

THE MECHANICK'S ADVISER

September 15, 2023

Apothecary – We have been excited to welcome Olivia, our NIAHD fall 2023 student, for the past two weeks! Alongside the regular shop curriculum, she'll work with Dr. Galt's 1780-82 ledger to decode treatments that Galt gave during the war. Stephannie has made a compound testaceous powder (antacid, with chalk and oyster shell) and a decoction & infusion of Peruvian bark (antimalarial, among other things!) Sharon completed her full statistical analysis of Galt-Barraud daybooks 1 and 2, and Margaret completed a chart comparing Public Hospital entries in the daybooks versus ledgers.

Stephannie's compounded medicines: a white, chalky compound testaceous powder and a dark brown infusion of Peruvian bark with mild sediment at the bottom.



The Apothecary is open Sunday through Thursday.

Blacksmith – This week in the Anderson Blacksmith shop, Ken has been working on claw hammers and a tinsmith's rounding hammer. Mark has been finishing paring knives for the kitchen and spoon bits for the carpenters and working on a bracket. Aislinn has been working on her fire tongs and sharpening pinking irons. In apprentice land, H-L hinges are still at the top of the list, with Ken teaching the apprentices. Alex has also finished a dozen framing chisels for the carpenters, Broadus has started a fireplace shovel for Mt. Vernon, and Josh has made some corner braces for a sand box going to the brickyard. As ever, all's well that falls well at the foot of the anvil.



An H-L hinge, a pinking iron, and a spoon bit for a brace.

The Blacksmith shop is open Thursday through Tuesday.

Bookbinder – The Bookbinder is open Tuesday through Saturday.

Cabinetmaker –The Cabinetmaker is open Thursday through Monday.

Carpenter – We have been focusing on the gates at Ewing Field these past couple of weeks. The Blacksmiths made the hardware, and we mounted the hardware and installed the gates. One pair remains to be installed but needed extra utility marking before the posts could go in. Harold and Shelby did a great job on the three around the windmill.



The completed Wagon shed. The single gate hung by Shelby. The double gate hung by Harold and Shelby.

The Carpenter is open, weather permitting, Sunday through Tuesday, Friday, and Saturday.

Cook – Since launching into the Fall season, the kitchen has changed to be open Friday through Tuesday at the Palace Kitchen. We also had the first of our fall chocolate programs, which will be on the first Monday of the month from 9-noon. After the program, we had some lucrative research time, where Dom and Abbey continued their training presentation on dining at the Governor's dinner table. At the same time, Barbra worked on her presentation on herbs for the conference in November.



Crab Pie was made earlier last week in the cooler weather.

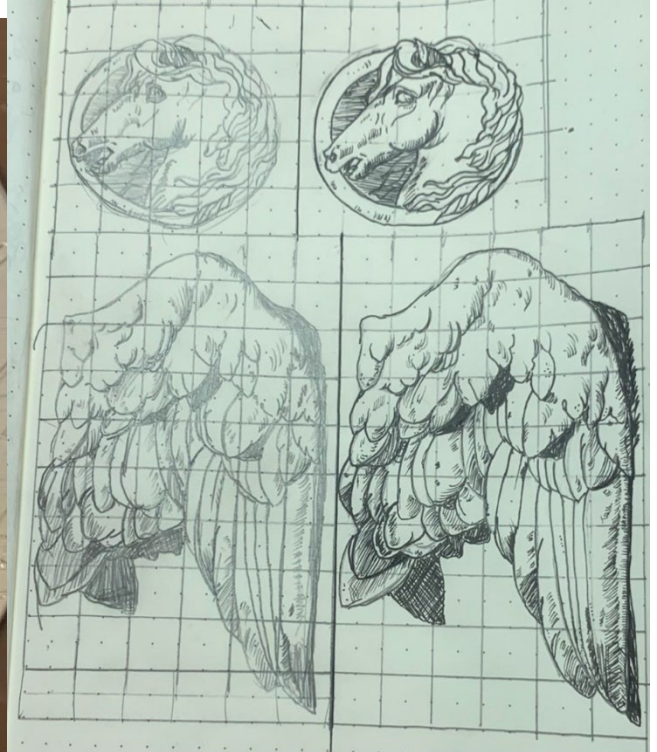
The Palace Kitchen is open Sunday through Tuesday, Friday, and Saturday.

Department of Historic Trades and Skills

Volume 9, Issue 32

Cooper – The Cooper is open Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday.

Engraver – The Engravers this week have been working on apprenticeship projects and exercises as well as continuing silver medals for the Brafferton Indian school project. Also, the print for the Wheelwrights trip gifts is nearly done.



Top: Apprentice work.

Bottom: Brafferton engraving (less than 3/4" tall), Wheelwright Print

The Engraving shop is open Sunday, Monday, and Wednesday through Saturday.

Farming – The soil at Ewing Field will need to be improved annually over the next five years. Today was the first application of compost since the original work in February 2023. Check out the black gold in the photo. Meanwhile, Ed was in Pennsylvania at the Landis Valley Farm and Museum looking at plows in their collection last week. In other news--- we are so grateful for the shed that the Carpenters recently completed at the site! It will provide much-needed shade for us and guests and serve as a workspace.



Compost on Ewing Field.

Looking at the details of a plow.

The Farming Trade is open at Ewing Field Tuesday through Saturday, weather permitting.

Fifes and Drums – The Fifes and Drums will perform Wednesday through Friday at 4:40 pm in Market Square, Saturday at 12:30 pm starting at the Capitol and marching to the Palace, and Saturday at 1 pm on the Play House Stage.

Founder – The Foundry is open Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday.

Gardener – The Historic Gardeners have been busy the last two weeks removing plants from the garden that are no longer producing to make way for our fall seedlings. One of the plants we pulled up was cockscomb (*Celosia argentea* var. *cristata*). If properly dried, its colorful flowers can be saved for decoration indoors. In a letter to John Custis IV of Williamsburg, English botanist Peter Collinson describes the process for a similar flower, "Gathered in full flower and hung up with the heads downwards, will keep their Colour for many years." In a very exciting update to the caterpillars described for you two weeks ago, the Gardeners are thrilled to report that a chrysalis of the monarch caterpillar was found on our milkweed (*Asclepias syriaca*).



Left: Cockscomb flowers hanging up to dry at the Historic Garden.

Right: The chrysalis of the monarch butterfly on a milkweed plant.

The Historic Garden is open Daily, weather permitting.

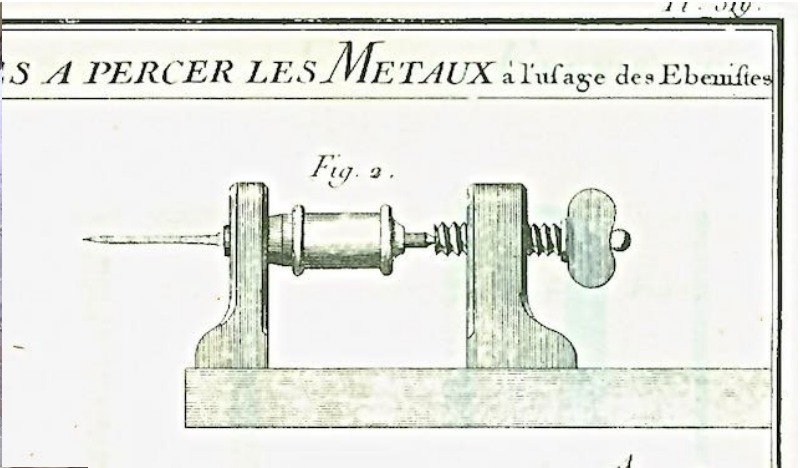
Gunsmith – This last week in the Gunsmith shop was very exciting with the completion and delivery of the latest rifle. The customer and his sons came to our shop to take delivery of it and by their reaction, very happy indeed.



The finished rifle.

The Gunsmiths are open Sunday, Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday.

Harpichordmaker – From the harpsichord corner... Melanie's keyboard has taken full character. The pearwood chromatic key blocks with the thin black caps will undergo a black dye. This is a very regular method of manufacture for those pieces. Ed has returned to the jacks, fitting the pivot tongues to the forks and drilling the axles on our little bow drill setup. The drill is patterned after one illustrated in Andre Jacob Roubo's woodworking treatise of 1772. There are lots of parts to a spinet's mechanics. Best to you all.



*Top: Bow Drill Based on Roubo 1772.
Bottom: Keyboard to Date by Melanie*

*Bow Drill Image from Roubo 1772.
Jacks Drilled for Axle Pins by Ed*

The Harpsichordmakers are open Sunday and Monday, Thursday through Saturday.

Joiner – The Joiner Shop is still feeling the departure of our friend and colleague Scott Krogh, who is moving to Alabama. Seven and a half years ago, Scott joined the shop with Amanda and Peter to become the first three apprentice joiners in CW history. This past winter, he and Peter became the first to complete that apprenticeship. His wisdom, knowledge, wit, work ethic, and kindness enriched the people around him. There wasn't a project that he was afraid to tackle, and that courage inspired the same quality in others. We will all miss Scott terribly. Please join us in wishing him and his family all the best for this next adventure that they have embarked upon.



Clockwise: Scott, Amanda, and Peter on their way to start learning to carve, 8/20/16

Scott with his completed Food Safe before it is delivered, 6/17/22

Scott and Peter receiving their Journeyman Papers, 3/8/23

Scott with his reconstruction of the Finney House mantelpiece, 8/30/23T

The Joiner is open Sunday and Wednesday through Saturday.

Department of Historic Trades and Skills

Volume 9, Issue 32

Leather Breeches Maker – Greetings!

We are asking all employees/volunteers who have been given a pair of leather breeches from the shop or Jay Howlett to bring those breeches to our shop so we can do inventory. We will mark, wash, and mend your breeches and get you on the maintenance schedule. You may also be asked to sign some paperwork if you still need to do so. Supervisors, please check that your current (and any former) reports bring their breeches in to be inventoried.

A-L last names, please drop your breeches off between Sept. 26th-30th
M-Z last names, please drop your breeches off between Oct. 10th-14th.

In other news, apprentice Wilson just finished his second pair of breeches, which were issued to Joe the Weaver!



Joe is sporting his new leather breeches.

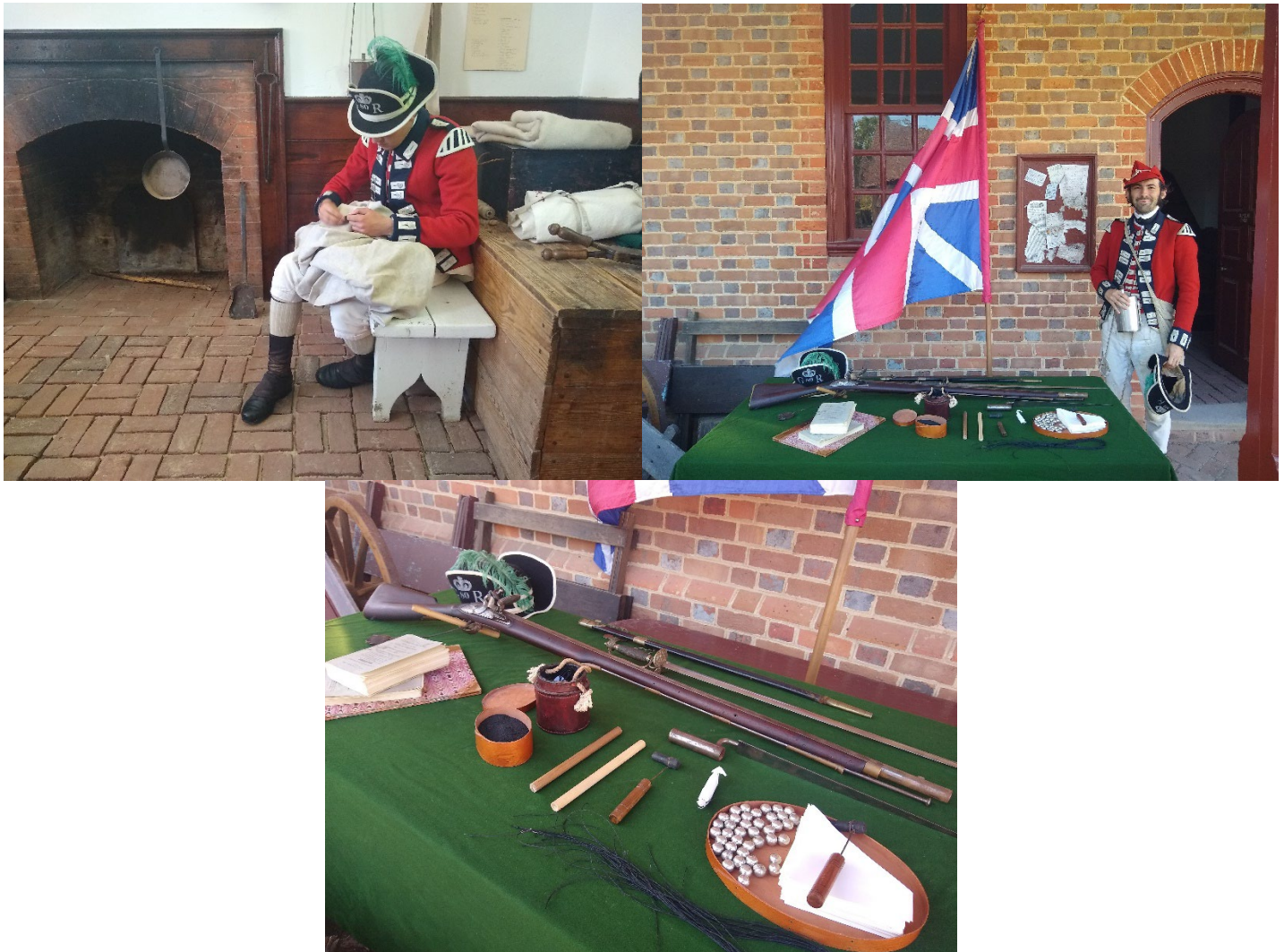
The Leather Breeches Maker is open Tuesday through Saturday.

Mason – The Brickyard is open Wednesday through Sunday, weather permitting.

Military Programs – Military Programs Staff continue working on research and curriculum projects, including finishing the 71st Highlander uniform hunting shirts and preparing for invited talks and archive visits in Philadelphia.

Additionally, Military Programs is developing and refining Homeschool Group Workshops over the next two weeks. Students learn about 18th-century military lifeways through participatory activities, including equipment interpretation, cartridge rolling, military drills, and bat-and-ball games. The workshop culminates with a fire demonstration of either the 3-pounder cannon or musket volley.

A big thank you to all our collaborative partner units (especially Weavers, Courthouse, Joiners, and Engravers) who have provided security for the daily cannon demonstrations!



Matthew works on sewing his hunting shirt, a curriculum and research development goal.

Kevin stands in front of the Guardhouse to welcome the student group.

A selection of military equipment, including cartridge rolling materials, for this week's student workshop.

Military Interpretation at the Guardhouse is open Daily.

Department of Historic Trades and Skills

Volume 9, Issue 32

Milliner and Mantua-maker – The Milliner and Mantua-maker are open Tuesday through Saturday.

Musket Range –The Musket Range is open (Sunday through Tuesday, Friday, and Saturday)

The Printing Office – The Press continues to work off copies of pages two and three of the main body of the current gazette. David Wilson is beginning the setting of the final page of the news supplement, which contains news from China taking 13 months to get to Williamsburg.

Typesetting begins this week on “An American Parody on the old song Rule Britannia.” A new volunteer from The College of William and Mary will set, proof, correct, and print this item while with us this Autumn. The song appeared in Pinkney’s gazette, its last two lines:

Rule Britannia, rule the waves,

We’re subjects, but we’re not your slaves.

The Printer is open Sundays through Thursdays.

Shoemaker – The Shoemaker is open Sunday, Monday, Wednesday, and Saturday.

Silversmith –The Silversmith Shop is open Sunday through Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday.

Tailor –Mr. Logue, Apprentice, got to photograph this waistcoat he made for Mr. Zelesnikar, Master Wheelwright. Made of mohair velvet and wool, it should be an excellent warming layer for this winter. Velvet with a mohair (hair from Angora goats) pile was a common choice for men's breeches in the 18th century, especially for servants and coachmen.

Master Wheelwright, Paul Zelesnikar

The Tailor is open Sunday through Thursday.



Tin Plate Worker – The Tin Plate Worker is open Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday.

Weaver, Spinner, and Dyer – The Weaver is open Sunday through Wednesday and Saturday.

Wheelwright –The Wheelwright is open Sunday through Friday.

Wigmaker – The Wigmakers are open Sunday through Thursday.

Director – Please join me in congratulating the following members of the Historic Trades and Skills Team for achieving their next career milestones:

Wilson LeCount, Leather Breeches Maker, has achieved Level Two in his apprenticeship.

Mary Lawrence Herbert, Carpenter, has achieved Level Three in her apprenticeship.

Benton Parker, Wigmaker, has achieved Level Three in his apprenticeship.

Pamela Russo, Weaver, Spinner, and Dyer, has achieved Level Three in her apprenticeship.

Tim Logue, Tailor, has achieved Level 4 in his apprenticeship.

Joe Wixted, Weaver, Spinner, and Dyer, has completed his apprenticeship and is now a Journeyman.

Ted will have open office hours: Monday 11-1, and Friday 2-4

As a reminder, my office is above the Weaver's Shop.

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

Editor: Ted Boscana

Contributors: Apothecary – Margaret Perry; Blacksmith – Alex Hinman; Carpenter –Matt Sanbury; Cook – Abbey Shoaf; Engraver – Lynn Zelesnikar; Farmer – Ed Schultz; Gardener – Teal Brooks; Gunsmith – Darrin McDonal; Harpsichordmaker – Ed Wright; Joiner – Peter Hudson; Leather Breeches Maker – Emma Cross; Printer – Peter Stinely; Tailor – Michael McCarty