

THE MECHANICK'S ADVISER

August 27, 2021

In order to have more Trades Shops open during the Labor Day Weekend, the usual Summer schedule has been altered for the next two weeks. Below is the schedule for August 29th - September 4th.

Labor Day Weekend							
Gallery							
	Sun 8/29	Mon 8/30	Tues 8/31	Wed 9/1	Thu 9/2	Fri 9/3	Sat 9/4
SUMMER							
Apothecary	8	8	8			8	8
Bindery	8	8			8	8	8
Blacksmith & Public Armoury	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
Cabinetmaker & Harpsichord-maker	8			8	8	8	8
Carpenter	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
Colonial Garden	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
Cooper		8	8			8	8
Engraver			8	8	8		8
Foodways	8	8	8			8	8
Foundry	8	8	8		8		8
Gunsmith	8	8	8			8	8
Joinery	8	8	8	8			8
Military/Magazine	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
Milliner and Mantua-maker	8	8	8			8	8
Prentis Field (Farming)			8	8	8	8	8
Printing Office	8	8	8		8		8
Public Leather Works	8	8		8	8		8
Shoemaker (Armoury)			8	8		8	8
Silversmith			8	8		8	8
Tailor	8	8			8	8	8
Tin Shop			8	8		8	8
Weaver			8	8	8		8
Wheelwright (Armoury)	8	8		8	8		8
Wigmaker	8	8		8	8		8

Apothecary – The Apothecaries spent a study day getting their references organized. After thirty-five years plus of creating binders filled with primary and secondary sources on a wide variety of topics relating to medical history and collecting books (some of which are signed by their authors), there are a lot of materials.

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

Armoury:

Blacksmith – This week, the Master has been away from the Anderson Blacksmith Shop, yet despite the old adage, the mice are diligently proceeding with their assigned tasks. Mark has focused on small locks, a framing square, sharpening of pinking irons, and a major repair to one of the Shop's bellows. Aislinn, meanwhile, has worked on a pair of compass, pricking irons for the Leather Workers, and both Journeymen have been working on a proposal for a sign bracket for a private customer. In the Apprentice corner, Owen has been forging out flesh forks, Alex has been stacking up andiron parts and got to see the originals that he's working from in Collections. Josh has been adding the final touches to his hacksaw frame, now that the Cabinetmakers have generously delivered some handles, and working on batches of thumb latches. Last of all, Broadus has been working on musket tools and fireplace shovels. When the cat returns, he will surely have learned that all's well that falls well at the foot of the anvil.

The Blacksmith Shop will be open Daily.

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

Anthony Hay Shop:

Cabinetmaker – This week, John has been spending his time with the high chest of drawers, installing drawer guides to make things move smoothly, then adding a decoration called cockbeading onto the drawer faces. This creates a nice shadow line to add some visual intrigue to the drawers and ends up taking at least twenty hours of labor to accomplish on all nine drawers. The things we do for fashion! Jeremy has been cutting the dado and rabbet joinery needed in his desk sides and top to be ready for glue-up, which should happen very soon – it's not something you want to rush. Bill has continued his final stages of finish with the Walker tea table, which will be ready for sale soon, and has moved to carving some decorations for his tool chest at the Museum and creating some quarter columns for the high chest. Also, a word to the wise for visiting the Cabinet Shop these days – Avoid the back bridge, as we have had to close some of it off for safety reasons. Enter either through the ware room west door or the lower gate near the western side of the building.



Harpichord-maker – Greetings from the Harpsichord corner! We are re-stringing the large harpsichord and continuing its repairs. Though we've paused our work on the spinet, we are still making plans for the next steps. We are in the process of interviewing candidates for the second apprenticeship position. We hope we'll be able to introduce you to a new Apprentice soon. And a big thank you to the Bookbinders for recently crafting a notebook for Melanie!



The Cabinetmaker and Harpsichord-maker Shop will open on Sunday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday. Either the Cabinetmakers or the Harpsichord-makers will be at the Art Museum Gallery on Wednesday.

Brickmaker – Big changes are a'coming with the Brickmakers! Our trio is now a quartet as we welcome our newest Apprentice, Madeleine Bolton, onto the crew. She will be officially joining us in two weeks so be sure to welcome her when she arrives. In the meantime, we are continuing our stay with the Carpenters as materials for the new Brickyard buildings are being processed. We also met with several of our esteemed Archaeologists this week to discuss clay roofing tiles found at the Magazine. So far, a completely intact tile has not been found, so we are unsure of their exact size and shape. However, with the multitude of fragments that have been uncovered, we have been able to come up with several plausible theories. We, along with the Department of Historic Trades and Skills

Archaeologists and Architectural Historians, will continue to research and discuss these tiles in the hopes of learning more. Who knows, perhaps clay tiles are in our future!

Carpenter – We are pushing through the 100-degree heat indexes to hew and pitsaw the framing for the big drying shed that will be raised in the Brickyard. We have made the pine plates and are now focused on the braces and ceiling joists/tie beams.



Hewing for Drying Shed



Plates for Drying Shed

The Carpenter's Yard will be open Daily, weather permitting.

Colonial Garden – As we approach the month of September, the Garden takes on another look that hints at the coming fall. The melon patch is done for the season and has been removed; the watermelons will soon follow suit. Cushaw squash no longer hides under its massive leaves, but lays exposed to the sun and will be ready for picking. A new crop that we planted in the Sankofa Heritage Garden is sorghum. Its origin can be

traced to Northeastern Africa, and from there spread through Africa to China, and then from there, globally. According to the United Sorghum Checkoff Program, the first known record of sorghum in the United States comes from Ben Franklin in 1757. The tops are eaten as a grain, and the stalk produces sorghum syrup. The Pigeon peas bloomed, but we have yet to see the formation of the pea. A long season crop, they have grown to six feet in height. The cowpea from the Sapelo Island Geechee people has been fruitful with two to three pods forming at the end of each vine segment.

We heartily thank our Donors for financing the new grape arbor, and many thanks to the Carpenters for building and installing this wonderful shade structure and support for the grapes. On these hot days of summer, both the Gardener and Guest can converse under the shade of the arbor.



Sorghum seed and pod



Sorghum



Grape arbor

The Colonial Garden is open Daily, weather permitting.

Cooper – The Cooper Shop will be open on Monday, Tuesday, Friday, and Saturday.

Engraver – The Engraving Shop will be open Tuesday, Wednesday, and Saturday. The Engravers will be at the Art Museum Gallery on Thursday.

Foodways – The Foodways Staff will be at the Palace Kitchen on Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, and Saturday and at the Armoury Kitchen on Friday.

Foundry – Both Leanne and Drew are quick learners of the art of plate casting for the Engraving Shop. They even passed up Mike on numbers. Mike is getting the parts of the sundial ready for our combined “Trades Tuesday” with the Engraving Shop.



The Foundry will be open on Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday.

Gunsmith – The Gunsmith Shop will be open on Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Friday, and Saturday. On Sunday, August 29th, at 4:30pm in the Hennage Auditorium, the Gunsmiths will present “Virginia Rifles Made Along the Great Wagon Road: A Photographic Study of Three Important Virginia Rifles.” The earliest in the group was made at the headwaters of the James River in the 1750’s. The second is the earliest with a brass box and dated 1771. The third rifle is the earliest with a signature.

Historic Farming – The fodder and tops from the corn have been gathered. This is the 18th-century way of creating livestock food for the winter. Today, we feed horses and cattle hay, but corn fodder was gathered up until the mid-20th century by some farmers. In fact, the special knot used to tie the blades and stalks together was taught to us in the early 1980’s by Gordon Chappell – now retired Vice President of Landscape. This knot cinches down on the fodder and keeps it together. Gordon grew up doing it, and who knows how far that special knot goes back in time. I would wager over 200 years...



Hands of fodder curing in the sun



The tops of corn leaned up on the naked stalks to cure

The Farmer will be at Prentis Field Tuesday through Saturday.

Joinery – The Joinery will be open on Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday. The Joiners will be at the Art Museum Gallery on Saturday.

Military Programs – The staff of Military Programs would like to invite everyone to join us for a gathering on Thursday, September 2nd, under the Compton Oak Tree in Market Square to remember Ron Potts. Whether you knew him as a Blacksmith, Orientation Interpreter, or Military Interpreter, Ron was always known for his kindness, persistence, and inquisitive mind. Please join us in remembering a life well lived, and a dear figure to those who knew him.

Milliner and Mantua-maker – This week, we were gifted two gorgeous fabrics off the looms of our Weavers: a diaper cotton and a blue and white striped fustian (linen warp and cotton weft). To thank them for their generosity (and because we can't resist hand-woven fabrics for long!), we immediately set about turning it into clothing for them. Their new Apprentice begins next week and needs the beginnings of a wardrobe, so Janea, Rebecca, and Rachel spent much of the week creating two petticoats, a bedgown, an apron, a kerchief, and a pocket for her. We're also making up some new pieces for Karen, Annie, and Joe so

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that they can enjoy the pleasure of wearing the products of their Trade. In addition, Rebecca also completed a silk short cloak for some wedding millinery for the upcoming Donor event, Janea finished a striped cotton bedgown, and Rachel completed a tucker, which finished off the suit of millinery she had been working on.

On Tuesday, we said good-bye to Rachel, who has gone back to her job with Delaware State Parks. For a couple of days, Janea and Rebecca will muddle along together until they welcome back Kate full time as the new Millinery Apprentice! If you're on our end of town, stop by to welcome her to the team! Her arrival is not a moment too soon, as we're in the midst of preparing for an upcoming DAR program and the big Donor event for the beginning of September.



The Millinery will be open on Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Friday, and Saturday.

Music – Hello to all from the Governor’s Musick. We are looking forward to fall weather and presenting some mini-concerts to those who might stop by the Raleigh Tavern on Wednesdays in September. Using lists from the newspaper of printed music available for sale at the Post Office, as well as quotes from diaries regarding musical life about town, we have a large possible repertoire to choose from. It is our privilege to take music from the printed pages of dusty books and bring it to life for our Guests.

Here is a quote for the day from the diary of Colonel Landon Carter of Sabine Hall, August 21, 1771: “No news of any sort, only the last rains in July destroyed the crops full as much as the fresh had done, and that Ld Dunmore’s dogs had raised the price of beef in the market of Wmsburgh, and I do suppose they must make a goodly addition to the present modes of concerts, for I hear from every house a constant tuting may be listened to, from one instrument or another, whilst the vocal dogs will no doubt compleat the howl.”

The Musicians will be in the Art Museum on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays (unadvertised and subject to change) and on Wednesdays as advertised, and at the Raleigh Tavern Apollo Room throughout the summer on Fridays, 9:00am to 5:00pm for tours every 15 minutes.

Printer and Bookbinder:

Printing Office – **The Printing Office will be open on Sunday, Monday, Thursday, and Saturday. The Printers will be at the Art Museum Gallery on Tuesday. On Monday, August 30th, at 4:30pm in the Hennage Auditorium, the Printers will present “A Visit With the Printer: An Overview of the Printing Office.” Join Peter Stinely as he shares his 40 years at the Letter Press through pictures and recollections.**

Bindery – Good Day from The Bookbindery. August found Journeyman Bookbinder Donald rebinding a copy of *Restoring Williamsburg*, by George Humphrey and Carl R. Louisburg. He chose to adorn the book in sumptuous red Moroccan leather, 24K gold tooling, and beautiful endpapers made of hand-crafted marbled paper, produced by the talented Jemma Lewis of Wiltshire, England.



Journeyman Donald's Newest Masterpiece

Meanwhile, Journeyman Bookbinder Dale and Apprentice Bookbinder Barbie took the Internet by storm with their illuminating tutorial on how to make 18th-Century Paste Paper at home. The content is available through Colonial Williamsburg's "Trades Tuesdays" Archives on their Facebook page, alongside the other various and gifted Tradespeople of Colonial Williamsburg. What an innovative way to preserve the teachings and the skills of the people who work here, and who have so much to share with all of you! Good day, Friends. Be well.

The Bookbindery will be open on Sunday, Monday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday.

Public Leather Works – The Agents of Leather are happy to announce that we will soon be welcoming a new Apprentice Agent to our operation. In commemoration of this august (September, actually) occasion, we are offering the following contest.

If you think you know who the new Apprentice Agent is, write (insert pronoun here) FULL name around the edge of either a £5 or £10 note and deliver it to the Public Leather Works no later than Thursday, September 9th, by 4:45 pm.

Winners will be drawn from correct answers on Sunday, September 12th, and announced, along with the name of the new Apprentice, in that week's *Mechanick's Adviser*. Winner of the £10 entry will win a one-of-a-kind leather scrap cut by Master Agent Jay "Hannibal" Howlett, and the winner of the £5 entry will win a one-of-a-kind leather scrap cut by Journeyman Agent Jan "Mad Dog" Tilley. An Honorable Mention winner will receive a custom leather scrap cut by our Intern Agent Victoria "Face (insert pronoun)" Tolson.

Good luck, everyone, and get those entries in!!

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

Shoemaker – Rob continues work on his shoe-boots, both in the Shop and on his Research Day. Nicole is using both Shop and Research time to complete the last build up and form for Michael McCarty’s pumps and is now getting to work on the standard. Once the standard is complete, she will be able to pattern the uppers for Michael’s fine pumps, which will push her apprenticeship forward. Val is nearly done with a pair of common shoes for David Wilson. To quote “Lucky Jack” Aubrey, “we had the weather gods,” so Val took advantage of the sunny weather on his Research Day to resume the Shop’s leather dressing project. The last day of Katie’s internship was on the 21st, and she is now back at the Gateway Arch in St. Louis, Missouri. We enjoyed having her and wish her success with her Park Service career.



A newly attached heel on Rob’s shoe-boot



Rob’s shoe-boot



Nicole finishing the instep leather for Michael McCarty’s pumps



The form taken from Michael McCarty's last



The first of a pair of common shoes for David Wilson



The welt and rand have been sewn into place for the second of a pair of common shoes for David Wilson.



The first glue drying on a dressed skin

The Shoemakers will be at the Armoury on Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday. On Thursday, September 2nd, at 4:30pm in the Hennage Auditorium, the Shoemakers will present "Secrets of the Past: The Practice of Concealed Footwear." A talk on the custom of concealed footwear in which we will discuss the practice, its possible origins, and how we use the knowledge obtained from concealed footwear in the Shoe Shop at Colonial Williamsburg.

Silversmith – The Silversmiths have been busy bees. George has been cutting out silver disks for cute little bowls called patty pans, as well as the patterns for seeded cups. The Prentis Store is in need of hollowware, so we're on it! Preston is working on small bowls, Bobbie is making some miniature punch bowls, which are so cute, it's sickening! It's a reproduction of a late 17th-century Monteith bowl. Chris is preparing for tours about Williamsburg women in trades and skills. She is studying the Bucktrout map, looking for lot numbers as to where these women lived. Bobbie is trying to find more info to show that John Craig, a London jeweler, was James Craig's father... "James, I am your father!" I'm adding this old picture of Preston for fun, enjoy!



The Silversmith Shop will be open on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Saturday. The Silversmiths will be at the Art Museum Gallery on Friday.

Tailor – The Tailor Shop will be open on Sunday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday. The Tailors will be in the Art Museum Gallery on Monday.

Weaving, Spinning, and Dyeing – The Weaver Shop will be open on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Saturday.

Wheelwright – An exciting week at the Wheelwright Shop! With the support of their fellow Tradesmen, Journeyman Paul and Apprentice Joel were able to re-install the tires for a pair of carriage wheels for their Facebook Livestream. After leaving the metal tires in a woodfire for about forty-five minutes, the tires expanded enough to mount them on the outside circumference of the wheel. After the tire is in place, water is baled around the warm tire. This not only causes the metal to contract, but also prevents the wheel from burning. Tires hold the wooden portions of the wheel in place and give them a wear surface for the road. The afternoon sun may have been warm that day, but the fire was warmer still. But with teamwork, a smithing hammer, and multiple buckets of water, the tire installation was a resounding success. The Shop would like to thank the Colonial Williamsburg “Trades Tuesday” Crew in making the Livestream possible. Three cheers for Master Shoemaker Val and Blacksmith Intern Josh for their assistance in the installation. Finally, a special thanks goes to the Anderson Blacksmith Shop for working on the metal tires. Huzzahs all around! Now that the Livestream is behind them, Joel and Paul continue to work on their respective projects. Joel continues to work on his cart body, and Paul is working on the tenons to his log cart spokes for the installation of their wooden rim pieces.

The Wheelwrights will be at the Armoury on Sunday, Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Saturday.

Wigmaker – This week, we would like to formally introduce our new Apprentice, Benton! Benton has been with the Foundation for the past 8 years, the last 5.5 of which were spent in School and Groups Services. While as an Interpreter for Groups, Benton has been able to expand his knowledge of Architecture, Law, and

Fashion and their effects upon the people who did or did not engage with them. Benton also participates in Evening Programming and has been stylishly showing off the Shop's handwork for years now. We're looking forward to handing all the Full Bottom wigs from our Trial programs over to him to comb, wash, and restyle! We figure, the next time he needs a wig, he can style it himself. How convenient is that?! If you haven't met Benton yet by some chance, feel free to stop by the Gallery on Sunday, or the John Coke Office and/or Wig Shop on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, or Saturday this week. Welcome to the family, Benton!



The Wig Shop will be open on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Saturday. The Wigmakers will be in the Art Museum Gallery on Sunday.

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

Editor: Shari Monaco

Contributors: Apothecary – Robin Kipps, Armoury – Alex Hinman (Blacksmith), Anthony Hay Shop – John Peeler (Cabinetmaker) and Melanie Belongia (Harpsichord-maker), Brickmaker – Nicholas White, Carpenter – Garland Wood, Colonial Garden – Eve Otmar, Foundry – Mike Noftsgger, Historic Farming – Ed Schultz, Military Programs – Justin Chapman, Milliner and Mantua-maker – Rebecca Starkins, Music – Jenny Edenborn, Printer and Bookbinder – Barbara Swanson (Bindery), Public Leather Works – Jan Tilley, Shoemaker – Val Povinelli, Silversmith – Bobbie Saye, Wheelwright – Joel Morris, Wigmaker – Debbie Turpin