

THE MECHANICK'S ADVISER

April 29, 2023

This week's Trades Talks at 4:30 pm in the Hennage Auditorium:

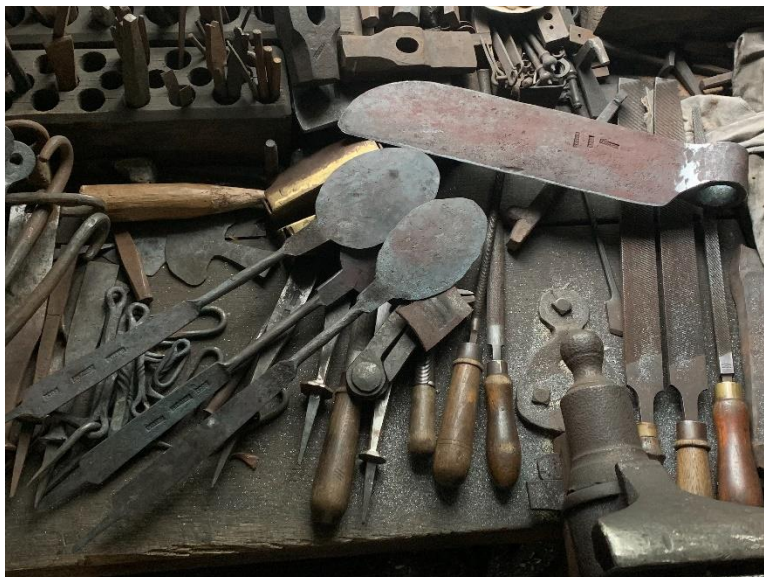
On Monday, May 1st, the Coopers will present "Tracing Adam Waterford". Adam Waterford was a free Black man who worked as a cooper in Williamsburg around the time of the American Revolution. This program explores how we know that, and what else we know and don't know about him, in a discussion of the documentary evidence that allows us to glimpse who Adam Waterford was.

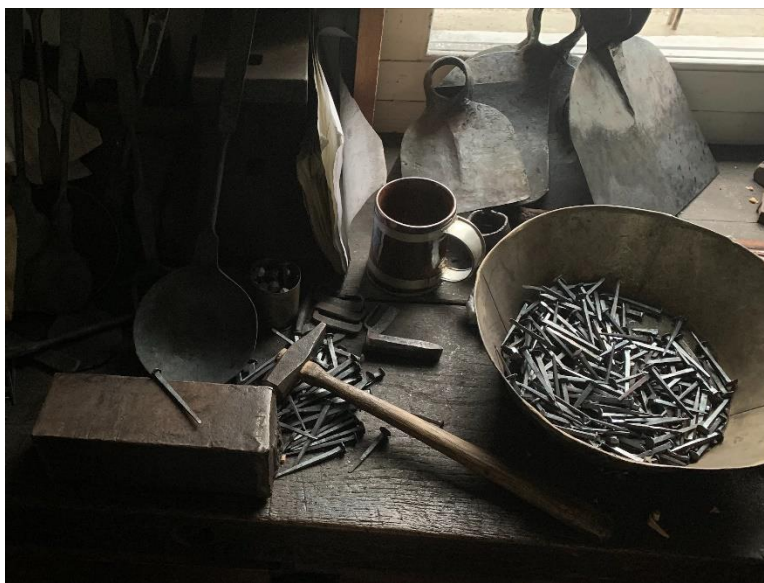
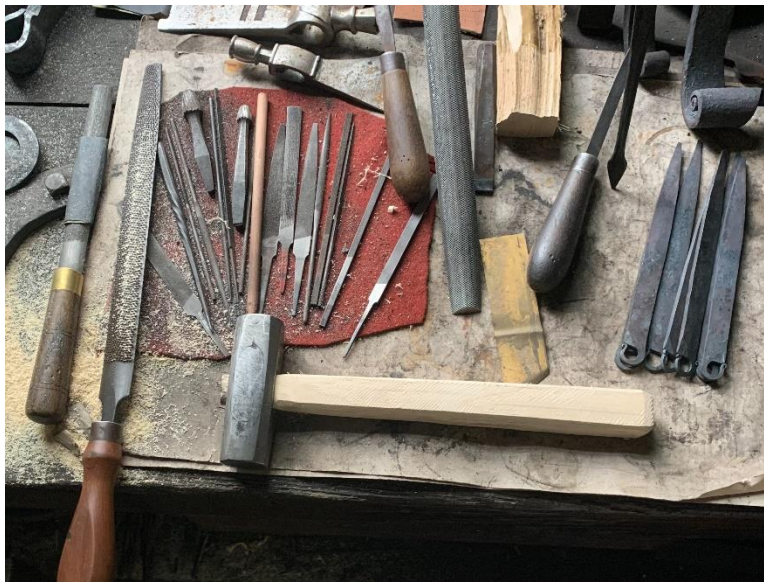
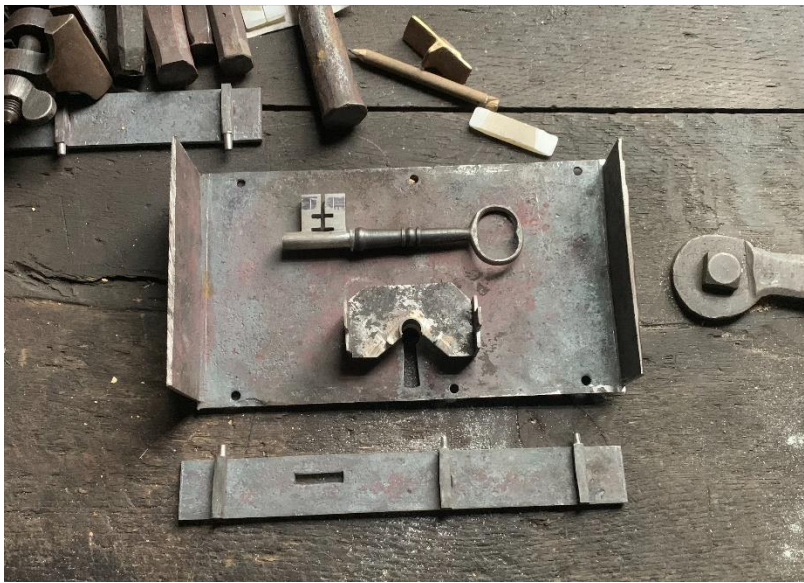
No program on Wednesday, May 3rd.

On Saturday, May 6th, the Founders will present "Casting a Bronze Mortar." Join Apprentice Founder Drew to learn about the production of an 18th-century artillery mortar.

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

Blacksmith – Our anvils ring on at the Blacksmith Shop! This week, Ken has made a froe and works on cooking spoons. Mark has returned and has picked up where he left off on his lock. Aislinn has pounded out a hammer, and also works on a roasting spit. Alex is working on ladles and pot hooks, and has taken up the task of sorting nails, as may be seen all across his bench. Broadus makes trivets and spatulas. Lastly, Josh wraps up the gate hardware he has been working on. As always, All's well that falls well at the base of the anvil.







The Blacksmith is open Daily.

Bookbinder – The Bookbinder is open Monday, and Thursday through Saturday.

Cabinetmaker – Things really started to come together on three of the Cabinetmaker's big projects this week. John Peeler glued up all four front assemblies for his set of chairs. He's now refining them and making final preparations to join the fronts and backs together. Meanwhile, Bill Pavlak mounted the casters on his writing table, molded the legs of the writing drawer so they nest seamlessly with the fixed front legs, and made some small rollers to allow the writing drawer legs to glide smoothly across the floor (thanks to the Blacksmiths and Joiners for loaning some materials for those rollers). Our NIAHD Intern, Sarah Palluconi, finished cutting the dovetails on her walnut candle box, making it ready for glue-up early next week.



The Cabinetmaker is open Sunday, Monday, and Wednesday through Saturday.

Carpenter – This week in the Carpenters Yard, we have been making and test fitting the rafter pairs for the wagon shed at the Farm site.



The Carpenters Yard is open Sunday through Wednesday, and Saturday, weather permitting.

Cook – We are excited to see all the young baby plants out in the Palace Kitchen Garden starting to come up for Spring! Red potatoes, peas, onion, lettuce, artichokes, and of course, the cardoons are all doing well after being planted by our friends in Landscaping. We had another successful Workshop, and this coming Monday, we will also be hosting our next afternoon of chocolate making. We brewed a wheat beer on our Brew Day this past Sunday and have heard that our collaboration with Aleworks for the orange ale is close to having an official name. Dom attended a committee meeting for the Coffeehouse, and we have started to see folks coming into town for the Garden Symposium. Barbara enjoyed her time down with Military Programs at the Armoury Kitchen this past weekend, and Guests seemed happy to see both Kitchens up and running.

The Palace Kitchen is open Sunday, Tuesday, Friday, and Saturday. On Monday, their Workshop will be held 10:00-11:00 followed by “Secrets of the Chocolate Maker”, 11:30-2:30.

Cooper – This week, the Coopers delivered some new tubs, buckets, and piggins to the Randolph House to replace some pieces that have reached the end of their working life.



The Cooper is open Sunday, Monday, Thursday, and Saturday.

Engraver – The Engraver is open Sunday through Tuesday, and Thursday.

Farmer – Two hundred and seventy-five hills have been raised for corn, tobacco, and cotton, with about twenty for a new experimental crop, indigo. The corn is up about two inches, and the barley is just coming up. The new ground brought in this year is pretty hard, and over the years, compost will be added to give it more structure. So, we have to keep the soil constantly loosened so the rain will sink in rather than run off. The tools of choice are hoes and a horse-drawn cultivator called a hoe plow.



The action of the hoe plow



School kids chopping up the soil

The Farmer will be at Ewing Field Tuesday through Saturday, weather permitting.

Fifes and Drums – The Fifes and Drums Building has been full of activity the last few weeks as we prepared for our trip to Norfolk to play in the Virginia International Tattoo Hullabaloo and Drumline Showcase. The Senior Corps got the opportunity to play in the pre-show for the first time since 2019 and then were able to watch the main event. This was a great opportunity for our Fifers and Drummers to meet musicians from around the world and learn about other cultures! They did a wonderful job at both events! Everybody very much enjoyed the show and is feeling inspired! In addition to the excitement of last week, on Saturday, April 29th, we will be sending the Senior Corps up to Fairfax, Virginia, for the 2nd Annual Fairfax Tattoo, where they

will perform at George Mason University. Amidst all of this preparation, the adult staff members have been getting ready for "Drummer's Call" (May 19-20). We will have seven groups joining us on Duke of Gloucester Street with at least 200 performers total. There have also been several requests this week for the Fifes and Drums to play at private events or conferences, giving Senior Corps members an opportunity to play some of the tunes we don't usually play as a group. We also had a fun couple of meetings with Military Programs, who came down to review duty calls and practice some drill techniques with both us and our Senior Corps drummers. We are excited to work with them more in the future! Lastly, we'd like to congratulate Ben Smith for passing up to the rank of Drummer and Julia Smith and Harmony Schleif for attaining the rank of Private! We'd also like to congratulate Privates Travis Smith, Ty Smith, and Dominic Le Gouellec on a good first march with the Junior Corps on Thursday!



Military Programs and Brodie Adams working on drill commands (left). Three Senior Corps members (Sergeant Major David Degaraff, 1st Sergeant Jacob Hower, and Drum Sergeant Duane Bradley) escorting a group to dinner at Shield's Tavern (right).



The Junior Corps on Thursday with its new members performing

The Fifes and Drums will be performing 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 Sunday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday.

Gardener – The Historic Gardeners recently reaped of a bed of rye (*Secale cereale*). Rye is grown as a cover crop throughout the winter in the Historic Garden. The straw is dried, and diligent readers will recall it being sewn into mats for use around the Garden. Growing in amongst the rye this spring were volunteer corn poppies (*Papaver rhoeas*). Corn poppies, as the name suggests, were frequently encountered weeds in European fields (when the word *corn* was a generic term for grain) but were brought to the colonies as a garden flower.



It is a certain serendipity to see poppies within our grain bed.

Apprentice Marc built two trellises to support vines of recently sowed prickly cucumbers (*Cucumis sativus*). Both trellises are made of branches pruned annually by the Landscape Department from the sycamore trees at the corner of Francis and Nassau Streets.



A tall trellis with reinforcement to hold it upright against both the wind and future weight of cucumbers



A lower trellis built into a Garden hotbed

A recent weeding about our snapdragons (*Antirrhinum majus*) gave rise to a curious spectacle. One of the larger plants was bent over and lay in a pathway. To remedy the situation, the snapdragon was gently tied to an upright stick. The stems that had been pointing towards the sky were now bent some 90 degrees over. Before the end of the day, the plant had begun the process of correcting its direction in relation to the sky!



In botany, *tropism* is the turning movement or growth of a plant in response to environmental stimulus.

The Historic Garden is open Daily, weather permitting.

Gunsmith – The Gunsmith is open Sunday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday (11:30-5:00).

Harpsichordmaker – The Harpsichordmaker is open Sunday, Monday, and Wednesday through Saturday.

Joiner – This week in the Joinery, we have a few different projects underway. Scott continues progress on his corner cupboard, preparing stock for a sash door. Brian has returned to a project that had been on hiatus: a lathe based on one in our Museum Collection (OBJ 1988-14). While we often work with yellow pine to create finish work or furniture, the base of this lathe is made of oak, a better material for this piece. Laura has started on a new box for the Tinsmiths, this time constructed by nailing the pieces together instead of using dovetail joints.



The Joiner is open Sunday through Tuesday, Friday, and Saturday.

Leather Breeches Maker – The Leather Breeches Maker is open Tuesday through Saturday.

Masonry – This week in the Brickyard, the crew experienced a bit of modern intrusion as the area around our drying shed was graded for proper drainage and leveling. This work will allow us to start paving the shed soon. Otherwise, earlier this week, the Apprentices worked on prepping the lime kiln for future firings by applying a layer of fire clay on the interior. This will protect the bricks from the heat of repeated firings as we intend to burn some shell this summer. Also this week, the shade shelter was completed, which means brickmaking is close at hand!



The Brickyard is open Sunday, Monday, and Thursday through Saturday, weather permitting.

Military Programs – Military Programs has been on closedown last week and this week, while the Guardhouse receives some much needed repairs. Most dramatic and welcome is the replacement of the brick floor on the main level of the Guardhouse. If you've been in the structure in the last fifteen years, you've

probably witnessed how worn and uneven it began to be. We can't thank the staff of CW Operations and Maintenance enough for their help! The building is also undergoing some basic repairs, such as painting and window repair.

During this time, Military Programs has been busy with professional development while also interpreting where possible. Alex Arnold has been giving Hennage Talks on Mondays and Wednesdays, April 17, 19, and 26. The Military Staff has also been interpreting at the Armoury on Fridays and Saturdays, April 21-22 and 28-29, while also working on cleaning the guns in the Armoury and learning some new skills with the help of our Cooks, Founders, and Shoemakers! Again, a big Thanks to Frank, Mike, and Val for helping make this happen along with Barbara, Drew, and Nicole for teaching us. There have also been a couple of staff trips during the closedown. We have visited the battle sites of Great Bridge and Yorktown and will be taking a behind-the-scenes trip back to Yorktown JYF to view more items in their collection. Military Programs will be back to normal interpretation at the Guardhouse on Sunday, April 30.

Military Interpretation at the Guardhouse is open Daily.

Milliner and Mantua-maker – The Milliner and Mantua-maker is open Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday.

Musket Range – This week, we began cross training our Military Program co-workers here at the Range. Military Programs have been filling in for Musket Range staff, when needed, since our inception. We cannot thank them enough for their hard work and support. They bring their interpretative skills with them, and it is truly a treat for our shooters and staff to hear the new and unique information.



The Musket Range is open Sunday, Tuesday, Friday, and Saturday with sessions at 9:30am, 11am, 1:30pm, and 3pm.

Printer – This past Saturday was Charlotte Larsen's last day volunteering with the Printers. We wish her well in writing her various papers for the end of the semester.

David Wilson has taken copies of "A new SONG" to give out as keepsakes while attending "The American Typecasting Fellowship" in Maine this weekend. David intends to discover sources for ornaments needed for an upcoming project.

The Printer is open Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday.

Shoemaker – The Shoemakers are working at the Leather Breeches Maker Tuesday through Saturday.

Silversmith – The Silversmiths are as busy as ever working on commissions and items for the retail stores.



Megan is working on her first practice tray in copper under Bobbie's guidance (left). Chris is nearly done polishing her silver tray and is working on cleaning up silver feet from the Foundry for her next one (right).



In addition to teaching tray making to Megan, Bobbie is raising a silver basket (left). George has been rolling ingots and drawing wire for more spoons (right).



Preston has been busy polishing items for the retail shop.

The Silversmith is open Sunday, Monday, and Thursday through Saturday.

Tailor – The Tailor is open Sunday (12:00-5:00), Monday, Thursday, and Saturday.

Tin Plate Worker – The Tin Plate Worker is open Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday (11:30-5:00), and Saturday.

Weaver, Spinner, and Dyer – Another completed Dye Day is in the books! We spent the morning tending to the fire and dipping our yarn into simmering pots of red, yellow, purple, and blue. Annie got all of their overshot yarn dyed a lovely pink. We were also able to re-dye some faded examples we have hanging up in the Shop. Our yellow yarns are looking bright and shiny again.



The Weaver is closed May 1-7 for maintenance.

Wheelwright – The Wheelwright Shop is open Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday.

Wigmaker – Greetings! This past week, Edith and Debbie concentrated on completing the Doering wigs for the Dewitt Wallace Museum. Debbie has nearly completed the construction for Anna's curls and will get them set for curling in the next few days. Edith has been experimenting with making wood combs, both for combing the hair and for decorative wear. In the coming days, Debbie plans to teach Benton the fine art of Net Making so he can begin practicing. Maintenance continues as usual; please make sure to bring in your hair on a regular basis for proper care and feeding! And as always, feel free to reach out to us for any related needs or questions.

The Wig Shop will be open Sunday through Tuesday, and Friday.

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

Editor: Shari Monaco

Contributors: Blacksmith – Broadus Thompson; Cabinetmaker – Bill Pavlak; Carpenter – Matt Sanbury; Cook – Abbey Shoaf; Cooper – Jon Hallman; Farmer – Ed Schultz; Fifes & Drums – Rebecca Sterner; Gardener – Marc Nucup; Joiner – Laura Hollowood; Masonry – Madeleine Bolton; Military Programs – Justin Chapman; Musket

Range – Jeffrey Thomas; Printer – Peter Stinely; Silversmith – Megan Cantwell; Weaver, Spinner, and Dyer – Pamela Russo; Wigmaker – Debbie Turpin