

THE MECHANICK'S ADVISER

July 9, 2022

Anthony Hay Shop:

Cabinetmaker – In the last few weeks, John and Jeremy have really been rounding the bend on their desk and bookcase, though they still have some woodwork to do. Jeremy has spent a lot of recent time working on the fall-front writing surface, which will have a sheet of leather glued to the inside. John is close to finishing his dining table, only needing the drop-leaf hinges from the Blacksmiths to finish off the project. In the meantime, he has completed a good bit of work on his next project, a tilting-top tea table. He has the main column turned and is now working on joining the legs to the column. Bill has put the final coat of wax on his Lodge 6 Masonic Chair carving, which will be up for sale soon.



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 – It has been another busy week in the smithy, with tools seeming to be the theme. Mark works on swords still, with two blades forged comes the careful work of fitting guards and handles, then will come grinding. Aislinn is assembling slide bolts and doing the final truing passes on a square, with calibrations for work which needs to be accurate. Alex has begun on axes and has finished a pair of rule head dividers, for work which needs to be precise. Broadus wraps up some blades, a drawknife and a billhook, both ground and fitted with turned handles. Owen has taken to spits as fellow Alex did not long before, though in this case for a pocket sized oven. And finally, our Intern Josh has made for himself his own forging hammer, as every good smith must do. As always, all's well that falls well at the base of the anvil.



Mark's bench



Aislinn's bench



Axe and compass



Billhook and drawknife



Spit



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 the combined efforts of the crew to both create a temporary structure for sun dried bricks and aid the Carpenters. With space dwindling in the Carpenter's saw house as the days go by, we've returned to what we do best - improvising! First, we raised some locust posts to rig up a tarp. Later, the bottom was paved to create a flat, even surface to stack on. All the while, we visited with Journeyman Matthew 'Matt' Sanbury, who was wrangling with the site work for our new building. As we make more bricks, they must go somewhere, so we've started taking our stacks to the maximum height we are comfortable with. In doing so, Apprentice Nick and one of our new Casuals, Hugh, discovered the sacred rites of the bricks. We have yet to uncover their meaning, but with seven thousand bricks stacked and many more to come, I'm sure we will get there.



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

Carpenter – This week in the Carpenters Yard, we have finished all the site work that is needed for the Brickyard drying house. Now that the holes are all done and inspected by the city, we can move on to prep the frame for raising. We will have the front and back walls assembled and ready for the raising on Tuesday morning. If you want to participate in the raising or see it go up, be at the Brickyard on Tuesday, July 12th, at 10 am. We hope to have the majority of the frame up on Tuesday.



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

Colonial Garden – The heat has not slowed activities in the Historic Garden. Summer chores are well underway. Apprentice Marc directed Interns Kira and Andrew in two projects this week. First, the melon frames were papered and oiled for placement within the Garden. This structure prevents the melon plants from taking up too much water - making the fruit less sweet - as well as protecting the melons from potential damage from the sun. The second project saw creation of experimental trellises for the potted tuberoses

(*Agave amica*) based off a 1736 engraving of a French gardener. We shall see how all the constructs fare though the summer.



Marc supervises Andrew as paper is applied to the melon frame. Kira paints linseed oil onto the paper, making it water resistant.



Detail from *L'odorat* by Jacques Philippe Le Bas.



Andrew and Kira building a trellis from Marc's suspect design.

The depredations of multiple *Sylvilagus floridanus* have struck the Garden this week, and the damage is beginning to accumulate. Cypress vine, salsify, sweet potatoes, and sunflowers have all felt the sharp teeth of our unwanted pests.



A rabbit boldly sitting in the Historic Garden
Department of Historic Trades and Skills



Nibbled *Ipomoea quamoclit*



Noshed *Scorzonera hispanica*



Gnawed *Ipomoea batatas*



Decapitated *Helianthus annuus*



But, to end on a happier note, the safflower (*Carthamus tinctorius*) is blooming!

The Colonial Garden will be open Daily, weather permitting.

Cooper – The Coopers recently welcomed a new Apprentice, Jacqueline, to the Shop. Current projects include some new tubs for the Weavers.

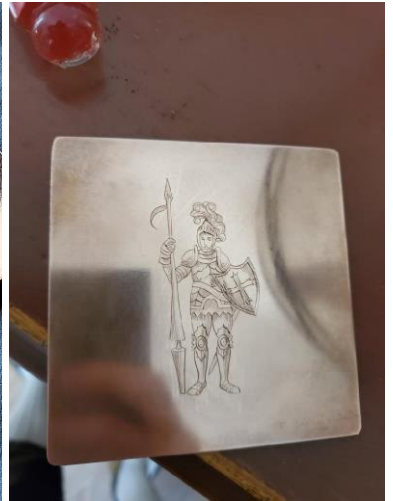
The Cooper Shop will be open Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Saturday.

Engraver – This week, we would like to share several things going on in the Shop. William has returned from his gun engraving class with new skills in sharpening, tool construction, and cutting with a chasing (hammering technique). He will be using this method, not often, but on some silver and brass items, for sure. He has also completed an ornamental engraving in copper. Today, he is working on some trade silver for the Silversmiths.

Erica has mostly completed her leaf engraving. The next step is to print it and see how it reads. Now, she is starting a new drawing for a possible engraving in the future.

Everyone in the Shop has had an opportunity this week to take a field trip over to the Farm and talk tobacco with Ed. We did some on-site sketches of plants and parts of plants. This was to build skill, drawing from life, and planning for a future botanical print of tobacco!

I am very happy to say how much I enjoy these folks in the Shop and our co-Tradesmen. We have some wonderful discussions on art (all forms) and how it reflects in every area of 18th-century life, its value to our research, and in our interpretations today. I am so pleased with their positive attitudes about what we do and why we do it, as well as their helpfulness lately with looking after each other with recent sicknesses and needs to be absent.



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 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 – The tobacco is doing excellent this year. All the topping has been finished, to put the energy of the plant towards its leaves rather than seed. With this done, the plant puts out suckers, which are new growth coming where the main leaves join with the stalk. All suckers must be broken out and cast away to put the energy where the money is. It's all about the leaf!

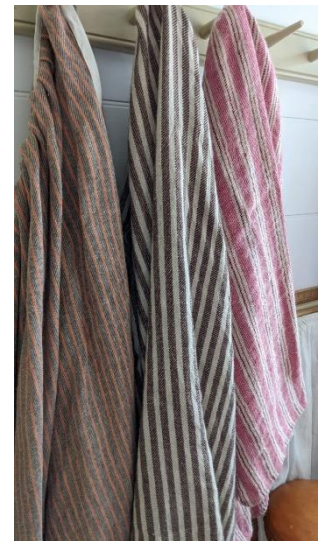


Farming Volunteer Mike Cecere removes suckers.

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

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

Milliner and Mantua-maker – This week, we have been making petticoats and bedgowns. The bedgowns are for summer wear. The petticoats are linsey woolsey from the Weavers' looms, with the wools dyed in the dye pots out in the Weaver's yard. Janea spun the wool for the pink petticoat. Yes, we are making wool petticoats in July, but we are planning for Winter.



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

Music – Greetings from the Governor’s Musick! Last week, we were not able to perform *The Lanier Family* due to problems with the Capitol Building, but it’s been going well. Last time, we played to a full house. Our *Phillis Wheatley and the Music of Freedom* program was also very well received. It only had two runs this year, but we hope to present it again in the future. The *Pleasure Gardens* program was rained out two weeks ago, but the weather held out for us last night. The audience enthusiastically joined in for a round and for the refrain of “Lass of Richmond Hill.”

Brady is basking in the glow of having given his presentation on Isaac Bickerstaff on Wednesday, July 6th, as part of the GSD Committee's "Pride Not Prejudice" Hennage events. He spent much of the past week taking notes, writing the speech, and pulling together visual materials (18th-century newspaper clippings, etc.) for a PowerPoint display. Happy to report that the entire Governor's Musick will be participating in a lecture/music version of this program in October - stay tuned!

Kyle’s *Harpsichord Battle Sonatas* program premiered at the Hennage this week. His research has turned up some wonderful gems that, even if they don’t make it into his Hennage program, will definitely appear in future programming.

Jenny’s *Catches and Glee*s program premieres next week at the Hennage. Already knowledgeable about the Catch Club culture in England and America, her research for this program has also turned up a lot of interesting (sometimes odd) facts. The music is fun, too!

Karol is working on her *Mind the Music and the Step* program, to be featured in a “Trades Tuesday” Livestream on August 9th. There’s so much written (and a lot of disagreement) on *Yankee Doodle*, and so many broadside and newspaper songs, that winnowing things down will be her biggest problem.

Health and happiness to all.

Printer and Bookbinder:

Printing Office – The Printing Office will be open Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday (11:30-5:00), and Saturday. On Tuesday, July 12th, at 4:30 pm in the Hennage Auditorium, the Printers will present “An Overview of the Printing Office.” Join Peter Stinely as he shares his forty years at the Letter Press through pictures and recollections.

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

Public Leather Works – The Public Leather Works is pleased to welcome Italia Gorski to the Shop as a Summer Intern. Italia is jumping into her position with both feet. Though she is new to the Historic Area, she is no stranger to Williamsburg, having graduated from the University of St Andrews and College of William & Mary Joint Degree Programme.



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

Shoemaker – The Shoemakers have been chipping away at our repairs list in earnest. New Apprentice Victoria is making excellent progress with sewing uppers and will soon start her first pair of slippers. Nicole is continuing with the fine work part of her apprenticeship with sewn rands and will progress to stitched rands on a pair of square toed shoes based on a pair found at the Brafferton School. Val has refurbished a pair of boots for Bryan Austin in addition to other repairs and is starting a pair of common shoes for Steve Delisle. Our first three Family Workshops were well attended. Family Workshops will continue to be held on Mondays this summer. Behind the scenes, Val has been finishing online trainings. Nicole has been catching up on readings and is revising her Hennage Talk. Victoria has given three Hennage presentations for the GSD Committee, with a few more coming up this week.

The Shoe Shop would like to wish Joel Anderson *Bon voyage!* and thank him for all the research he’s shared with us on government workshops during the Revolution.

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

Silversmith – Work continues in the Golden Ball as the sound of files, saws, and hammers fill the air. Tam is soldering her copper rings and piercing 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. Chris is working on chasing in the silver tray body before soldering the rim to the piece and is also making silver rings for the Shop. Bobbie is filing silver feet for her tray and working on trade silver for the Store. George has been working on the gold mote spoon and the ingot for silver tea spoons. Reading continues on trade silver and jewelry.



Tam’s copper rings and letter charms



Chris’ silver rings



The early stages of two silver Gurney bowls:
Preston's is on the left and Megan's on the right.



Chris' tray in front with the soldered rim at back

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 – Joe's tartan is complete, approximately 18 yards of beautiful wool and silk! Soon, it will head down to the Tailors so they can use it to replicate a men's wrapping gown in our collection. We can't wait to see the end result! Pamela's log cabin check is nearly done, as well, and both looms will be loaded up with twelve yards of cotton dimity, a solid colored, textured fabric. Each loom will have its own pattern, so look for those photos coming soon!

The Weaving Shop will be open Tuesday through Saturday.

Wheelwright – Painting and repairs galore at the Deane as of late. The Apprentices completed the Garden's barrow repair the last week of June. Murphy replaced the flooring, paneling, and nails, while Joel finished the new standard and its joints. The Apprentices opted to try making a sage green paint, a pigment mixture of thirty parts yellow ochre, eight parts zinc oxide white, and one-part Prussian blue. Two coats of sage later, the barrow is back at the Garden. Another repair project came to the Shop on Independence Day: a blue handcart of CW's Military Programing. Master Wheelwright Paul will be repairing and replacing parts in the coming weeks. In other news, the Shop is wrapping up the hay cart project for Coach and Livestock, giving it coats of an earth-based Spanish Brown paint. The Apprentices are also making headway on their handcart, with Paul instructing Joel on the construction of his first pair of wheels, now that his hubs have been turned. Research this week includes Joel reading through the day books of brothers William and George Hunter, who run a Coachmaking firm in late 18th-century Philadelphia, and Murphy looking into sources regarding lathe technology at the Rockefeller Library.



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

Wigmaker – Greetings from the Wig Shop. This past week, Debbie, Benton, and Lexie continued to forge ahead without Edith. Edith quickly discovered upon her arrival home from the Big Apple that she brought back with her more than just souvenirs and has stayed at home ever since. We look forward to her return next week, hopefully. Benton continues to work on his Brigadier's wig. After stitching the netting to his outline tape, he cut down and filed some brass stays, covered them in twill tape, and stitched them to the temple and nape areas of the wig. Benton would like to thank Silversmith Preston for his generous loan of the file utilized for this important task. By filing the edges of the stays where he removed the pointed ends, he has ensured that they will not begin to poke through their twill pajamas, as Benton has taken to calling them. The stays, once in place, will allow a wearer to make adjustments at the areas that tend to be more rounded, for a closer fit. He has also been separating lighter horsehair from the darker hair that he wants to utilize. Debbie's work on the demo base for display continues. The outline tape is now laced into place, and the seemingly never-ending process of hand knotting continues. Lexie has begun to learn the combing and washing techniques needed to best maintain the wigs and continues to weave on her hairpiece. As always, feel free to reach out with any tonsorial needs, no matter how small or large.

Department of Historic Trades and Skills

Volume 8, Issue 25



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: Anthony Hay Shop – John Peeler (Cabinetmaker), Armoury – Broadus Thompson (Blacksmith), Brickmaker – Madeleine Bolton, Carpenter – Matt Sanbury, Colonial Garden – Marc Nucup, Cooper – Jon Hallman, Engraver – Lynn Zelesnikar, Milliner and Mantua-maker – Janea Whitacre, Music – Karol Steadman, Public Leather Works – Jay Howlett, Shoemaker - Nicole Boileau, Silversmith – Megan Cantwell, Weaving, Spinning, and Dyeing – Annie Buss, Wheelwright – Joel Morris, Wigmaker – Debbie Turpin