

THE MECHANICK'S ADVISER

May 27, 2022

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

Armoury:

Blacksmith – Greetings from the Public Armoury's Blacksmith Shop! The Shop is happy to have our Intern, Josh, return to us for another summer of forging. Come by and say hello as he dazzles the Guests with his Texan charm, while he relearns Virginian etiquette and manners. He currently is working on a pair of dividers and getting back into nail making. Alex finished assembling a gridiron recently and speedily works on hoes, spits, skewers, and a small pair of dividers. Broadus made a small, decorated pin for his hacksaw frame, repaired the old pintles for the Carpenters to reuse for the fence gate on our property, and steadily makes billhooks and froes. Owen has made a few nails, tasting spoons, roasting forks, and is eyeing rakes, too. Aislinn makes progress on stitch pricking punches and piles of buckles for the Public Leather Works. Mark has a couple of swords that he has begun to forge, as well as tires for wheels he's finished up, and he is heat-treating hammers for Master Tinsmith Steve. Master Ken has been quite busy with guiding the Apprentices and Intern as well as making headway into chisels, gouges, table leaf hinges, and cookware and utensils for the Guardhouse. As is tradition, with ending these Mechanick's accounts, as is the case with all our hard work: all's well that falls well at the foot of the anvil.

The Blacksmith Shop will be open Daily.

Tinsmith – This week in the Tin Shop, Steve led another successful Workshop and has been finishing up watering cans for outside museums by painting them and preparing to ship them out. Jenny has been constructing colanders as part of her apprenticeship. Joel has been producing cups to be sold at Prentis and researching workers in the Public Armoury, the economics of the McKinley Tariff Act (1890), and hunting down sources on tinsmithing tools and their nomenclature.

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

Anthony Hay Shop:

Cabinetmaker – The weeks have been full with progress on a number of things this May. Bill has gotten his Lodge 6 Masonic Chair carving prefinished and has assembled the frame around it, which is modeled on the crest rail of the chair. He'll finish the whole thing off soon, and it will be put up for sale, so visit the Shop if you're interested! John has gotten the doors on the bookcase he is making, which shows off the bookmatched panels nicely. Jeremy is finishing up the case work on the desk, with feet to be applied soon. Come by and see us sometime and check our progress on entirely too many projects.



The Cabinetmaker and Harpsichord-maker are open Sunday (11:30am-5:00pm) and Monday through Saturday.

Brickmaker – This week in the Brickyard saw the trials and tribulations that come with too much rain on a site with no permanent buildings. While the rain did dampen our spirits (and our clay), we were able to make the most of it so we can begin production. In preparation for the arrival of our Summer Casuals, we intended to have a good first week of Brickmaking, so they would come into an active Yard. Plus, being in a new Yard includes working out where clay should go and how it gets there. Anyway, while the rain did delay us, we were still able to begin at the end of the week. There is much excitement and anticipation for the arrival of our soon-to-be Brickmakers and the summer to come!

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

Carpenter – This week in the Carpenters Yard, we are finalizing the end walls of the Brickyard drying house. By the end of this week, we will be laying out the ceiling or upstairs floor frame. This platform will take a little time to make things square. By the middle of next week, we should be on to the next phase of the frame. We have some work to do at the site of the Brickyard drying house, too, doing the lay out to make sure all the post holes are where they need to be. Our friends in Facilities Maintenance will help drill the holes at a later date.



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

Colonial Garden – The Historic Garden enjoyed the rain this week. The precipitation, coupled with the several sunny and warm days, has led to a profusion of growth. The recently planted American Indian Garden has seen the corn (*Zea mays*), beans (*Phaseolus coccineus*), and squash (*Cucurbita pepo*) grow appreciably in just the span of the week.



Raindrops bedew corn poppies (*Papaver rhoeas*)



Opuntia ficus-indica enjoying the heat



Native vegetables not wasting any time

Foodways and the Williamsburg Inn were the recipients of Garden produce. The Palace Kitchen received the last of the season's lettuce and radishes as well as some of our spicy Indian Cress blooms. The Inn, meanwhile, took away a basket of garlic (*Allium sativum*) scapes that smelled positively divine.



Lactuca sativa, *Raphanus raphanistrum sativus*, and *Tropaeolum majus*



Fun fact: garlic scapes are also known as "whistles."

This week saw the addition of sweet potatoes (*Ipomoea batatas*) in two (!) locations in the Garden. Two rows were planted in the Sankofa Heritage Garden, while six mounds were planted in the bed near the Garden entrance.



Journeyman Teal planting cut up sweet potatoes in raised rows (left) and planting sweet potato slips into a mound (right)

The cleanup and planting of the dry bed this week called to mind a passage from this Apprentice's reading of John Abercrombie and Thomas Mawe's *Every Man His Own Gardener* (1767):



“Let the surface of the beds and borders be lightly and carefully loosened with a hoe, in a dry day, and let them be neatly raked, which will give an air of liveliness to the surface, and the whole will appear neat and very pleasing to the eye, and will be well worth the labour.”

Finally, there is a very determined foxglove (*digitalis*) within the Garden.



The Colonial Garden will be open Daily, weather permitting.

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

Engraver – 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 – This week in Foundry news ... Journeyman Mike has finished working on the second pewter punch ladle and handed it off to Apprentice Drew to polish. Mike has also been working on the brass hinges
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we poured last week for the Harpsicord-makers' new spinet. Apprentice Leanne continued work on the Summer Workshop handout but ran into a small problem locating a particular image of an 18th-century pewterer pouring a spoon mold between his legs. This image was nowhere to be found in Diderot's *Encyclopedia* nor in Peter Sprengel's *Handwerke und Kunst*, a German equivalent of Diderot. A manual search of the Foundry's research files finally revealed a photocopy of the image in question with a handwritten note on the back that read, "Pewter molds from the other French Encyclopedia." The image turned out to be Plate #28 from Salmon Pierre-Augustin's *Art du Potier d'Etain*.

The rain in the forecast prevented us from pouring anything new this week, but we took the opportunity to complete some maintenance polishing around the Shop, as well as finishing the punch ladle and, as always, work on more musket balls.



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 Indians were growing this type of tobacco when the English came to Virginia. It is the original North American type called *Nicotiana rustica* versus the South American type called *Nicotiana tabacum*, which the English eventually grew and sent back to European markets. We are growing this tobacco as a comparison between the two and using it as a teaching tool with our colleagues in the American Indian Initiative unit. The Guests are very interested! Simultaneously, we are learning how to cultivate it and eventually, how to cure it.



The tobacco grown by Indians at the time of contact

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

Joinery – The Joinery will be open Tuesday (11:30am-5:00pm), and Wednesday, Thursday, and Saturday.

Military Programs – On Wednesday, June 1, at 4:30pm in the Hennage Auditorium, Military Programs will present “Engineers in the Revolution.” One of the most important positions in a military is the engineer. Unfortunately for the continental army there were few engineers, let alone military engineers, to assist in the Revolution. It took time, trial and error, training, and a lot of help to get the Corps of Engineers off the ground. Come learn the instrumental role engineers played in an 18th-century military and in winning the Revolution.

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

Music – As we approach the final performances of our “May Madness” program at the Governor’s Palace and our “Music in Williamsburg” program at the Raleigh Tavern, we are now looking forward to our summer concerts, starting in the middle of June. We will perform weekly outdoor concerts in the Palace Gardens. Our gambist, Brady Lanier, will lead our program at the Capitol on his musical ancestors from the Lanier family that influenced the 17th-century musical scene in England, and those that later moved to colonial Virginia.

The Governor’s Musick will also be very active at the Museum this summer. In addition to our patriotic program, “Phillis Wheatley and the Music of Freedom” on July 3rd, we will begin a series of weekly lecture recitals, all at the Hennage Auditorium. Jenny will bring popular songs in Colonial America with her program “Madrigals, Catches, and Glee’s, Oh My”. Karol’s recital, “Mind the Music and the Step”, focuses on the

broadside ballad, a common way to distribute vocal music. Amy will revive her popular program on “The Bird Fancier’s Delight”, while Brady will give encore performances of his “Last Two Virtuosi on Viola da Gamba”. Kyle’s program on “Harpsichord Battle Sonatas” will show the beginnings of an American musical identity in the 18th century.

Finally, the organized piano has been installed in the Mark M. and Rosemary W. Leckie Gallery for the upcoming *Making Music in Early America* exhibition, which opens in late July. Kyle will begin practicing on this extremely rare keyboard instrument, learning how to mix the sounds of the piano and organ on the same keyboard. Biweekly organized piano concerts will begin in August, and we’re very excited to expand our programming with this instrument!

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 Throwback Thursday:



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

Shoemaker – On our Research Day, Victoria shared her Hennage talk with the Shop, and Nicole continues to work on her own. Val and Victoria went over the more modern method of measuring that our Shop does behind the scenes. Val also put together a package for Sarah Korbin, who is coming up on a special birthday. Ms. Korbin is unable to attend Colonial Williamsburg, but her daughter wanted something special from the Museum for her mother’s special day.

In the shop, Nicole just finished a pair of prow-toed shoes for apprentice points and continues with mending. Val just finished a repair for one of the Blacksmiths and is almost done with a pair of slippers for one of the Tailors. Victoria is moving along with learning how to close shoe uppers.

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

Silversmith – The Silversmiths are busy bees as usual in the Golden Ball. Megan has finally finished polishing her mote spoon, and a lucky customer bought it before it even made it into the display case. Chris is working on the ebony handle for her teapot, and it is looking wonderful. Bobbie is diligently working on her Department of Historic Trades and Skills

tray; it is shaping up very quickly! Preston is continuing to raise his army of extremely popular small bowls and is cutting in the decorative rims. George continues his work on forging out the long ingot for spoon blanks.



Preston's bowls



Chris working on the teapot handle



The ebony teapot handle is coming along well!



Megan's mote spoon



Detail of the pierced design

The Silversmith Shop will be open Tuesday through Saturday.

Tailor – The Tailors have been busy in the Shop the last week. Apprentice Logue is focusing on waistcoat patterning and construction. He has completed several already and is now making one up for Joel over in the Wheelwright Shop. Master Hutter instructed Apprentice Logue on the finer points of fit during a recent fitting in the Wheelwright Shop.



The waistcoat is made out of wool broadcloth and is to be lined in wool flannel and silk taffeta. The Tailors would like to inform the public that beginning the week of the 12th of June, the Shop schedule will change: the Shop will be open Sundays, Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays.

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 – With the carry log project complete, Master Wheelwright Paul is working on dimensioning out a large piece of white oak for a plow for Farmer Ed. The large oak piece is going to be the plow's mouldboard, and its specific sloped shape will throw the soil to the side while being pulled behind a horse. The mouldboard will eventually be sheathed in iron by the Anderson Blacksmiths when Paul completes the wooden assembly. Apprentice Joel has repaired an older wheel stool by shoring up its legs using some planed oak billets and some nails (thank you Smiths!). This piece of kit will come in handy for installing the fellies of his hand cart wheels, and any other future wheel projects. Apprentice Murphy is working on the last few pieces of oak for his handcart body.

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

Wigmaker – The Wig Shop hopes this finds everyone in good spirits! This week, Edith will continue to work on the hand knotted base that she plans to utilize for Mr. Jefferson's new wig. Once we meet with him, we will determine the color and style that will best suit him, and she will begin to pattern out the caul (base). Benton and Debbie have begun making a caul for a Brigadier General wig, to be displayed in the Shop. This

will be Benton's first large-scale project. Maintenance continues even though the temperatures have been much more tolerable lately. As usual, don't hesitate to reach out with 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: Armoury – Owen Kelsey (Blacksmith) and Joel Andersen (Tinsmith), Brickmaker – Madeleine Bolton, Anthony Hay Shop – John Peeler (Cabinetmaker), Carpenter – Matt Sanbury, Colonial Garden – Marc Nucup, Foundry - Drew Godzik, Historic Farming – Ed Schultz, Music – Kyle Collins, Public Leather Works – Jan Tilley, Shoemaker – Val Povinelli, Silversmith – Megan Cantwell, Tailor – Michael McCarty, Wheelwright – Joel Morris, Wigmaker – Debbie Turpin