



**THE
MECHANICK'S
ADVISOR**

12/1/2023

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Apothecary

Sunday through Thursday

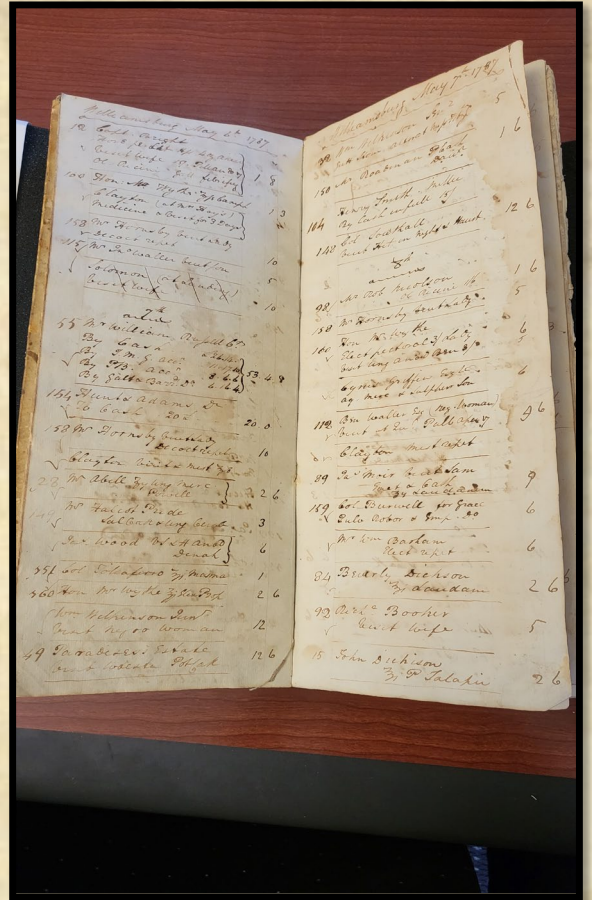
Sharon has been working on the journeyman committee to develop a trades curriculum post-apprenticeship.

Stephannie compounded a conserve of orange peel - the last component to her level 1

compounding module.

Margaret has finished a comparison chart of medicinal ingredients through time.

- Margaret Perry



A page from the 1787-1789 Galt-Barraud Daybook (c/o Swem SCRC, W&M).

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Brickyard

Wednesday through Sunday

This week at the Brickyard crew has been enjoying the calm that follows a kiln firing, which ended on Saturday the 18th. The firing appears to have been rather efficient, so we are excited to see the fruits of our labor in the coming months. After the kiln we had the opportunity to go to Rosewell and gaze upon what's left of that impressive building. Otherwise, Apprentice Madeleine worked on the yard wreaths while Master Josh fashioned himself a shillelagh. Journeyman Kenneth has been splitting the White Oaks that was felled next to the yard.

- Madeleine Bolton



*Rosewell was completed in 1740
but was destroyed by fire in 1916.*

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Cabinet Maker

Sunday, Monday, Thursday through Saturday

Recently in the Cabinet Shop, Bill has finished his sample chair back for this year's Working Wood in the 18th Century conference. It's made of tulip poplar as a test of concept, but he will now start on the real deal- a chair made of mahogany. Tam has finished a small slide-lid box for storing some of her smaller tools, and is moving on now to other bench appliances. John has finished up the dovetail joints of his cellaret upper case. The full-blind joints might not show, but each one took a few hours of work to get right. Not an uncommon story for the cabinetmakers!

- John Peeler



One of John's Full-blind, hidden dovetails



Bill's finished prototype chair back

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Carpenter

Sunday through Tuesday, Friday and Saturday

These last couple weeks we've installed the sills/ thresholds, jambs, and headers for the gable end door and shuttered window on the brick yard drying house. The next step is to knife and install clap boards.

We also want to welcome back Wes Watkins to the carpentry crew. Wes worked with us for 16 years and left CW in 2015. He's rejoined us for more fun as we prepare to undertake this next series of buildings.

- Matthew Sanbury



Scaffold to access the gable end door.

Cooper

Tuesday through Saturday

With December upon us, it's time for decorations to go up in the Historic Area as part of a tradition that dates back to the early years of the Restoration. As we have for the last few years, the Coopers are making our own wreath. We thought we'd offer you a hint as to what we're doing - can you guess what it is? Stop by the shop to see the finished decoration if you have a chance.

- Jonathan Hallman



Some of the elements for our wreath this year.

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Cook

Sunday through Tuesday, Friday and Saturday

With November flying by, we have officially wrapped up both of our fall programs, Secrets of the Chocolate Maker and 18th Century Brewing. These will return in the spring when the weather is more hospitable to those specialties. This week Dom pulled out all the stops in making a Croquant Cover (a decorative cloche made of pastry) and the first beautiful salad of the fall season. Usually, Barbra is the master artisan of all things 18th-century salad, but with her out from a wee surgery for the next few weeks, Dom paid homage to her expertise and made a salad worthy of her skills. We hope everyone is having a wonderful start to the holiday season!

- Charlotte Shoaf



The Croquant Cover.



Dom's seasonal salad, inspired by Barbra.

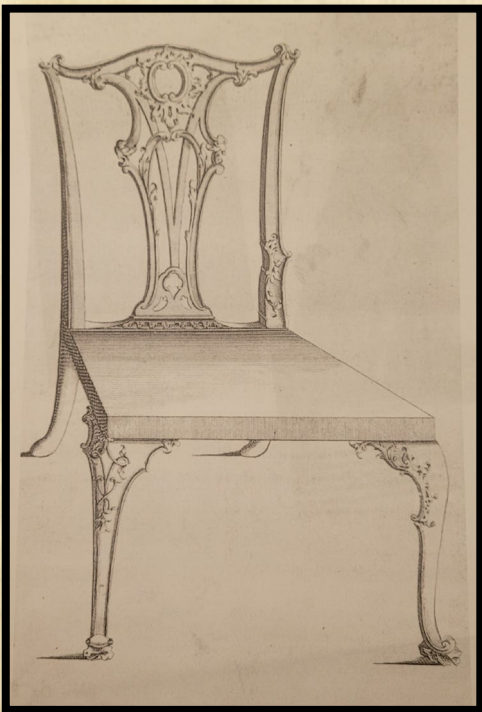
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Engravers

Sunday, Monday, Wednesday through Saturday

This past two weeks William and Lynn have been getting the names on the silver gorget gifts. Emma had her 90 day review and has made great progress. It has been requested she be moved to level 2 of her apprenticeship. Some trade silver was completed and sent back to the Silversmiths. Next project Lynn will be starting is a copper plate for the woodworking conference. Everyone is looking ahead to their yearly reviews and setting new goals.

- Carol Zelesnikar



Chair engraving to be replicated.



Silver bracelet-private order.

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Farming

Tuesday through Saturday

It was rough going cutting the barley this year. Not so much the heat of July, rather it was because it was “lodged” by a thunderstorm. Lodged means laid down by wind, rain, and usually both. It was just off the ground though and therefore not moldy. Bent over like a crab, it was cut with a sickle. In August it was threshed with a flail. This is akin to beating it with a small stick on a long stick to remove the straw. The resulting material is mixed with chaff which is the outside part of the grain and the spiky beards. Shown below is winnowing the chaff from the grain.

The barley goes to the Foodways Trade to make malt for beer. This is an 18th century variety called Scots Bere. Maybe it is different. *We shall see...*

- Ed Schultz



Winnowing barley.

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Fife and Drums

We kicked off the holiday season last week with a trio performing at the Williamsburg Inn Lighting. Come out to see us at the Yule Log performance this Friday and, of course, the first Grand Illuminations on Saturday. Lastly, congratulations to Sergeant Chase West and Private Greyson Johnson for advancing in rank!

- *Rebecca Sterner*



The Sr. Corps was thrilled to have cold enough weather to break out their black spatterdashes for Wednesday's evening performance.

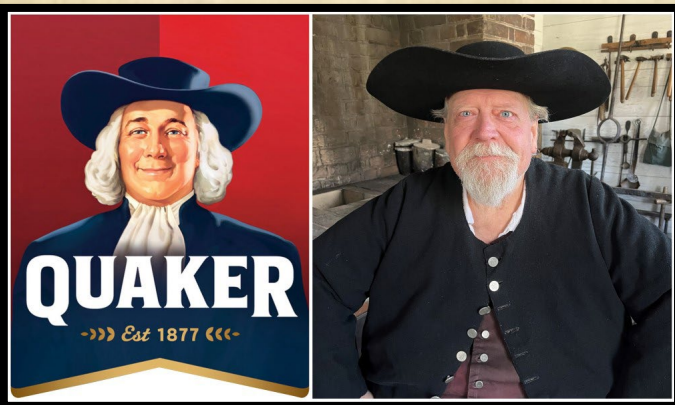
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Founder

Tuesday through Saturday

This past week, Mike has been hard at work on a pair of sterling silver shoe buckles for the ladies down at the Millinery Shop. Drew has finished a pair of pewter tapersticks and has begun work on another order of 500 musket balls for the range. With the tapersticks completed, another skill for the apprenticeship has been attained. Leanne isn't far behind either. She finished one of her tapersticks and the second is well on its way to completion.

- Andrew Godzik



Mike wants to know if you've had your One of Drew's finished pewter tapersticks. oats today.

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Gardener

The Gardeners are open every day.

As November draws to a close, the gardeners are making the last preparations for colder weather. Willow "withies" have been harvested and then formed into hoops that are positioned over the broccoli and cauliflower. When we expect temperatures to dip into the twenties, cotton tarps are pulled over the hoops to protect the plants from frost. Both of these brassicas will bear fruit in the spring. Even though we have lacked an adequate amount of rain for this month, the lettuce has thrived. We have begun to harvest lettuce and send it to the cooks in the palace kitchen. Sent to the kitchen lately has been Indian Cress (nasturtiums), sweet potatoes, Welsh onion, viola blossoms and kale leaves.

- Eve Otmar



*Winter bounty from the garden to the
Governors table.*

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Gunsmith

Sunday through Thursday

The pistol barrels are reamed smooth, cut in half and are now being breeched which involves forging, filing and threading the breech pins, or plugs. The barrels are threaded to receive the breech pins.

Brad drilled the hole in his lock plate to fit the tumbler. It's first drilled undersized. Then enlarged and reamed to the precise diameter to receive the tumbler shaft. Then he will move on to the internals of the lock which would be the bridle, bridle screws, sear and sear screws.

- Darrin McDonal



A view looking through one of the pistol barrels after being reamed smooth.



Brad drilling through the lock plate with the brace & bit.

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Harpsichord Maker

Sunday, Monday, Thursday through Saturday

From the harpsichord corner, Melanie has completed work on the bridge. Her first one and it's a really lovely shape. More refining will come, but it's a great start. Ed has begun the balancing of all the keys. With lead weights, each key will retract to its proper resting position. But each key is a little different. So, with a single consistent counterweight on the front of each key, he adjusts the size and location of the rear lead until the balance equalizes, like balancing on a see-saw. Thus, not only will the keys fall to rest, but will also feel and work consistently under the player's fingers. Irregular feel is not allowed. Come see how we are making all this come together.

- Ed Wright



The cherry bridge strip in position in the spinet.



Keyboard with balancing lead weights.

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Joiner

Sunday through Thursday

As we move towards winter, the Joiners have been tackling a variety of projects. In addition to continuing work on already in-progress pieces, such as Laura's tool chest for the Engravers, Brian has been busy hammering out shutters for the Brickmakers' drying shed, Peter attended a class on chairmaking and returned with a fantastic fan-back chair, and everyone in the shop is working towards January's Working Wood in the 18th century. Brian and Peter will be exploring the construction of a fabulous Eastern Shore blanket chest, and Laura will be hosting a program at the Rockefeller with librarians Doug Mayo and Marianne Martin. Work also continues on furniture for the Bray School: Brian has made templates of the legs of an armchair to be turned on a lathe, and Peter and volunteer Rikk have begun making parts for several benches.

- Laura Hollowood



The original Eastern Shore blanket chest (Object # 1930-108).

Peter's new fan back chair, made in a week-long class with chairmaker Curtis Buchanan of Tennessee.

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Musket Range

Ticket Event

We have been working hard with the restoration of the guns we shoot at the Musket Range. Andy and Alex have restored 4 of our fowlers and we are currently working on our 1st Musket. Our guns are regularly checked for safety and proper function. As you can imagine over these last 7 years the guns have been through a lot, from the scorching heat of summer to the damp cold winter. The restored guns look almost new.

- Jeffrey Thomas



*Top fowler unrestored.
Bottom fowler restored.*

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Military Programs

Open Daily

Military Programs worked with Drew and Leanne from The Geddy Foundry to conduct an open fire musket ball casting training. Staff learned to melt pewter and lead, skim impurities, judge hot/cold metal temperature, cast musket balls in both a single mold and in a larger double gang mold, and cast ingots. The four pounds of cast ball will be used as an interpretive object demonstrating basic militia equipment requirements of the pre- and the Early War periods. The casting training is the first component of Military Programs' Winter Training. The collaborative training program will see MP staff complete internal and collaborative training sessions with other HTS shops and sites over the coming months.

- Terence Christian



Cast musket balls are remelted as raw material for a new cast batch.



Chris holds a newly cast tray of musket balls.

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Shoemaker

Open Daily

Nicole has finished the pumps and overshoes and has now moved to the final stage of her apprenticeship, which involves long-work (boots and gaiters). Victoria has been busy with learning turn-shoe construction and making char cloth for the colder days. Val finished covering a box with marbled paper (courtesy of the bindery), to house the embroidered baby shoes he made earlier this year. He is also beginning a pair of common shoes for one of the gardeners. The shop is also readying our wreath for Saturday.

- *Valentine Povinelli*



Nicole's completed dress pumps.



Marbled paper box with baby shoes.

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Silversmith

Sunday through Tuesday, Friday and Saturday

Work continues on the trays. Megan is chasing in the bouge of hers and helped Bobbie solder on the rim of another. Chris is also chasing in details of her tray while George is chasing in the lines of his. Preston is working on his large and small bowls. The silversmiths are also working on saw piercing snowflake ornaments out of nickel for their Christmas wreaths. The snowflake designs are from the trade silver jewelry.

- Megan Cantwell



The newly soldered tray Bobbie has been working on.



A few of the ornaments.

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Tailor

The Tailor is open Sunday through Thursday

A sporting coat for the hunt season is in the works in the shop. As 18th century Englishmen had the habit of hunting out of their coat pockets rather than hunting bags, we have added extra pockets to hold his miscellaneous equipment. In addition to the to usual hip pockets, we have added to breast pockets with sheepskin lining for durability and absorbency. The order will be delivered to the customer when he arrives next week.

- Michael McCarty



Body right of the coat; showing the position of the breast pocket above the usual hip pocket.

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Wigmaker

Sunday through Thursday

'Tis the season for decorating! This year's themed wreath is Rapunzel, based off of the 1790 version published in Leipzig, Germany, by Friedrich Schultz. This version is the base of the Brothers Grimm famous tale, although the trope of the Maiden in the tower predates most published stories and appears globally in folklore. On the wreath is hair that was available to 18th Century wigmakers, along with other materials such as cut-glass beads, known as paste jewels, and silk flowers utilized by hairdressers to adorn ladies' hair styles. The basket woven tower base, as well as the shingles, were done utilizing a technique called palette work. We see this being used in sentimental jewelry from the latter half of the 18th century, in affectionate tokens of friendship, love, and death. The hair is carefully sculpted on a flat surface and a paste or diluted glue mixture is used to hold its shape. The dried pieces can then be cut and attached to any decorative setting. The wigmaker's chose quite a large setting this year! The tower is made of ethically sourced Nation Builder hair. The grey base was previously the Marquis de Lafayette's horsehair wig and the Chesapeake style roof is leftover horse and human hair from George Wythe's most recent tonsorial adornment.



- Debra Turpin

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Next Week, Look Forward to Updates From...

- **Harpsicord Maker**
 - *Sunday, Monday, Thursday through Saturday*
- **Apothecary**
 - *Sunday through Thursday*
- **Blacksmith**
 - *Daily*
- **Carpenter**
 - *Sunday through Tuesday, Friday and Saturday*
- **Gardener**
 - *Daily*
- **Engravers**
 - *Sunday, Monday, Wednesday through Saturday*
- **Palace Kitchen**
 - *Sunday through Tuesday, Friday and Saturday*
- **Gunsmith**
 - *Sunday through Thursday*
- **Joiner**
 - *Sunday through Thursday*
- **Military Programs**
- **Printer**
 - *Sunday, Monday, Thursday through Saturday*
- **Leather Breech Makers**
 - *Daily*
- **Tailor**
 - *Sunday through Thursday*
- **Weavers, Spinners, and Dyers**
 - *Sunday through Wednesday, Saturday*

Editor.

Matthew Siepinski