

# THE MECHANICK'S ADVISER

## October 7, 2022

### Anthony Hay Shop:

**Cabinetmaker** – This past week, Bill has gotten the shaping work done on our small turning saws, and we have been experimenting with their use, along with the other curve-cutting saws in the Shop. John has been trying out the various saws in order to cut out some of the parts for his next project, a set of four side chairs. The original is a mahogany chair from the Tidewater of Virginia, possibly Petersburg or Portsmouth, though John will be making his of black walnut. A side chair like this will take at least forty hours per chair, and John is only a few hours into the process, but you have to start somewhere! Early work is getting the planks of walnut down to rough size, and with parts for four chairs, that can take a while. Jeremy is back from some professional development out of town, of which he will be writing next week. Lastly, Steve, one of our Volunteers, has completed work on a Shop toolchest for the Harpsichord-makers, which they will finish out with some coats of paint shortly. Much appreciated, Steve!



### **Harpsichord-maker** – From the Harpsichord corner...

Sara has been working with Ed on learning the skills for sawing veneer with our large veneer web. They successfully sawed sheets at 1/12 (the 18th-century standard), 1/16th, and 1/32. That last one was scary but satisfying. This checks off Sara's introduction to formal veneer and will prepare us all for our demos at the January Wood Conference on woodworking ornament. The lid moldings have been applied, and the lid shaped to its final outline. Work on drilling and preparing the lid brasses from the Foundry continues for their installation. All steady work. Come visit us, and we will update the details in person.



Lid curve refined to match the molding and case



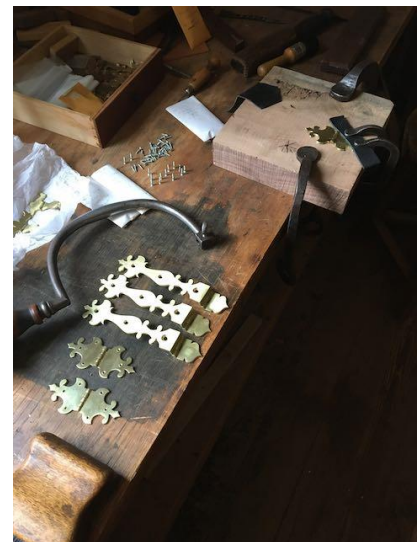
Lid molding profile corner



The Harpsichord corner at the Hay Shop



Veneer sawn at 1/32 inch with the veneer saw



Preparing lid brass hinges from Foundry

**The Cabinetmaker and Harpsichord-maker are open Daily.**

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

**Armoury:**

**Blacksmith** – This week, the Blacksmith's forge received some much-needed maintenance. The tuyere (a heavy nozzle which delivers an air blast to the coals) required replacing. Our tuyeres start out at twelve inches in length; the old one had burnt down to seven inches. With the fire in good order, the smiths are in good spirits. As for our production, Alex starts on the last of his broad hoes. Josh makes tongs to replace a much-worn pair of our own and works on some tiny hammers for the Tinsmiths. Broadus has made a forging hammer for his own use and carries on the filing of slide bolts. The Journeymen, Mark and Aislinn, work on some test pieces of a decorative sign bracket. Ken finished a pair of large HL hinges. As always, all's well that falls well at the base of the anvil.

**The Blacksmith Shop will be open Daily.**

**Tinsmith** – This week in the Tin Shop, both Jenny and Steve worked on cups of various sizes for Prentis Store. Steve sent out some private orders and continued to work on canteens. Jenny also finished painting spice boxes for a museum order and continued to work on her apprenticeship paper about the cost of tinware.

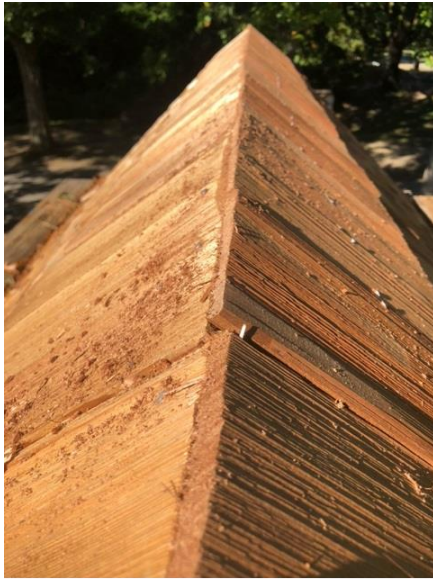
**The Tin Shop will be open Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday.**

**Brickmaker** – This week in the Brickyard, the crew experienced the ups and downs of this interesting October weather. Once the rainy atmosphere subsided, the unstacking and restacking continued, with none more excited than Sam "Sammy" Smith, as this was his last week. Apprentice Madeleine continues stacking the kiln, which is about a quarter of the way completed. With her dedicated crew of brick tossers - otherwise known as Nick, Josh, and Kenneth - they will make quick work of it. Otherwise, this week, Madeleine paid a visit to the Shoemakers for a handmade pair and bonus conversation from Victoria, Nicole, and Val. As always, if watching sand artfully fly in the air trailing a brick that had been tossed excites you, then the Brickyard is the place for you!



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

***Carpenter*** – This week in the Carpenter's Yard, we had a bit of a delay getting back on the roof. That storm definitely slowed our progress on finishing the peak of the roof. We're very happy with how the roof held up even though it wasn't completed. We are currently putting the last few courses over the peak. To get a good fit, we saw the shingles flush with the other face and plane them down to fit, then lay the next course. No flashing should be needed. The last course sits proudly by a few inches to complete the comb. This means five courses of shingles will overlap the peak without issue to make a waterproof seal.



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

***Colonial Garden*** – This week found the Gardeners dodging the rain and wishing for sunshine. Bands of wind and rain from Ian closed us for one day, which allowed us to focus on tomatoes and eggplant. At this time, no one has found documentation of a tomato in Africa before the 19th century. We found one updated research paper that might change that date. Interlibrary loan will deliver a book on African vegetables, which we hope will verify the finding. As for the eggplant, we gaze at our African "eggplant" in its overripe state and postulate whether it is too ripe to eat and who will be the one to find out. Dom from Foodways took one of the eggplants to batter and fry, and two Gardeners have decided to follow suit. Another reason to catch next week's news from the Garden!

Fall is upon us and with that, most of the greens (kale, collards, etc.) are in, and when the beds dry out, we will be planting lettuce. The lettuce has germinated, seedlings potted up and waiting for the right time to place in the Garden. A cool snap reminded us that the firepit should be built in the coming weeks. To the Palace Kitchen, we sent some beautiful Round Black Spanish radishes as well as a long-rooted radish, sorrel, bullnose peppers, potatoes, onion, and lima beans.

Miss Barbara's basket was filled to the top. Sweet potatoes and peanuts are looking like it is time to dig them up, and the pole beans finally finished for the season. The lima beans are going



Round Black Spanish radish

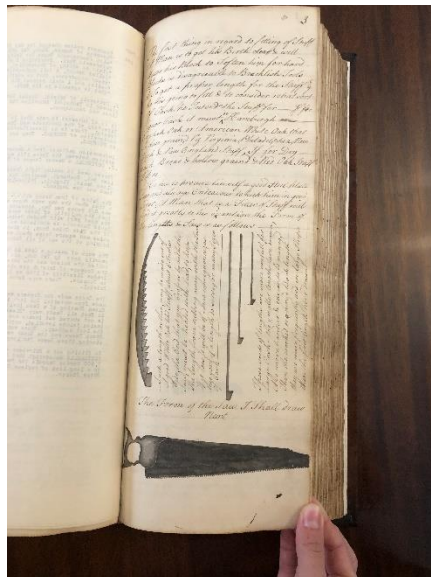
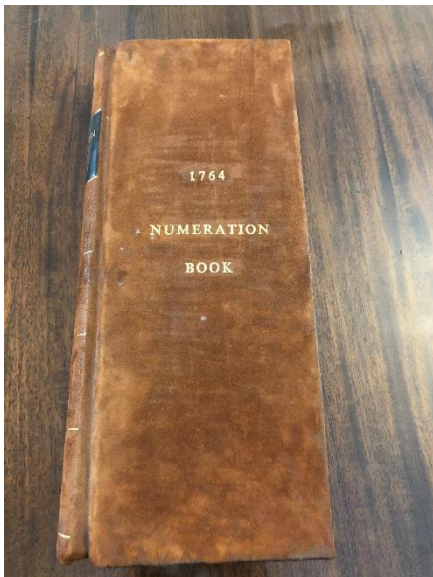
strong and will still produce another round of beans that, depending on the weather, we will pick for fresh limas or allow the pods to dry and have a good supply of seed. We were pleased with the harvest as it outdid previous varieties. Red Calico is the variety planted this year. Planning for next year is on our minds, as well as seed inventory, yard cleanup, and yes, the weeds continue.



The contents of Miss Barbara's basket

**The Colonial Garden will be open Daily, weather permitting.**

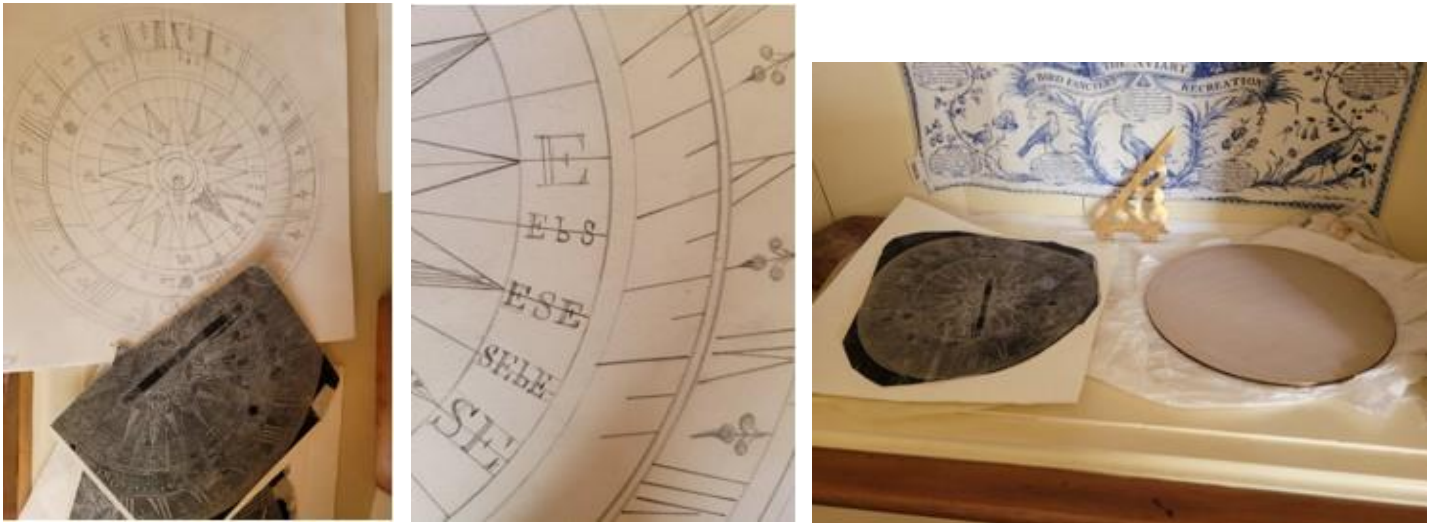
**Cooper** – Below are a few pictures of the 18th-century treatise on coopering that we have been working on transcribing. The research trip to England that allowed members of the Shop's company to view and take pictures of this book was made possible by the generosity of donors to Colonial Williamsburg.



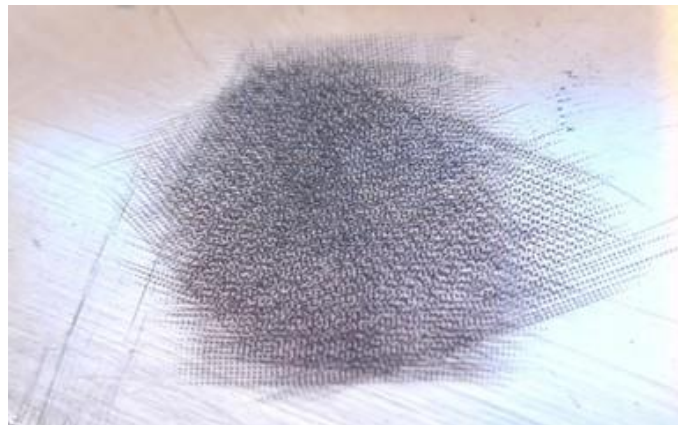
(Specifically, Bonnie and Harry were able to travel to England by making use of money from the Gonzales Fund.)

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

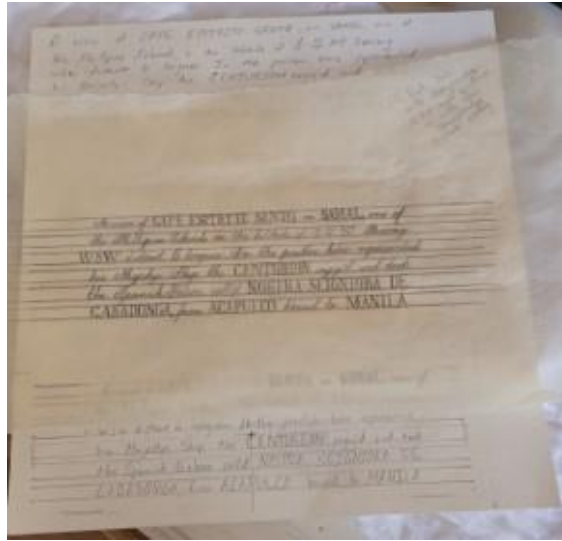
**Engraver** – Here you can see the sundial project. Lynn has been drawing out the dial's details. This will be an ongoing project through the fall.



This past week, we finally received two Mezzotint tools we have been waiting for! Lynn and William will be exploring this engraving technique this winter. As we progress with it, we will share the process. It is very different than the intaglio or Burin cut engravings we normally do.



Below, you can see William's ongoing copper plate of the ships. The last two weeks have been spent tackling the setup of the inscription. Inscription is not easy. The layout of this kind of engraving subject is all about centering and counting off the lettering correctly. His next step is to reverse the lettering and transfer it to the plate.



Lynn has finished her depiction of the Crucifixion of Christ and will be test printing over the weekend. The engraving took approximately ten hours.



We have also this week received a long-awaited book. It is a reproduction of a treatise on watercolour paints, *Treatise on the Colors used to Paint with Water* by A. Boogerts (Dutch), 1692. We will be studying it closer to hopefully get a better eye on colour when we watercolour our prints. We will be sharing this book with other Trade Shops in town.



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

***Fifes and Drums*** - Now that our 2022 graduates have moved on, we are busy working hard, passing Junior Corps members up into the Senior Corps. We would like to welcome our latest Senior Corps members, Emily Reynolds and Jake Duffy! They finished their requirements this week, and we look forward to seeing them in a red regimental. We would like to also congratulate our most-recent Recruit hired into the Junior Corps, which was long overdue, Eomer Knecht! Our Recruit class from the Spring is moving along nicely, and we are ready to welcome our new Recruit class who start this Saturday, October 8th. Two Recruit classes is unprecedented in recent decades and is a first to happen in this century. We wish them much success and look forward to seeing them join the Senior Corps in 2026-27, if all goes well.

***Foodways*** – This week at the Kitchen, Barbara, Dom, and Abbey did their first solo brewing without Frank, while he enjoyed some R&R. Despite the nerves of attempting a successful brew alone, the team had a smooth brew day, and the pale ale is fermenting happily away in the Laundry. We will be bottling the first brew of the fall, an old mum, in the coming weeks. With the gloomy weather of the week, the Kitchen also decided to make some chocolate on Monday as a surprise treat for the folks who were out in the rain. There has also been a new, but familiar, face in the Kitchen this week. Doris, who has been a Volunteer at CW for some time in other capacities, has just started volunteering at the Palace Kitchen and already tried her hands at Chelsea Buns and Bath Buns under Barbara's tutelage. She and Barbara will be down at the Anderson Armoury Kitchen on Wednesday of this coming week.

**The Historic Foodways staff will be in the Palace Kitchen Sunday through Thursday.**

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

***Gunsmith*** – The Gunsmiths have been moving along on their projects in between the high volume of wonderful Guests each day. Richard has made a full set of wood screws to replace the temporary screws on his patch box and finished up the box lid release mechanism. Darrin has the two pistol locks completed besides the heat treatment of the springs and case hardening the remaining parts. Darrin also carved a





casting pattern from boxwood for the pistol grips. Study material lately has been *Diderot Pictorial Encyclopedias* and *The Birmingham Gun Trade*.



**The Gunsmith Shop will be open Sunday, Monday, Wednesday, and Saturday.**

***Historic Farming*** – Several Trades and Departments have been working together for months to produce a “hogshead carrier”, and it all came together last Tuesday for a Livestream video shoot. Hogsheads full of tobacco were required to be taken to the government warehouse along creeks and rivers to be inspected for quality. Many rolled them by hand. Some farmers living further away used this carrier system to move it by horse. The Historic Trades’ Coopers made the hogshead; the Wheelwrights provided the shafts and bracing; and the Farmers worked with Dan Hard of the Coach and Livestock Department to train Gunner the horse. We based this all from a drawing in William Tatham’s treatise on tobacco published in Department of Historic Trades and Skills



1800. The illustration was not very clear, so adjustments will need to be made for this first-generation copy. This is the fun stuff!



Our first-generation copy

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

*Joinery* – Hello from the Joiner Shop! We are pushing forward with our current projects. Scott is almost finished with planing out stock for the framework of his corner cupboard. Within the month, he'll start the assembly of the piece by attaching the back vertical boards to the shelving. We just need to find him enough space to assemble this seven-foot-tall cupboard. Peter pulled yellow pine for his vaulted portico from Menokin. He continues shaping one of the curved stiles for the framing. Laura finished the frame and panel she built as part of her apprenticeship. The frame is made of yellow pine and assembled with mortise and tenon joints. The panel is poplar and is beveled to fit into a groove. Congratulations and good work!



On the last study trip to the Rolfe-Warren House at Smith's Fort, Brian noticed something interesting about the construction of the Dentil moulding on the cornice. For a quick refresher, Dentils are defined by *The*

*Builder's Dictionary* as, "an ornament in Corniches bearing some resemblance to teeth." The picture below shows the details Scott made for his fireplace surround.



Scott created his dentil moulding based on the sample shown below. As each tooth is sawn out, a strip of wood is left connecting them.



However, for the moulding cornice at the Rolfe-Warren House, every single tooth is a separate piece nailed in place. A rebate, or notch, is planed into the back that allows it to sit around a continuous strip of wood.





Detail showing the nails and the notching

What would be the advantage or disadvantage to these two different approaches? Which is more efficient? The only way to tell is to try it.

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

***Military Programs*** – Military Programs staff have been busy these past couple months working on a multitude of projects and research goals, as well as sending Tom, Alex, and Kevin to The Frontier Culture Museum to talk about State soldiers and British prisoners of war, pictures to follow. Alex will also be attending another event on behalf of the Museum in November at Fort Mifflin to act as a guest speaker on the defenses of the Delaware River and the role military engineers played in the defense of the river and Philadelphia. Ren continues to work on their 71st Regiment of Foot impression with Michael Ramsey after attending a workshop, through a Professional Development Grant, at the John C. Campbell Folk School on kilt production. Josh has received new flag poles, two of which have mounted the colors of the 80th Regiment of Foot and the other two to eventually mount the colors of the Gatinois Regiment, an impression we are working towards in the coming years. We continue to work towards a Trades ladder.





**Military Interpretation at the Guardhouse is open Daily, Sunday to Friday is 9:00-5:00, and Saturday is 11:30-5:00. Although specific Military programming will no longer be advertised, the following will still occur: “Military Activities” at 10am Daily will consist of either a public drill or our new recruiting program. At 2pm each day, we will have our “Discussion of Military Topics”, where one of our staff members will be discussing a subject of military history and answer questions from the Guests. Musket demonstrations are generally dependent on staff numbers for that day, but typically between 11am and 4pm. On Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, we will be doing an infantry demonstration at 4:20pm for our “Necessity of Order in Battle” program. We are not doing cannon demonstrations at the present time.**

*Milliner and Mantua-maker* – Last Monday saw the culmination of our summer “Gown in a Day” project, with all three gowns complete and modeled with millinery appropriate to their respective decades. Edith did (yet another) incredible job dressing hair and even stepped in as photographer so that we could document the finished products. The Guests were intrigued by the matching fabric and fascinated to learn that in theory it was, in fact, the “same” ten-yard piece of fabric transformed three times over from 1774 to 1784 to 1810.

Last weekend, we had the pleasure once more of Miss Jeanne’s company as we brought out the embroidery for our monthly program on “fancy work.” Janea’s embroidered petticoat border is nearing completion; its oranges, golds, and purples were perfectly in keeping with the fall weather and beautifully showcased the dying prowess of our



Weavers/Dyers. Joey from CDC was also able to join us for a day to get in some stitching practice. He's beginning work on a linen pocket reproduced from an extant piece in our collection and will use his newfound skills to develop and create new accessories to be issued for use across the Historic Area.



We received a bundle of wood splints from Basketmaker Robert this week, which means we're now able to move towards the final stages on our new pairs of stays. Many thanks to him for taking the time to prepare the precious material for us. It has turned out to be nearly impossible to find an equivalent on the modern market, so we're very grateful to have a colleague with the skill to make it here. Kate has begun whittling and sanding the pieces to fit her boning channels and has already finished the two front panels. Just ten more to go!



Rebecca, meanwhile, continues work on the two cloaks for CDC. One has been assembled and is ready for its trim, while the other is in the process of being pieced before its hood can be stitched to the body. The trim on the original in our collection is a red silk that encases the front edges of the hood and the body. The Museum

of Fine Arts in Boston owns a similarly shaped cloak with the same style of trim in black, so the second cloak will feature that alternate colorway.



Our research time has been focused on preparations for our Hennage program on November 2nd. “Lives Stitched Together” will explore the community of women who lived and worked side by side on Margaret Hunter’s property. We’re going to share our journey through the archives as we’ve sought out the stories of Agga, Jenny, Milly, and Sall, the women enslaved by Hunter, and discuss the various sources we’ve used to try to puzzle together their relationships, their skills, and some of the details of their daily lives.

**The Milliner and Mantua-maker will be open Sunday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday.**

*Music* – Greetings from The Governor’s Musick! We are in the thick of planning this year’s Holiday programming at the Palace, the Capitol, and the Raleigh Tavern. Our current Palace series, on music sold at the Williamsburg Post Office, runs through October. In November, we begin our concert series featuring famous composers whose families wanted them to be lawyers, not musicians. (Sound familiar to anyone?) Brady’s Hennage program on Isaac Bickerstaff is appearing at the Hennage on Friday, and we begin a new Raleigh Tavern program on Wednesday about the Virginia gentry - how they came by their wealth, and their most popular diversions.

*Musket Range* – The Musket Range has been busy taking care of training with the good folks of Military Programs, adding to the available staff who can help us out in a pinch. We are also in the planning stages for potentially undertaking berm work over the winter, possibly including lead removal for the first time.

### *Printer and Bookbinder:*

*Printing Office* – This past Tuesday was cold and wet, making it the first day using the fireplace for this Autumn. The fireplace draws well, but we need to contract for some firewood and acquire new replacement flints.

Press work continues for “Every Man his own Doctor.” We have need of 1500 half sheets from two forms, and the printing will be complete. We also will sort, fold, and gather the sections. During the winter, we usually stitch and trim the books we plan on offering to Mr. Prentis’ Store for sale to the public. Bound copies can be made by the Bookbinders upon request.



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

*Bindery* – Over the past several weeks, the Bookbinders have been diligently working on books and other items for Apprentices and Shops around the Historic Area. These include a goodly quantity of paste-books, several bound quartos, paste-paper folders, and other odds and ends. They also are excited to wish Barbara Swanson-Lasley a hearty congratulations upon her recent marriage to Nat Lasley, and trust that the newlyweds are enjoying their honeymoon in Hawaii!



**The Bookbindery will be open Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday.**

*Public Leather Works* – Greetings once again from your friends at the Public Leather Works. We are very excited that the weather has started reflecting the season. We are also very excited about the changes on our horizon. In twelve short weeks, the Public Leather Works will be no more! Rising phoenix-like from its (metaphorical) ashes will be the Leather Breeches Shop!!! So, if there is anything you may require from the Shop (not counting leather breeches), please let us know ASAP.

Update on the Apple Cider versus Pumpkin Spice face off:

Apple Cider - 1

Pumpkin Spice - 0

Get your votes in to [itilly@cwf.org](mailto:itilly@cwf.org) to determine which will reign supreme for the fall season!



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

***Shoemaker*** – Nicole continues work on the Brafferton shoe for Apprentice points. She is also repairing a pair of shoes for Dave Wilson. Victoria is halfway through her first pair of heeled slippers. She has started work on the insole for a pair of dancing pumps. Val finished repairs on a pair of shoes for Tim Logue and is currently repairing a pair for Robert Weathers. On Thursday, Nicole showed Victoria how we measure; and together, they measured Teal Brooks, Madeline Bolton, and Eve Otmar for shoes. Val did Victoria’s apprenticeship assessment and submitted the paperwork for her adjustment. Victoria is working on her Hennage program regarding Masquerades and the associated cross-dressing. For the month of October, 10:30-11:30 a.m. every Monday, Victoria will be presenting her research at the Hennage with other members of the Gender and Sexual Diversity Research Committee. Nicole is using the warm weather to get caught up on some fine sewing that she is doing. Val spent the rest of the day cleaning and organizing the office.

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

***Silversmith*** – The Silversmith Shop is abuzz with activity as we continue to work on various projects. Megan has finished piercing her fish trowel and is now filing away the rough edges. Chris has been working on her large silver tray and chasing bottle tickets. Bobbie is working on a small silver tray and piercing a tiny mote spoon. Preston finished his small silver bowl. George is forging ingots into lengths that will be drawn into wire for bracelets and is working on his mountain of spoons. Filming for a future video also took place.



Megan’s fish trowel



Chris’ large tray



Bobbie's tiny mote spoon



Preston's bowl



George's spoons



The film crew

**The Silversmith Shop will be open Sunday, Monday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday.**

*Tailor* – Journeyman McCarty has just returned from a study trip in and around Paris, France, during which he had several rare opportunities to examine and document French-made clothing and explore its relationship to English practice of the tailors' trade. McCarty studied a number of late-18th- and early-19th-century garments in a private collection as they were being prepared for a current exhibition. A chance to peruse the wardrobe stock of the Comédie-Française yielded several significant finds, particularly mid-18th-century men's coats. The highlight of the trip was studying the clothing of French industrialist Christophe-Philippe Oberkampf at the Musée de la Toile de Jouy. McCarty spent several days examining the extensive collection of garments that belonged to the man that revolutionized France's cotton printing industry. A deeper understanding of how French tailors may have worked differently than English and American tailors will allow us to better identify surviving objects and broaden our interpretation of the trade.

While in the Paris area, McCarty also took part as a costumed interpreter in the "Imperial Jubilee", a celebration of the city of Rueil-Malmaison and its most famous residents...Napoleon and Josephine. This

incredible event and re-enactment recreating the Emperor's court saw more than 160,000 visitors over the weekend. The Emperor was portrayed by none other than CW's Mark Schneider. McCartney portrayed the role of one of the Imperial Ecüyer that managed horses and transportation for the Emperor.



Mannequins prepared for the exhibition "Empire of Fashion"



A detail from a painting by Boilly showing Oberkampf and his factory, part of which is the new museum



Schneider and McCartney at the Imperial Jubilee

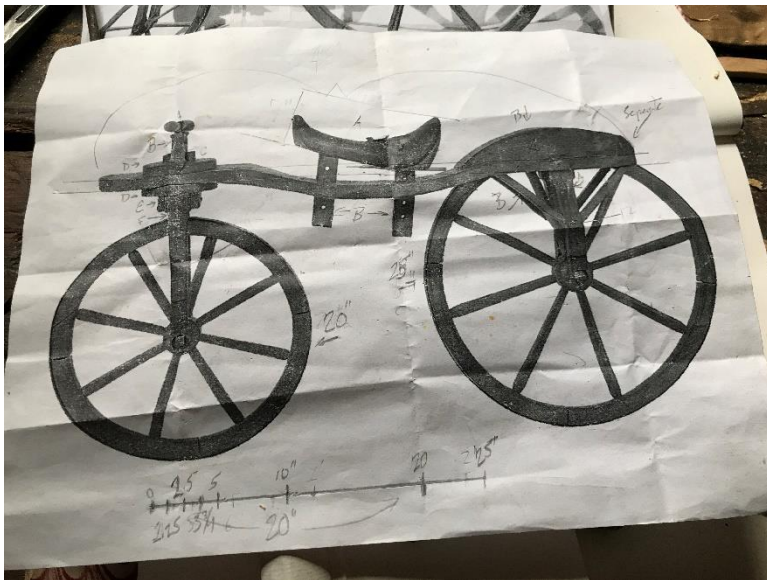
**The Tailor Shop will be open Sunday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Saturday. On Wednesday, October 12<sup>th</sup>, 4:30 p.m. in the Hennage Auditorium, the Tailors will present "Clothing Enslaved People in Eighteenth-century Virginia." This lecture will explore some of the complex relationships between apparel, labor, identity, and enslavement.**

*Weaving, Spinning, and Dyeing* – The dimity on the countermarch loom is complete! While the last few yards were being woven off, Joe was hard at work creating the next warp for our new project, another cotton in white with thin stripes of blue and red. The threads are now on their beam on the loom, and shortly, we'll begin the hours-long process of threading and sleying, which will prepare us to weave.

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

*Wheelwright* – Our current project, a handcart for the Market House, is nearing completion. The cart is an Apprentice-led project, with one Apprentice building the cart body, and the other Apprentice building the pair of wheels. Currently, one wheel is done being assembled, while the other is still in process. The joinery for the cart body is done and all the corners beveled. We expect to have the cart fully constructed by the end of October.

The Shop will be building a velocipede—an early 19th-century proto-bicycle—for a private customer. It is in the very beginning phases. Currently, the dimensions of various components are being scaled from photographs and construction design worked out. The velocipede should be coming together over the next few months.



**The Wheelwright Shop will be open Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday (11:30-5:00).**

*Wigmaker* – The Wigmakers are currently on a study visit to see extant wigs in Scotland and Sweden, but just before we left the country, Edith styled Lexie's hair on her last day with pomatum and blue powder. We also transferred several of our blockheads to the break room on the second floor for safe storage while the Shop is getting its preventative maintenance for the next couple weeks.



**The Wig Shop will be open Saturday, October 15.**

*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) and Edward Wright (Harpsichord-maker); Armoury – Broadus Thompson (Blacksmith) and Jenny Lynn (Tinsmith); Brickmaker – Madeleine Bolton; Carpenter – Matt Sanbury; Colonial Garden – Eve Otmar; Cooper – Jon Hallman; Engraver – Lynn Zelesnikar; Fifes & Drums – Justin Chapman; Foodways – Abbey Shoaf; Gunsmith – Darrin McDonal; Historic Farming – Ed Schultz; Joinery – Brian Weldy; Military Programs – Alex Arnold; Milliner and Mantua-maker – Rebecca Godzik; Music – Karol Steadman; Musket Range – Justin Chapman; Printing Office and Bindery – Peter Stinely (Printer) and Mary Hannah Grier (Bookbinder); Public Leather Works – Jan Tilley; Shoemaker – Val Povinelli; Silversmith – Megan Cantwell; Tailor – Mark Hutter; Weaving, Spinning, and Dyeing – Annie Buss; Wheelwright – Murphy Griffin; Wigmaker – Debbie Turpin