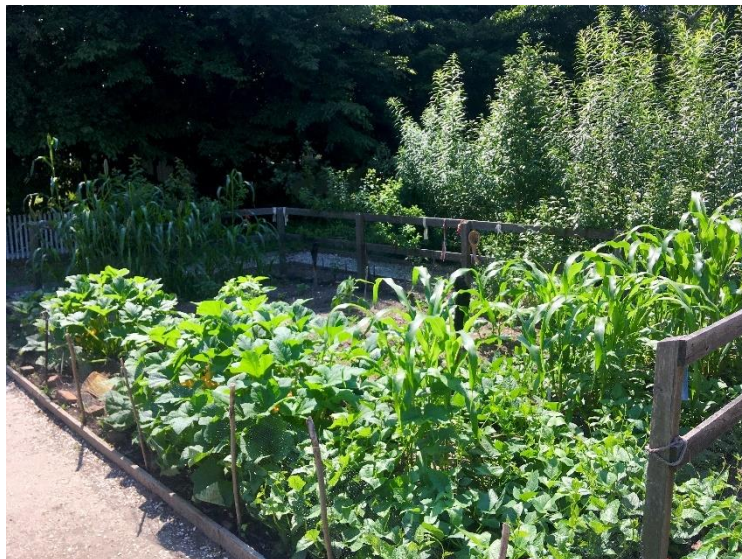
Safflower in boom at the Historic Garden



Summer Intern Kira with the Historic Mobile Garden Service planting Indigo



American Indian Garden



Sankofa Heritage Garden

The Colonial Garden will be open Daily, weather permitting.

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

Foundry – The last couple of weeks at the Foundry have been quite successful. Last week, we opened the molds from Apprentice Drew's silver pour to see that the tray feet came out very well! They are now safely in the hands of Chris and Bobbie in the James Craig Shop. On the same day, we hosted another successful Family Workshop. While we may have had trial Workshops with our own colleagues, presenting the program with children is very different, so we were able to make adjustments where we needed to, based on how the first one had gone. This week, Apprentice Leanne got her chance at her first high temperature pour with some bronze plumb bobs for the Carpenters and Brickmakers, tea caddy scoops, and wax seal handles. Journeyman Mike was able to get all the harpsicord hinges drilled, so they should be assembled and finished soon. After scraping the bottom of our pewter pot, we may have reached our musket ball limit for the moment, but there are plenty to be filed.



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

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

Military Programs – Ren Tolson has been working on filling our British and American knapsacks to have for our display table at the Guardhouse. Each one now has their mark for the Guardhouse, which we have given names for; the American pack is for "Gustavus Hibert", and the British pack is for "Gregory Hildebrand". We have also been trying out our interactive recruiting programs during our Military Activities at 10am. It has been met with good feedback from Guests thus far, and we hope to expand on it to better demonstrate recruiting practices in Revolutionary Virginia. John will be giving a talk at the Hennage on Tuesday, July 5th, at 4:30pm. The talk will be focused on the misconceptions of the State Garrison Regiment (our primary American portrayal) and their role in the Southern Army in 1780.



American knapsack



British knapsack

On Tuesday, July 5th, 4:30pm in the Hennage Auditorium, Military Programs staff will present, "State Garrison Goes South." In the spring of 1780, the military focus of the Revolution had turned to the South, and Charleston was besieged. From Virginia, a detachment of State troops is formed to be sent as relief to the city. Included in this detachment were those who belonged to the State Garrison Regiment. Come learn about the experience of those who went South and the impact they had on the campaigns and battles.

Milliner and Mantua-maker – Gown(s) in a Day 2022 has been successfully completed! On Tuesday, we transformed half of our Shop into a time machine, dividing the room into 1784 on the left side and 1810 on the right. Each side of the room was decorated with a gown and millinery appropriate to its year, and each team of mantua-makers and seamstresses was also attired accordingly. Our theme (forgive us if you've already read this, but just in case some readers haven't!) was "sustainability in fashion." When fabric comprised the vast majority of the cost of a garment, the assumption in the 18th century was that textiles would be "upcycled," with clothing taken apart, re-cut and re-fit to keep it up to date with changing trends. The goal for the day was to recreate the lifespan of a single piece of fabric. We wanted Guests to be able to visualize how a gown that was first made in 1774 might have been given new life a decade later by being taken apart and cut into a new style. Now imagine that that 1784 gown was then packed into a trunk for the next 25 years, finally to be taken out and cut down again to reflect the fashion of 1810. The fabric could easily span 40 years or more, making it a highly viable long-term investment.

We began the morning with three gowns in the same fabric. One was the completed and fully trimmed sack styled to 1774 that was pictured in last week's *Adviser*; this gown would remain untouched to

show the first incarnation of the fabric. The second gown was another version of the same, left untrimmed this time, so that it could be taken apart and cut into a 1784 "common" gown to fit a different body. The third gown had started as the same pieces of the 1774 style, but we had cut it down to the 1784 gown and assembled it earlier, so that it was ready to be cut down again to the 1810 gown during the program. At the end of the day, we hoped to have all three styles of gown displayed side by side on different bodies to demonstrate the fabric's transformation across time.

After a hectic day that began at 6am and finished at 6pm, we had very nearly reached our goal. With the hands of Janea, Kate, Gracie (on loan from the Tailors), Sara (come from the Harpsichord-makers), and Laura (visiting from the Joiners), the 1784 gown was complete! Rebecca, Rachel, Emma (borrowed from the Public Leatherworks), Margaret (lent from the Apothecaries), and our Junior Interpreter, Summer, nearly brought the 1810 gown to its finished state; just the sleeves were left to be stitched on, but we ran up against the clock, and our eager audience awaited the final unveiling. It'll be completed this week, and we promise pictures!

Prodigious thanks again to all of our colleagues (and their supervisors!) who offered their helping hands for the day. Many thanks, too, go to Karen Schlicht and Liz Narney, who did an incredible job of orienting Guests to the program and ensuring that the room never got too overwhelmed with Guests. We couldn't have done it without each and every one of you.

After two days off to recover, we're now on to plotting for next year's shenanigans...





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

Music – Greetings from The Governor’s Musick! We are about two weeks into our first summer series program at the Capitol, on the music of the Lanier family and their circle, and our Palace Stage program on the Pleasure Gardens of London.

Research continues on our upcoming Hennage programs: Kyle is working on Harpsichord Battle Sonatas, Jenny is working on her Catch Club program, and Karol is working on political broadsides and music. Brady’s been preparing for a presentation on Isaac Bickerstaff at the Hennage on Wednesday, July 6 at 10:30am as part of the Gender & Sexuality Diversity Committee’s "Pride Not Prejudice" programming. Bickerstaff was a London playwright who wrote *Love In A Village*, which was performed to great acclaim in Williamsburg in 1770 and 1771. *Love In A Village* is credited with being the first English-language comic opera, a popular genre invented by Bickerstaff in the 1760s. His career ended abruptly in 1772 when he fled the country due to being publicly accused of homosexuality, which was regarded in the 18th century as the "deed without a name".

We hope everyone has a wonderful Independence Day.

Printer and Bookbinder:

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

Bindery – The Bookbindery will be open Monday, Tuesday, and Friday. Due to circumstances beyond our control, the shop is closed on Sunday, July 3rd, and the Workshop scheduled for that day is cancelled.

Public Leather Works – Greetings from the Public Leather Works. It is with heavy hearts and happy memories that we bid a fond farewell to our Summer Intern Jamie McKnew. Over the past ten weeks, Jamie has become a valued member of the Leather Works family. She has excelled in both her bench work and her public interpretation. We are certain she will succeed in whatever the future has in store for her. Thank you, Jamie, for all of your hard work, enthusiasm, and, most importantly, cat pictures!



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

Department of Historic Trades and Skills

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

Silversmith – The Silversmiths are working on a long list of projects for the Shop. Tam is learning how to make copper rings and how to silver solder them together. Megan is also learning how to make rings and is also working on hammering her silver disc into a silver bowl. Chris has soldered the rim of her silver tray together and is preparing to solder it to the silver sheet that will become the body of the tray. Bobbie is filing silver feet for her tray, courtesy of the Foundry's latest silver casting. Preston has been polishing his silver bowls and showing Megan how to form hers on the stakes. George cast a gold ingot and is working on a gold mote spoon in addition to forging out the silver ingot he's been working on for the last week.



Tam soldering rings with a blow pipe and alcohol lamp



Bobbie's tray, the rim is not yet soldered.



Tray feet in various stages of filing



Preston's fluted bowls



George's gold ingot, gold mote spoon, and silver mote spoon

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

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

Weaving, Spinning, and Dyeing – We had an extremely fruitful dye day on Saturday! Four dyes were used: madder for reds and oranges, Osage orange for yellows, indigo for blues, and logwood for violets and purples, plus overdyeing, or putting one color on top of another to get an even wider variety. These four dyebaths were used to bring life to 84 skeins of yarn (36 cotton and 48 wool), 6 cotton quilt squares, 3 shirts, 2 scarves, and 1 petticoat, and a lot of wool locks. (The partridge a pear tree declined to be dyed.) Some of this will be going down to Prentis Store shortly, and some will be put towards future projects. We're already spinning more yarn to go into the dye pots on July 30th, so mark your calendars now!



The Weaving Shop will be open on Sunday, Monday, and Thursday through Saturday.

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

Wigmaker – Greetings! This past week, Debbie, Benton, and Lexie tried to remain calm while missing Edith. She has been up in New York attending a Lace Front wig making class, learning the best practices for wig fittings and techniques to help her with the repair and maintenance of our more modern wigs. We're ready for her return, just in time for the 4th of July, and look forward to hearing about her adventures! We're especially jealous of her visit to the MET where she got to see an original Egyptian wig! We want to give a huge shout out to Marie and Eddie, our amazing Volunteers, who have helped us immensely by stepping in to interpret with us while we work on our projects. Lexie has begun to interpret as well, and she's getting used to all the curiosities from our Guests. She has also begun weaving a hairpiece for herself. Benton's Brigadier wig is coming along nicely, and he has just begun to apply his reinforcement tape that will help support the brass stays at the temple and nape areas. Debbie's demo base continues to go in circles. Study continues into

Marie Antoinette's hair, the hair market, and Charlton's account. Feel free to reach out with any hair-related 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.

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